

MODERN TRENDS IN FEMALE INFANTICIDE

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Abstract

Tamil Nadu has a great tradition of heritage and culture that has developed over 2,000 years and still continues to flourish. This great cultural heritage of the state of Tamil Nadu evolved through the rule of dynasties that ruled the state during various phases of history. Many of the ruling dynasties gave patronage to Art and Culture that resulted into the development and evolution of a unique Dravidian culture which Tamil Nadu today symbolizes. Under the rule of the Pallavas, Cholas and the Pandya kings, there were tremendous growth and development in the field of Art, Architecture and Literature. The history of Tamil language can be traced back to the Age of the Tolkapiyam, the Tamil Grammar text, ascribed to around 500 B.C. Similarly, the Sangam literature dates back to 500 B(1) Tamil is spoken all over the state and Tamilians are in fact very proud of their language. Tamil is the official language of Tamil Nadu and one of the 18 languages mentioned in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution(2)

Keywords: *Pallavas, Pandya kings, Tolkapiyam, Sangam literature, sati, devadasi system, Mughals*

Status of Women in Sangam Age

From B.C.3 to A.D.3, 600 years, is called Sangam age(3). The Sangam literature says that women had the status not equal to men. They had to follow lots of rules, which were not meant to men(4). In the matter of education women were given equal importance. Women were taught Iyal (literature) Isai (music) and Nadagam (Drama) (5)Sangam literature divides the life of women into seven stages. They are Paedai (first 5 years), Pedumai (5-10 years), Mangai (10-16 years), Madanthai (16-25 years), Arivai (25-45 years), Therivai (45-60 years), Perilam pen (above 60 years). The marriage was conducted after the girl's puberty(6) The loyal women were respected highly in the society. The loyal women worship was started in this period. 'Chilapathikaram' says that the king 'Sengootuvan' prepared a statue for Kanaki and built a temple. This type of loyal women's worship derived into 'Mariamma' and 'Bhagavathi' worship in the later ages.(7)

Status of Women in Medieval Period

As far as the position of women in Tamil Nadu in the medieval period is concerned, women were not disqualified from the enjoyment of rights. They were under no restraints in their political, social, cultural, religious and economic activities(8) Because of the Muslim's invasions in the medieval period, lots of restrictions were given to Indian women. As such they faced distresses like female infanticide, child marriage, sati, devadasi system etc.(9)

Status of Women in Modern Period

Modern India refers to the period starting from the period of Later Mughals to the end of British rule in India (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.). In the British period the education of women was encouraged and this resulted change in the position of women. The educated women started to raise their voice against the British rights.(10)The Christian missionaries, who came to India to spread their religion, came forward to give education to the women to abolish women slavery(11)

Female Infanticide

The birth of female child was considered as a grief in the medieval period. Because the parents had to pay dowry for the child's marriage and also they had to search bridegroom in their same caste. There was a custom that the girl children should get married before 10 years. So the female infanticide happened. When the female baby was born, they murdered the child by giving liquor or spurge milk, paddy with milk, dumpling cow dunk in the child's mouth and burying them alive. However they tried to control this evil in the medieval period but failed.(12) After independence also this social evil was very common in certain places like Usilam Patti in Madurai District, Dharmapuri, Namakal and Salem of Tamil Nadu.(13) this paper deals with female infanticide in Usilampatti.

Female Infanticide in Usilampatti

Science is an important factor for the Economic transformation of country Science and technology have solved most of the problems of developing countries. The scientific advancement has come to aid the farmers to increase the productivity of their land and livestock(14)Due to vaigai river Usilampatti and Surrounding areas became as a fertail Region but the Vaigai River water flow in one side of the area only another side people can not use the water of Vaigai river so in Usilampatti one side is fertile area and another side is dry land the fertile area people give Dowry in form of gold ,land and money but Another area people Forced to give dowry so they fell in to the hands of usharies this pathetic condition led to female infanticide. CASSA (Campaign Against Sex Selective Abortion) is propagating against infanticide in Usilampatti. The people of this area said that “ the female infanticide is Reduced but Still Prevailing” (15). The girl child 2,00,000 which have to born in 2011 was not born in India due to the abortion this statement was given by Mr.Jeevanandam, Director of SIRD (Social Integrated Rural Development). Mr.Deivendran, the Co-ordinator of CASA said Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu are the places follows female infanticide in India (16). In 2001 to 2011, 31,33,281 girl children's were died in India due to the abortion among that Tamil Nadu 19848 childrens in Tamil Nadu were aborted.

Modern trend in female infanticide In Usilampatti:-

- In this area most of the people are working in other states like Andhra, Karnataka etc the pregnant ladies were taken to that place after delivery it is boy child they return

back to home with child it is girl child they murdered it and return to home with possible reason.

- Around Usilampatti there are few scan centres this centres ready to declare it is girl or boy child for money (18)
- According to MTP Act (Medical Termination of Pregnant Act 1971) women have Right to Abort the Child if the child is in sick or it is danger to the mother this Act was abused by the people.

Conclusion

The recent technologies development in medical practice combined with a vigorous pursuit of growth of the private health sectors have led to the mushrooming of a variety of sex-selective services. To reduce female infanticide awareness programmes should be launched to make aware among the people and the Government have to make the female independent, women should be imported skill a not training through various vocational programmes. Free and compulsory education should be provided to female children and dowry is considered to be an important cause of female infanticide the Dowry Prohibition Act should be made more stringent by proper amendments and should be implemented strictly.

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