

Ecological Perspective of Role of Women in Nation Building

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Abstract

Women and the nation share a special bond that aims towards unanimous growth and development. As we know, development is not a prize of one factor; rather, it paves its path on many elements. In my research paper, I have portrayed the aspect of the environment as a pillar of prosperity. The sustainable development of a nation is incomplete without nature. Nature helps in enriching nations with natural resources, which is the lifeline of the existence and evolution of human beings. But everything needs to administer or regulated in order to proper utilization of resources. Here, women play a vital role. She regulates the wealth of nature in a proper manner and thus helps in the comprehensive availability of it. The efforts made by women towards the conservation and proper handling of the environment support nation to proceed in the path of progress.

Keywords- Women, Ecology, Nature, Management, Nation, Development

INTRODUCTION

The woman is a word which, though it seems small but has confined immense depth and significance. A woman is a creator, a motivator, an inspiration, a potential and a resourcer. A woman has many roles and faces. It depends on us which part is viewed or glanced at by us. It is well known that a developed or educated woman is a source of development of the house, then society and then country. Hence, when a woman develops whole nation grows with her. The development of a country is based on many factors, like market, technology, availability of basic needs of people, politics or environment. Women have excelled in every field. In this patriarchal society, the contribution of women in a different field to bring

up the nation on economic and social grounds is remarkable. Through my research paper, I have tried to bring in the limelight the factor of the environment as a major need for the growth of a country. The environment has a great impact on the development of the country. The consumption of natural resources, climatic change, population growth, use of pesticides in growing crops and leading to health issues are all factors that can never let a country or nation rise and grow in this competitive world. Women share a special bond with nature. Nature and women are so close to each other that it seems to be two faces of the same coin. Women are considered to be a creator, and in the same way, nature also takes part in creation. Even the emotional and sensitive role

shared between these two is remarkable and exceptional. Women play a major role in the conservation of the environment. The use of natural resources in household work, providing food and raising children, even managing the use of water and fuel are a part of women's jobs. Even women had taken part in certain environmental movements in the past to save and flourish nature. Literary women have also written few books and have developed their knowledge in ayurvedic medicines to support and conserve the environment. Hence, we can aptly say that women have played vast roles in the development and evolution of the environment, which is directly linked with the progress and expansion of the nation. Literary view upon the portrayal of woman can be aptly seen in following lines of the poem of William Wordsworth

*"I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses tears and smiles."*

Relation of Women with Nature

Nature has always been the epitome of pure, simple and authentic beauty lying on the earth. The different forms of nature be it cloud, snow, tree or birds, everything has the reflection of truth, sacred and divine in it. If we look towards the similarity shared by the creation of god, i.e., women, then we can aptly view the alliance between them. Women are too considered as the pious, kind, beautiful and gentle soul

accompanying the purest form on this earth. It's not only about similarity shared; rather, women have also been active participants in the conservation of the environment. The role of women in saving the environment can be aptly understood from the responsibilities executed by them. Women do numerous jobs which help in the conservation of the environment like managing household work, nurturing and educating children etc. Though they seem everyday, routine work of any women but the management of the house is the most extensive and proficient job which needs the talent of managing wastage of water or power, the rise of pollution through the means used in different household works. Hence, it includes water and air management in terms of wastage as well as pollution created through them. Even the usage of plastic, intake of meat which is a major source of carbon emission as well as wastage of food are taken care of by women, which helps in nature balance. It's the role or job of women who decides the proper consumption of food, water or electricity in the house that leads to the availability of food, water and power to everyone and maintains the balance of ecology. Even the pollution of air or water that can be created in huge amount is looked after by the women through proper disposal of waste. Women also does the raising of children, which again helps in the protection of the environment since she teaches them to maintain the balance of ecology; she makes them understand the proper way of using water and maintain the cleanliness of air or water or earth; hence she is the one who not only herself gives a hand in the conservation of environment but also makes the next generation aware and awake towards these responsibilities. Management and uses of land and other natural resources are

also one of the important roles of women, which lead to the protection of the environment and later helps in nation-building. Even the vast ayurvedic knowledge of women keeps their family healthy, and ultimately it keeps the environment related to the human being. Women keep performing different roles towards the development of a nation about which at times she herself doesn't realize. Even women have done a marvelous job in farming which generally tends to be the job of men category. There also they have shown their skill as well as she nurtured earth, our motherland. Changing seasons or the climatic cycle indicates that the earth continues in a balanced cycle, which again finds relation with the life cycle of human beings that is again related to the motherhood of a woman. Women have the power of reproduction, nurturing and nourishing child who is similar to the role of Mother Nature. Being it a research work in English literature, perception towards women can be well understood through the words of William Wordsworth in these lines

