

Study of Women in 21 Century with Religious Perspective

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Abstract: *The place of women in society varies greatly across the globe. Religion, which itself must be seen as a fluid term with interpretations and practices that are "embedded" and so alter with respect to cultural and historical links, is one of several significant characteristics linked to the differentiation of gender inequality. Despite the intricacy of the issues, some religious traditions and norms have the potential to exacerbate gender inequality and diminish the status of women in society. The impact of religion on gender disparity in the social, economic, and political realms is investigated using an exploratory quantitative methodology. One of the key elements that helped bring the old traditional ways into modern society is religion. The goal of this study is to determine how adults' attitudes towards women are influenced by their religious beliefs. 100 adults from Periyar University in Salem were chosen at random to make up the study's sample. The religiosity and spirituality measure by Hernandez (2011) and the attitude towards women by Spence, Hemrich, and Stapp (1978) were used to gather the data. The outcome demonstrates a significant positive association between religious belief and attitude towards women. The person with higher religious convictions exhibits a more traditional attitude towards women, while the one with lower religious convictions exhibits an egalitarian approach. The way men and women view women is the same. Compared to metropolitan people, rural people exhibit a more conservative attitude towards women.*

Keywords: gender inequality, world religion, geography of religion, status of women

1. Introduction

The publication *Technology, Dialogue, and Expanding Borders* is innovative. The many authors examine how social media sites like Twitter and Facebook, as well as the Internet, blogs, and other communication technologies, are reshaping groups of men and women active in feminism and religion. Women are strongly involved in the digital world; they dominate blogs and use social media in large numbers. These media dismantle barriers, enabling women to relate to issues from their own personal experience while speaking globally and across various divisions.

The co - editor of the anthology and author of the piece "#FemReligionFuture: The New Feminist Revolution in Religion," Gina Messina - Dysert, examines how feminism and the digital age may coexist. Historically, men have held positions of leadership in both church and society at large. Religious education and communication have frequently taken place in settings that excluded women and in languages that women did not speak well. Women have far more access to digital media, which is typically conducted in English and is based on personal computers in homes, libraries, classrooms, and even public spaces like cafes or parks. Even though even the poorest students are now receiving iPads and laptops in elementary school, there are still certain restrictions on access to the digital world on a global and economic class level due to a lack of ownership and instruction in its use.

Hierarchies based on gender, education, and socioeconomic class are substantially destroyed by social media. Its democratic participation practises give women an equal voice to interact and share their opinions, regardless of status. When speaking from personal experience, women can do so without being intimidated by others with more advanced degrees and professional expertise. This is crucial in religious traditions where there is a clear line separating

the ordained from the laity and where women have not been allowed to be ordained or even to enter the exclusive areas set out for men with official status. By exchanging ideas, women can establish a new sense of feminist community online. These communities can then inspire activism and organising. Concerned about change are both men and women Online movements can help support Rosemary Radford Ruether discriminatory practices, including the refusal to ordain women.

The blogs, on the other hand, give women the opportunity to speak with equal authority based on their personal experience. Coleman was able to talk about personal experiences—such as miscarriage and depression—that religious communities frequently overlook on her own site, BeautifulMindBlog. com. This type of widely used communication fosters community and provides women who take the lead in blog creation with a ministry within such communities. It is a ministry established by mutual respect rather than through hierarchical authority. Reader and blogger establish a mutually beneficial ministry in which the blogger also receives ministry. This model of ministry is feminised.

In her essay "From Typewriters to Social Networking," Washington, DC - based feminist group WATER (Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual) founder Mary Hunt describes how their organization's technology has changed over the course of thirty years. They began with electric typewriters, pens, pencils, paper, stamps, and envelopes and gradually developed into a global movement of electronic communication. They have been able to continue the expansion of their relationship communities thanks to online communication.

Caroline Kline, a Mormon feminist, investigates how blogs might change religious discourse by bringing up subjects that are considered taboo in the official tradition. The

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ordination of women to the priesthood and the definition of the term "Heavenly Mother" are two topics that frequently come up in Mormon feminist blogs. The Mormons, also known as Latter-day Saints, view God as having two personalities: a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother. Although this view of the divine has been a part of Mormonism since its 19th-century beginnings, since the late 20th century, the leadership of the church has rarely referenced Heavenly Mother in its God discourse and has discouraged members from praying to her. Yet her existence and meaning remain an urgent issue, especially for Mormon feminists. On Mormon feminist blogs, she is often discussed, some women having personal and deeply meaningful experiences of her that they share, while others are skeptical of the usefulness of separate gender-identified concepts of deity.

