



ACCORDING TO JOHN STUART MILL'S BOOK, 'THE SUBJECT OF WOMEN', GENDER INEQUALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

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ABSTRACT

Mill believed that equality of power between men and women is not attainable without family reorganisation and traditional gender role shift. Inequality, according to Mill, is the most fundamental and deceitful kind of oppression, and it is inexorably associated with injustice. Mill saw marriage as a form of female slavery. A married lady, like a maid, had no control over her life. Women were unable to make decisions on their own at the time. Married women, like slaves, had no claim to property.

KEYWORDS : John Stuart Mill, rights, slave, The Subjection of Women, women

INTRODUCTION

Mill's argument suggests that inequality of power between women and men is a source of social and political ills, and that women have traditionally been unfairly restricted to the roles of wife and mother due to gender inequality. Mill argues for equalizing the power relationship between men and women that justice is not possible without family restructuring and conventional gender role change. Mill even said that inequality was the most fundamental and deceptive form of oppression and that it was inextricably linked with injustice.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION

John Stuart Mill, in his book 'The Subjection of Women', states that the existing social relations between the two sexes govern the principles of the society, but the legal subordination of one sex to another — this is a wrong principle, and it has become a major obstacle to human development. So this principle should be replaced by the principle of perfect equality, where there will be no recognition of power, where there will be no privilege on the one hand, there will be no disability on the other [1-2]. He said that at that time it was believed that men had the right to rule in society and women were obliged to obey it. Men are fit for government and women are ineligible, refused to give women any of the freedoms or privileges that are allowed for men [1-2].

CONDITION OF MARRIED WOMEN ACCORDING TO MILL'S

In the mid-nineteenth century, Mill saw the family primarily as a place of forced motherhood and marital slavery. At that time several barriers to women's intellectual and moral development forced them to marry and have children and that was the only way to live her life. In fact, Mill thought that being a woman in nineteenth-century Britain meant being a wife and mother, where motherhood and marriage were imposed on women despite the absence of any legal obligation to marry and eventually become a mother [3-4]. What is remarkable about Mill's gender analysis, in which he compares, being a wife to being a slave, is that it is strikingly found visible similarities to contemporary radical feminist arguments about the institution of marriage and the practice of compulsory heterosexuality made by feminists like, Adrienne Rich, Catharine MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkin. Mill's thought on women's position in his contemporary society is frequently invoked in contemporary radical arguments for gender equality in this context when Mill stated: "Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house" [4-5].

POSITION OF MARRIED WOMEN AS SLAVE IN HER FAMILY

So, according to Mill's understanding, a wife had to seek permission from her husband to do something like a slave. In exchange for her family labor, the wife was unable to acquire any property. The identity and property that she had as a person before marriage would be lost after marriage when the

husband and wife become "one person in-law." The worst part of marriage is that she suffers from the horrors of marital rape and degeneration. Mill cited the societal construction of women as dutiful wives who were supposed to be innately subservient. Mill's main point is as follows: "What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing - the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others" [6].

Mill did not expect that men and women would have any intellectual or affective distinctions if equality and liberty were widely available, and these were the attributes he considered were most essential for advancement, not physiological or biological traits [2]. Mill said "there will no prove to be any natural tendencies common to women, and distinguishing their genius from that of men" [2]. As patriarchy remains in the family, Mill maintained, all efforts to achieve justice through education and civilization will be futile; justice will only be realized in society if "the citadel of the enemy" - that is, inequality within the home - is assaulted. Mill saw the perfect family as "the real school of the virtues of freedom" and "a school of sympathy and equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience the other," which absolutely contrasts liberalism's emphasis on the public sphere, and particularly the state, as the central principle for cultural and political modification [2].

GENDER EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Mill maintained that equality could not be achieved until the family was altered and to be even more egalitarian. While Mill plainly wants to retain the safety and liberties that the domestic sphere should provide for its members, he also presented a political case for the importance, and importance of equality and justice within the family. An egalitarian family is a just family. According to Mill: "The equality of married persons before the law, is not only the sole mode in which that particular relation can be made consistent with justice to both sides, and conducive to the happiness of both, but it is the only means of rendering the daily life of mankind, in any high sense, a school of moral cultivation." De jure equality, according to Mill, is insufficient; we must also address social inequalities: "Though the reality may not be realized or widely accepted for years to come, the only school of strong ethical emotion is the 'society between equals.'" Several feminist scholars think that Mill did not go far enough in granting women the right to political power while failing to sufficiently explain other crucial changes (mostly economic, but also psychosocial) required for that right to be implemented. The infamous Mill quotation that his opponents cling to his remark that "the most common arrangement, by which the man earns the income and the wife superintends the domestic expenditure, seems to me in general the most suitable division of labor between the two persons" [2].

Mill believed and anticipated that the 1860s' family

connections would reform and become more equal over the time. Mill argued that choosing a woman to head the household was not an issue if it is done in an equitable manner, "if marriages were an equal contract ... on just terms," and if women "find all honorable employments as freely open to her as to men" [2].

Mill's belief in the 'power of ideas' to play an active role in life may have blinded him to the necessity of practice. Mill believed that once society met the requirements of development, thoughts would become the driving force behind change. However, no matter how great a concept is, if it is not put into action, it will frequently become empty over time. The belief that women must have the liberty to work outside the home is certainly vital. The ability to make money outside the home, women must do it so that the choice is a realistic one attractive. Mill did not share this view, perhaps due to an overly optimistic view of how equality would work - he did not see that some women working outside the home for these tasks so that it could easily be an option for all women. Perhaps Mill believed that once women and men were viewed as equal, no institutional measures were required to maintain that equality. For a woman's choice to be on par with a man's choice to work outside the home, let her do so. Although, just having the concept of equality is not enough to make it a reality.

Women spend a lot of time on the farm "superintendence of the family and the domestic expenditure," which is "extremely onerous to the thoughts; it requires incessant vigilance." Many women are at "the beck and call of somebody, generally of everybody" Mill noted that if a woman is to have some time for herself, "she must snatch any short interval which accidentally" arises [2]. For Mill, as Marriage is a socially determined destination for women, the potential they have grown up with and the purpose for which they all explore, except those who are less attractive will choose any man as their partner. One might assume that everything has been done to make this condition as deserving as possible for them, so that they have no reason to regret in rejecting any other option [3-4].

CONCLUSION

Mill thought that marriage was like slavery for a woman. A married woman had no rights over her life, like a maid. At that time, women could not make any decisions by themselves. Married women had no right to property like slaves, The purpose of a married woman's life was to give birth, nurture children, and serve all members of the in-laws' family. Women were victims of gender discrimination in the private and public spheres. So marriage was legal slavery to married women. Slavery means submission to the owner and the absence of any kind of rights. Mental and physical oppression are inevitably associated with slavery.

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