*"A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd,
To warm, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light"*

Relation of Woman and Nation in Terms of Nature Management

Women are the major worker of economic and social change and environmental protection. In many ways and to various degrees, they are constrained in their roles as farmers, producers, investors, caregivers and consumers. Women are key people for development in every sector. Agriculture being the major source of food all over the nation has also incorporated women as major workers. In rural areas, women help in farming

and cultivation of the crop; they are the main person to take care of crops by sowing, weeding and harvesting. Even they do the storage of the crops properly so that they can fulfill the need of their family as well as of the consumers; this ultimately gives a helping hand in the nation-building. Since the male category generally gets into some other business or move to the city for earning better to fulfill the requirements of the family. Even in urban areas, women do the farming though in a smaller area, generally in the form of terrace garden or organic farming that reduces the use of pesticides and artificial fertilizers, which ultimately helps in the growth and health of the population. The use of dry leaves or food remains in order to make compost is also among the job of women towards the development of the nation and conservation of the environment. The use of waste materials to make an attractive and useful object or do craftwork for decoration is again an environment-friendly skill performed by the female of the house, like making packets of newspaper, decorating items from old and used bottles. These activities bring the best out of waste and serve mankind.

Rabindranath Tagore has aptly described Women Role in these Lines below:

*"Woman is the builder and moulder of nation's destiny,
Though delicate and soft as lily,
She has a heart far stronger and bolder than man.....
She is supreme inspiration for man's onward march."*

Management of different needs and necessities has always been a counterpart of the female gender. Be it management of water, air or food, and each has found its place in the workload of women category in order to better caretaker of nature which ultimately gives a boom to nation

development. There is a scarcity of water nationwide, especially during the summer season, which needs proper management of water in housework, which is evidently and rightly done by women of the house. Women, especially in rural areas, have to suffer from the scarcity of water; hence they aptly understand the value and consequences of its deficiency. Not only this have they also taken care of natural balance by not throwing waste in water sources as well as guiding the members of the house towards proper uses of it. They also use their skill in water management through rainwater harvesting in their home. Management of fuel, be it in the form of wood, or petroleum gas or the use of biogas, all is taken care of by women. By the use of biogas in rural areas, women help in the conservation of the environment, as the gas produced is used for different uses like cooking, power generation etc. and its byproduct is used as fertilizer. Through these activities of biogas production, making of compost, proper disposal of garbage, women help the environment as well as the nation in development and maintenance. The incomparable skill of woman has been depicted by Rabindranath Tagore in his work "The Home and the World."

"Men can only think,

Women have a way of understanding without thinking.

Women was created Out of God's own Fancy.

Man, he had to hammer into shape".

Women as Foresighter towards Development of Nation in Respect to Nature

Women have immense power; their power mainly lies in their instinct and way of perceiving things. Women also play the role of foresighter, their motive is always to work in a way to pave the path for a rising tomorrow.

Education, a source of building the future, is a way through which women help in the construction of a better and soaring future. Woman in the role of a teacher or mother imparts knowledge to children, which has its base linked with the future. These teaching will help children to be good human beings; it will also inculcate values in them, thus developing them as a savior of the environment and to be a participant in the development of the nation. Educated females and educating females both are the cause of moving a well-planned society. An educated female gives rise to economic and social status, which ultimately becomes the support of building a better nation. An educating female is an outcome of educated women since when one woman gets educated; she becomes the source of education and development of the family, society and nation. Sasha Temerte has well said in these lines of her poem:

"A woman with a book, and a pen

has the power to move nations.

A woman with a mind, and a voice

has the power to change the worlds."

