
The position of married women in society, according to Simon de Beauvoir

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Abstract

Beauvoir speaks of the unequal position of men and women in marriage institutions. Men always play the dominant role in the family. Men want to keep women dependent on themselves. The law also gives women less status than men. Women are referred to as the 'other'. Women are completely separate and inferior to men. The legal system gave men exceptional economic rights. A man is given the place of an independent person in society, while a woman is seen in a limited role of reproduction and family care. Women are never equal to men. After marriage, women are loaded with all the responsibilities of the family, such as looking after the home, family and children, and therefore marriage becomes a burden for women. Men have special freedom. He is the guardian, the nurturer and the educator and shows the way forward. In his shadow the wife's life expands and presents her entirely. He is the protector of custom and he is the defender of morality. In comparison to women, only men are regarded liberated and accountable. According to Simon de Beauvoir, a woman sometimes becomes a slave, sometimes a goddess, but she is never seen as a human being. The woman is forced to play an 'other' character.

KEYWORDS: Simon de Beauvoir, marriage, 'The Second Sex', women

INTRODUCTION

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir published 'The Second Sex', an important work of feminist criticism and philosophy. It influenced important feminist thinking trends in the twentieth century, and its ramifications can still be felt now. She offers a compelling case against the widely held belief that women in a male-dominated society are still degraded "in the second position." 'The Second Sex' deals with the underlying assumptions of de Beauvoir's dominance in the context of contemporary society and cultural structures that continue to dehumanize women. Her argument was that the ammunition provided that women were in no way the "second" gender, that they were equal to men in all respects.

Beauvoir states that "The woman is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to

the essential. He is the subject, the absolute and she is the 'Other'. Further, he sets himself up as the essential as opposed to the 'other' the inessential, the 'object' [1].

WOMEN AS A PRODUCT FOR MAN UTILIZATION

The woman's identity is thoroughly developed during the evolution of the entire social framework. Because the woman was not as physically strong as the man, she was an 'other' and therefore her downfall was unlikely. As the power and authority of men increases, women become weaker. Especially when men gained control over land and property, he also wanted to subordinate women so that he could increase his capital. After marriage, a wife acknowledges her husband as her lord for economic and societal reasons. A good woman isn't regarded as a valued asset by her husband. Her husband regards her as an item. A husband is as proud of his wife as he is of his land, house, property, and wealth. A woman, like a man, is a human being, yet she is not regarded as an independent individual. She defines herself in terms of men. She is viewed as a product for man utilization [1].

When a man acquires a woman as his property, he thinks that she is only a body. A man does not want his wife's personality to develop because he wants to keep her to himself. Beauvoir did not exclude sexuality, the body, and femininity from ethics, but rather its core issues. In *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir said that women cannot be considered as mere sex creatures. In the second sex, Beauvoir eminently states that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole the produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine" [1].

GENDER-BASED CLASSIFICATION

According to Beauvoir, humanity is separated into two parts. The distinction between a man and a woman is undeniable. In actuality, sex distinction between men and women is a biological phenomenon. Beauvoir wants to say that there is no difference between men and women except for physical differences. She acknowledges that there are, of course, biological differences between men and women. But if these physiological differences cannot be ignored, they will be recognized by our society as submissive women on the basis of this argument. By establishing physical differences, women have been placed at the bottom of the second or secondary gender-based classification. This biological situation forces women to take on the role of being dependent on men. Beauvoir gives explanation it throughout social structure of gender and social practice that revolve the feminine beings into 'women'. It is just the configuration that distinguishes and constructs them. A girl is typically introduced to the idea of womanhood by the others. A woman learns how to act like a woman [1].

The majority of women accepted their position as conventional women. They devote everything to their husband, family, and children. In the eyes of men, a woman must be weak, useless, and unsophisticated in order to be a woman. Whereas a woman desires to be vibrant and autonomous, social pressure confines her quest for satisfaction to a passive mode. The girl is torn between her desire for independence and her reality as a woman [1].

