



The woman and the re-image of a women

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Abstract

In this Article 'the Women' means, a woman who is not bounded or imposed with the cultural and religious influence, a woman who is only 'herself', a woman who is independent of religious and cultural norms, rules and expectations, a woman of a real face that how she would be if she would free from the impositions and restrictions of the socially constructed rules and regulations. 'Re-image' here means 'to portray', how a woman portray herself to the society for the sake to overcome the expectations which is the emergence of the socially constructed norms or culture, here I mean that how religion and culture gives a directions to one's life and how it produces an identity of a woman in her surroundings. The socially patriarchic dominated norms of culture and religion victimize the real face of a woman. In the patriarchic world nobody keeps any concern with the struggling and compromising phase of a woman. No doubt the male has dominated the female in decision making processes, but those resulted in the shaping of cultural and religious norms. In this paper it is highlighted that what would be the real world of a woman if she would be free from the socially constructed norms and how a woman has been taken away from her real world and a re-image has been prepared according to the so called cultural and religious norms.

Keywords: woman, culture, religion, society, patriarchy

Introduction: A Woman and her society

A woman in our so called culturally rich community is expected to live according to the norms constructed by a society. Not worrying about the personal wishes of a woman the patriarchal society has constructed the social rules and regulations, where the women has to bear more things to fulfill the expectations of the society. But the question arise here is, what about the expectations of a woman from her society? Does the society ever think about the expectations of a woman?

From the very past to the present women are like a machine which works according to the will of others (males). In every religion, every culture the women have been used as a tool to regulate the cultural and religious norms without knowing about her choices. It means the culture and religion are all constructed not by a female but by a male and that without keeping any concern for her. That is why only woman has to sacrifice and not a male. Does a woman really want to do what the society is expecting from her or she is doing that things just because it is imposed upon her, whether imposed by her culture or by her religion.

If it is imposed upon her, then what she want to be like if not imposed anything upon her? How she would like to live in the world without covering herself under the boundary of cultural and religious norms? What she thinks she would be if the society might not create the imposed norms in the name of culture and religion. I had conversations with a number of respondents, whom I asked, 'what you think you would do if you were not encompassed by the so called culture or religion? I got the response like, *I would be very differ from what I m today, I would not wear these kinds of cloths which I m wearing just because I m expected to wear the same in my society. I might have multiple of choices to do by my own, be it my hobby or my profession.* The women at the same time also said, *'it will be like to commit a big sin if I will say anything which my religion does not accept'.*

But still she has her own world inside her, which others do not know. She had many desires which lied inside her own soul and mind. She even never wanted to express those wants, because she knew her society will not accept it. She fears to express what she would do if the imposition of culture and religion would be no more. A woman feels herself in an imaginary world where she crosses the boundaries of culture and she imagines the real herself in that world. Is it a culture or religion which is forcing a human being to live her life according to the will and expectations of those who created it? A women might have her own identity but, what she is being resisted to define that identity according to me is socialization, religion, culture and most importantly society itself.

Everyone has born and came to the world without any restrictions, impositions, enforcement, compulsion, contract, status, or anything. But we came to the world independently, without any ticket or certificate of any culture or religion. When, one comes to the world a name is titled for the newborn according to the gender he/she has acquired naturally. The newborn is socialized according to his or her of gender, which is called gender socialization (Wharton, 2006).

Socialization refers to the process through which individuals take on gender qualities and characteristics and acquire a sense of self. In addition, through socialization people learn what their society expects of them as males or females. Even if these expectations are not realized fully, people learn that they will at some level be held accountable to them. Gender socialization is a two-sided process. On one side is the target of socialization, such as a newborn, who encounters the social world through interactions with parents and caretakers. Through these encounters children not only experience other people and the outside world, but

also become aware of themselves (Warton, 2006). On the other side of the socialization process are the agents of socialization that is, individuals, groups and organizations who pass on cultural information. Example, a girl is prohibited to wear, eat, go, talk and do many things which the boy has not been prohibited. And the woman has been trained in such a way that ultimately, she kills her own desires inside herself and portray a different herself which is totally separated, to the society. And she thinks her life to be the same where she finds no other choices.

The culture and the religion guide her to put a particular kind of attire, those imposes to not to eat or drink a particular thing etc. These cultures commands her to do a particular works be it a household or other kind. It says it is the duty of a woman. In my ethnographic field work in Turtuk village I was surprised to find that the household work is tagged with the women only. The woman has to look after the baby, she has to cook food and do the other household works, she has to entertain the guests, she has to go to the field for farming, irrigation, or cultivation and at the same time she has to maintain other many more culturally associated things. I realized the tough life of every woman in the village. She has no life of her own, not at all. But it is imbedded into her by her culture that she has to work those things. She has to serve her family, entertain guests, look after her children and do other household and field works at the same time. A respondent told me that "*the men in my village never believed to help a woman in her household and field works. They just earn money in what so ever time period, take chill and roamed out with the tourists who visits to the village*". And according to my observation during the field work, it is happening because the culture of the village is shaped like that only. Now here again a question arise, can't the man-made culture be re-shape? If a man can make many rules for the maintenance of smooth functioning of a society then the same man can re-shape those rules and regulations for the welfare of a human being. And human being includes both man and woman and not only a man.

Conclusion

Therefore, from the very past to the present, a religious and cultural norm has been functioning like a role model and that also which has to be follow strictly. No alternate choices are there, if one resists those rules specially a woman, she will be judged according to her statements and at the same time her parents will also be victimized. These may happen because woman has no right to speak and make any decision in the male dominated society. A woman has to re-image herself in front of the world because she has maintained the cultural norms of the so-called society. Even though her own inside world might be different from what she is portraying, but still she ignores her real self. But unfortunately, the male dominated society still never realized the compromising and struggling picture of a woman. But they are making the social structure more and more rigid to subordinate the woman. If the cultural and religious norms would not be imposed upon a woman then according to my observation, a woman would be very different from her re-imaged picture in her culturally bounded society. To conclude it can be realized that a society should encourage the reshaping of man-made cultural and religious norms, there is a need to think rationally and emotionally about the socially constructed

'gender role'. And a woman should give a chance to live her own world, not only in the dreams, but in her own real world.

References

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