Additionally, Mormonism forbids women from receiving priestly ordination. Mormon feminist activist Margaret Toscano talks about the online Mormon "Ordain Women" movement in her essay. Since it was started on March 17, 2013, it has had hundreds of thousands of hits, demonstrating the widespread concern about it and the openness of many Mormons to talking about this taboo subject. 711 people, a considerably smaller group, signed a petition in favour of women in the clergy. Although there are many more who agree with the notion, the smaller number of signed supporters demonstrates how reluctant Mormons are to publicly oppose a theory that is at odds with the established hierarchy. More amazing is how online communication played a part in creating a movement of activists focused on this issue.

A major source of tension in the Roman Catholic Church is the barring of women from the priesthood, as well as its hierarchical systems of command and control. In her essay "The Catholic Church and Social Media," Catholic writer Michele Stopera Freyhauf explores the conflicting consequences of social media use among the clerical hierarchy and nuns. The leadership rapidly understood the value of such social media, but their dogmatic communication styles alienated readers and led to criticism of them. Evidently, authoritarian communication approaches did not work well on social media, which is why they received unfavourable feedback. Nuns, who are structured as religious orders but are far more democratic and are classified as laity by the hierarchy, on the other hand, were able to use social media significantly more successfully in the manner of open-minded dialogue.

Although underappreciated and undervalued, women have played and continue to play a significant part in the development and stabilization of religion. All faiths primarily rely on the contributions of women to uphold and spread religious heritage and ideals.

2. Literature Review

Marak, Gibson (2021) in his PhD research work **Women as religious leaders anthropological study of christian Garos of Meghalaya** explains that the Women of Garos tribe in Meghalaya who had accepted the Christian Religion for a long time are also becoming nuns and religious

authority in their community. Their becoming priests is a higher women status for their community and in society also.

Philip, C. M. (2020) in his PhD research work **Gandhian perspective of emancipation of women a critical study** explains Mahatma Gandhi's perspective about women and equality of women in the society and for future generations. Gandhiji favored women equality for a sane and healthy society which can be the foundation of National Development. Progress of Women will determine the future of our generation and Nation according to Gandhian Philosophy.

Jayantasiri (2019) in her PhD research work **An Analytical Study of the Buddhist Concept of Womens Rights with Special Reference to the Development of Monastic Community for Women in India and Srilanka** explains the Buddhist philosophy and vision about Women rights in society & family. This study also highlights Women Buddhist Monks and their monasteries. The relevance and impact of women Buddhist Monks on society.

Ditrich Tamara (2019) in her research paper **Women Renounces in India** explains the various sects women nuns in India, their life, socio-economical status and various religious practices attached with them. There are approx 5000 Naga Women Sadhus in India. Who practices firmly their difficult religious practices for liberation. Moksha or the Ultimate Liberation is the goal for are women Monks basically in Indian Subcontinent religions.

Kumari, Nirmala (2009) in her PhD research work **Womens participation in freedom movement of India from 1920 to 1947** explains the religious social environment of that time span with women perspective. The Hindu-Muslim aggressions of that time have damaged much to Social Harmony and Integrity, also affected women safety & their status. The riots during the nation's breakup caused tremendous economic, political, and physical misery for women.

Objective

- Study of different religions nuns in India.
- Study of relation between religion and women in 21 century.

Hypothesis

- Nuns of different religion still firmly doing their religious practices traditionally.
- In this 21 century also, Women are renouncing modern life of religious goals.

3. Methodology

In addition to using content analysis as a method of study, analytical research has been employed to examine the facts surrounding the relationship between women and religion. Secondary data of various resources can be used to justify the objectives of the research work.

4. Content Analysis

Buddhist Monks –

Female renouncers were largely ignored in Brahmanical writings, although non - Brahmanical movements like Buddhism and Jainism supported it.

For the first time in recorded history, female renunciation was legitimized and institutionalized with the establishment of female monastic orders in Buddhism and Jainism. This gave women a new way to leave behind domestic life with its social structures of class (vara) and, to a much lesser extent, gender. The sources claim that the Buddha reluctantly founded the female monastic order and that he added an additional eight precepts for nuns (garudhammas) that firmly guaranteed their inferior status to monks at all times.

Many contemporary historians contend that these regulations served to safeguard women or were just in keeping with ancient Indian social customs that mandated that women must always be under the control of men. Buddhist theology holds that both men and women are equally capable of attaining soteriological spiritual emancipation.