BEAUVOIR VIEW OF THE MARRIAGE

Simone de Beauvoir did not support the institution called Marriage. Her writings show that she did not accept the institution of marriage. As can be seen in both her personal life as well as her philosophical writings, Beauvoir rejected marriage and maternal slavery. She never advocated for women to unwittingly surrender to marriage and motherhood or to be forced to go down a path they had never happily chosen [2]. Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* interpretations "The relationship between patriarchal marriage arrangements and the exploitation of women" [3].

Marriage is an institution where a woman is kept as a slave to a man, where she has to take care of all the household chores. Man is the master of women in a society where men predominate. Men see their wives as their own personal property. The definitive purpose of marriage is to bind the woman, but without autonomy no woman can love her husband. The wife's love for her husband is nothing but service, instead a wife gets financial dependence from her husband. Marriage, according to Beauvoir, becomes a very horrible condition when it becomes a responsibility apart from personal normal relationships, passions, and desires, and when it becomes a right for a man to acquire submission to his wife. Two persons cannot be one in this condition, yet each other's ruler is also dominated. Marriage is immoral only when that relationship is transformed into a right and a compulsion. A wife accepts her husband as her Lord after marriage. To a wife, the conjugal relationship becomes only a duty. She should thank her spouse for marrying her. In today's patriarchal society, it is regarded exceedingly offensive for a wife not to be truthful and faithful in marriage. A married woman is concerned about losing her identity. Marriage never gives a woman the happiness she expects. Marriage isolates a woman from all expectations. Marriage is equivalent to consenting to having responsibilities. Women feel more devoted after marriage. When a girl gives her all to someone, her entire destiny is entwined with that person. It is the accountability of a wife to devote herself to her husband, as only he can give meaning to a woman's continued existence. Only a man can complete the existence of a woman. A woman surrenders herself completely to the man and in return she provides her protection. From ancient times to the present, sexual intercourse has been characterized as service. The husband thanked her wife for this.

So give her different gifts and take on the burden of her whole life. A wife has to surrender herself to her husband [1].

Marriage was more important for males than for women since it allowed him to prove his manhood as well as his entitlement to property. Men want to get married for two main reasons, the first is that a woman can satisfy the physical needs of a man and the second is that he needs a woman to take care of his family. It is true that men need women in their lives [1].

Marriage is seen as a woman's life's fate. Traditional society at the time expected women to consider marriage as their destiny. Beauvoir thinks that marriage is a dissimilar category of occurrence for men and women. Traditional society wants to keep women dependent on men. Usually parents think of their daughter's marriage without thinking about the development of her personality while raising her daughter. In the case of adult girls, the most important ambition in their lives is to get married and find a husband who will adore them eternally. The two main reasons for women marriage are physical and psychological benefits. First, it keeps the person away from loneliness and establishes the person in a safe place through home, family and children. In most cases, girls are inclined by others and are enthusiastic to marry. They imagine that this is the only easy way; they decide to get married to get recognition in the society as wife and mother. Even today, in the case of marriage, the need for marriage is felt for social position and material advantages rather than love and attractiveness [1].

Simone de Beauvoir believed that women should go beyond the confines of the home and participate in productive activities outside. Beauvoir sees the institution of marriage as destructive to women [4].

CONCLUSION

Beauvoir says that even in today changing circumstances, male dominance in the family continues. She states that the contemporary position of women has undergone major changes due to economic development which has displaced the concept of the institution of marriage. In today's world, marriage is a mutually negotiated relationship between two independent individuals. The patriarchal grandeur and riches of today's family have faded. No matter how much the traditional form of marriage changes, it still tends to suffocate the couple in different ways. Men and women today enjoy much more freedom to choose their mates than in the past. Beauvoir believes that women should make their own decisions and have a critical perspective. They cannot always suppress the voice. A woman can agree and disagree with her husband's thoughts. A wife following independent thinking should not blindly support or oppose her husband's thoughts. A woman who understands her own situation and makes a

decision and presents her point of view clearly is the one who truly lives. Although a woman is materially dependent on others, she will feel a sense of inner independence. Women do not need to give importance to traditional values but they should take their own decisions and leave the bondage of marital attachment.

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