
Women Empowerment – A Utopian Notion

Ranjit Mandal

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jain Vishva Bharati Institute, Ladnun, Rajasthan

Abstract

The word 'Utopia' has been derived from the Greek word 'Outopos' which means an ideal place in which everything is perfect. Human beings, from the very beginning of civilization, are the embodiments of power. It is quite clear that whoever is very powerful, he or she dominates the others. But very few people would like to contemplate on the paradoxical role of power when they speculate about human relationships. In spite of this phenomenon, they keep on recriminating one another for the plea of gender discrimination, inequality and the corrosion of the status of women in society. The same ideology has been reflected through literature. This paper attempts at analyzing and assessing the present position of women in society and investigating who should be held responsible for this dilemma – men or women themselves.

Keywords: *utopia, contemplate, recriminating, dilemma*

In this era of globalization, talking about women empowerment means that we, both men and women, have accepted the fact that women are debilitated, fragile, atrophied, pusillanimous and subordinate to men both physically and mentally. Rousseau in his book *The Social Contract* opines that "Man is born free but every where he is in the chains (Rousseau 2). These chains have been made by the ideological notion of power. God has created all human beings: the males as well as the females with some potential. From the very beginning of human evolution, all human beings have been craving for power. History, especially in the last 100 years has proved how power corrupts those who (both male and female) achieve or inherit it. In this context; John Dalberg-Acton, a 19th century English historian and politician commented: "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Therefore, history has acknowledged that whoever is very powerful, he or she dominates the others. Let us discuss and interpret the paradoxical role of power not on the basis of gender but on the basis of power and how literature, art and media have been hiding the reality and spreading ideologically the notion of gender relationship.

India is a rich country historically, socially, religiously, and culturally. It is the birthplace of spiritual tradition where women deities are worshipped by both males and females. Mahavira's attitude towards gender is unbiased. According to him, both men and women are compatible to gain the spiritual emancipation through their abstinence of worldly passions. But behind this spiritual curtain women have been facing domination, domestic