This is demonstrated by numerous accounts of women who achieved complete enlightenment, became wellknown teachers, or even became the carriers of the Buddhist transmission, like Khujjuttara, a woman from a very humble background who rose to become one of the Buddha's most important disciples and even transmitted a collection of texts known as the Itivuttaka. Even while women are disproportionately underrepresented in Buddhist literature, they do occasionally, albeit infrequently, speak for themselves: Buddhist nuns wrote the Therigāthā, an anthology of seventy - three poems, most likely during the Buddha's lifetime. According to Buddhist doctrine, women and men are equally capable of achieving enlightenment in terms of soteriology. The nuns' dedication to meditation, joy in being free from the demands of family life, and joy at reaching spiritual emancipation are all expressed in these poems.

It should be noted that these stories, which went through centuries of transmission and editing, make up only a small portion of the vast body of Buddhist textual tradition (written by and for men), despite the fact that modern Buddhists and scholars frequently single them out as a form of Buddhist apologetics within the context of the contemporary (Western) enterprise of gender equality.

Jaina Sadhvis –

By the Middle Ages, Buddhist nuns had likely all but vanished from the Indian subcontinent, but other religious women had persisted, particularly the Jain nuns, whose institution dates from the middle of the first millennium BCE to the present. In contrast to Buddhist nuns, who have recently attracted a lot of scholarly attention, Jain nuns have gotten comparatively little study. With a few notable exceptions like Charlotte Krause (Banthia, Soni 1999) and a few contemporary researchers, the Jain community remained largely isolated in the Indian subcontinent throughout history (until only recently). Additionally, female renouncers

from this community did not draw the attention of many Western scholars or practitioners.

Jainism was likely founded in northern India at the same time as Buddhism, based on historical accounts. The two religions have many similarities in their doctrines, social structures, and monastic organization but also drastically diverge; most notably, Jain monastics are required to lead a much more austere ascetic existence. Jains, like Buddhists, created monastic organizations for monks and nuns, supported by male and female lay groups, and technically ranked nuns below monks. Due to several doctrinal differences, including differing perspectives on gender, Jains are broadly divided into two sects: the vetambaras ("white clad") hold that women can achieve spiritual liberation, while the Digambaras ("sky clad"), who are comprised of naked ascetics, assert that women must be reborn as men in order to be liberated. Although there are both male and female renouncers in both groups, the majority of nuns are in the Vetmbara sect. Nuns have consistently outnumbered monks from the very beginning of the Indian renouncer movement till the present.

According to tradition, as recorded in the Kalpastra, there were 36, 000 nuns and 14, 000 monks during the founder Mahvra's lifetime. Women also predominated among laity traditions, outnumbering men by a wide margin.

Hindu Sadhvis –

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According to tradition, as recorded in the Kalpastra, there were 36, 000 nuns and 14, 000 monks during the founder Mahvra's lifetime. Women also predominated among laity traditions, outnumbering men by a wide margin. Several literary reports concerning female ascetics, mystics, and saints date back to the medieval era. Also, women who have renounced speak for themselves, such as the sainted Kashmiri yogin Līlā Ded from the fourteenth century. The sixteenth - century poet Mrba added to the vast body of mystical and devotional writing from India by speaking in their own words about their spiritual journey, ecstasy, and the joy of release. However, they stood outside of the human world because their status was seen as heavenly, making them extraordinary people. They were not normal female role models, but they did represent spiritual freedom for women.

Hindu female renouncers were never prominent in the many and long - standing Indian renouncer tradition; instead, they joined various male monastic organizations (sapradya) if they were allowed to do so. They revere the female body as sacrosanct and believe that all women possess the Goddess nature, making various kṛta and Tantric ascetic organizations

among the friendliest. As a result, they give women respect, power, and autonomy and frequently reject or even oppose the Brahmanical ideals of asceticism and chastity.

Tantrism has offered a space where women have been honored for millennia despite the general patriarchal restrictions, despite the fact that it is not widely practiced.

5. Conclusion

In order to become embodied in the modern Indian reality and to be relevant in their purpose, every religious institution is challenged today to review and reinterpret their founding charism. Although women's worth is acknowledged in the Church's official doctrines, they are nevertheless underrepresented in all aspects of its service. A significant job for religious life is to empower consecrated women, and this requires a genuine commitment to bold and creative transformation, which unquestionably needs to start with religious formation. Quite a few women's religious communities have already dared to alter their organization and way of life, but the great majority have yet to do so.

The prospect of being independent women in the twenty - first century fills us with joy, vigor, and desire to find mates.

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