Women have also proved the attribute of being a foresighter through active participation in environmental movements like the Chipko Movement and the Green belt movement. They had the understanding of the need for trees and forests for the proper living of human beings. Hence they lead this movement, taking so much pain on themselves in order to bring about awareness among people. At the present time, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was also like one of those movements done by women. This project had the foresight of more than just the clean India concept; it also gave rise to the issue of sanitation and women's education, as well as covered the issue of

women's safety. It gave women an opportunity to contribute towards the development of the nation by improving the condition of a sector of the country, which is also considered as a pillar of a rising nation. Through the campaign of "No Toilet, No Bride" women gave their enormous support towards the success of the movement and also in environment protection by keeping the surrounding clean and green. Proper disposal of garbage is another basic need which needs the contribution of the female gender as she is the one who takes care of it and also teaches the future generation about it. Women are the one who takes care of the disposal of garbage in the correct way by putting it in right colored dustbin, as a part of an activity for the sustainable environment; like blue colored bin contains recyclable waste, the brown bin is for kitchen and garden waste while the green bin is for non-recyclable waste.

The Poem below aptly shows Concern and Need of Proper Disposal of Wastes

*"Blue or green, two bins, you mean?
Yes, they are there; to throw your waste.
But not in a hurry, nor in a haste.
Select from waste, sieve if seems muddy
Separate all items and when they are ready
Place in a blue bin, or one that is green
For a voyage to the landfill, or for composting."*

Even the project of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), another project lead by the government, gave women of the rural area a chance to earn money; it aimed at enhancing livelihood security by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage. This brought self-employment in them and worked towards nature protection and improvement by making ponds, plantation of trees, and small dams to fulfill the need of society and create assets for

the nation. These are few examples that prove that women have immense capability, and they have and can take the nation and nature towards development with their effort and understanding.

Women as mountaineer and environmental scientists or meteorologists have shown their insight in the prediction of nature, which has its goal towards the future building of the nation. They are the analyst or foreteller who, through their power of analysis, helps society to be aware and responsible towards the coming natural disaster like flood, drought or cyclone and glaciers defrosting as well as the rising temperature in poles. The major help done by women through the foretelling about the environment is to warn the farmers about approaching natural calamity like flood, drought, cyclone etc. People had been and are being warned about the need for environmental conservation, but the negligence of people could be seen aptly through the outcome of the high level of pollution, scarcity of water, climatic effects etc. Women's enforcement towards the protection of nature has many speculations behind it, and with a sincere and genuine effort from everyone, we are leading towards a better and rising future of the nation.

CONCLUSION

Women are the source of life on this planet earth. But the hardship due to inadequacy of resources is experienced by them in each step. Limited access to credit, health care and education are among many challenges they face. These are further aggravated by the global food and economic crises and climatic change. Women keep working day and night for the well-being of family and community. Women give their maximum effort for the overall economic and sustainable growth of the

nation. Be it a revolution for the conservation of the environment or for sanitation and education, they have played a key role in the development of the nation.

Even in this situation of Covid-19, through the project of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan lead by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a chance to start new innovation which was taken up by women as an opportunity to prove themselves; for example, rural women took this opportunity by developing hand sanitizer and masks from home products and thus helped the nation in this pandemic. The nation holds a special place in everyone's heart. The importance and necessity of nation, state and community are not remote to anyone. The development of a nation has a direct association with the development of society. In a similar way or vice versa, the downfall of the nation also affects the whole chain. The growth of the country is dependent on many factors, but one major and most negligible one is the environment. Environment plays a vital role in the existence of life on earth. Nowadays, we are suffering from the virus called Covid19, this is an outcome of removing the shelter of wild animals or birds and getting closer with them for the fulfillment of our need. The basic need for survival of life is food, water, cloth and shelter. The major and basic source of accomplishment of these needs is none other than nature. Population residing in the developed country enjoys the life of luxury, and without any doubt, these fancy things are produced basically from the core of our planet earth, like extraction of crude oil and minerals. Water, the major need of life, is a form of nature. Medicines are the need for a healthy life and healing of ailment. Medicinal plants are a great source of

Indian heritage and are found in the greenery of the surrounding. The availability of air for breathing and survival of life is in abundance due to the trees and plants found on our planet. These resources are managed by the women category of the population. But the negligible importance given to both the lifeline and excessive use of materialistic things has started creating unbalance in the environment. It is well said in these lines of the poem below:

*"The environment, too, ca not be ignored
As the rich nation grew, earth's soared".*

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