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Cultural Relativism and its Influence on Human Rights

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ABSTRACT

This paper talks about depth the theories of Universalism and Cultural Relativism for the purpose of finding out the nature of Human Rights. However, the primary focus of this paper is to put forth instances of Woman's Human Rights being violated due to certain cultural practices of Female Genital Mutilation, Polygamy and hence based on these grounds refrain from the incorporation of the theory Cultural Relativism.

Keywords: Universalism, Cultural Relativism, Women's Rights, Female Genital Mutilation, Polygamy.

I. INTRODUCTION

What are human rights? Would they be regarded as universal in nature or culturally relative? Is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) based upon the principles of the Western Culture? From its very inception in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been subject to debates with respect to its nature. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights came into force with 8 abstentions. Apart from the six members that belonged to the Communist Bloc, Saudi Arabia and South Africa also refused to sign. To be able to understand and analyse the grounds under which the following countries refused to sign and what led to the debate, it becomes imperative to discuss the theory of Universalism and Cultural Relativism.

The preamble of Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises '*inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.*' This portrays nothing but Universalism where every individual is entitled to basic Human Rights anytime and anywhere independent of the caste, creed, culture, religion, sex etc. Here, an individual is regarded as a social unit. However, when it comes to Cultural Relativism, by its very name one can understand that community is regarded as a basic social unit where concepts like individualism, equality, freedom of choice don't seem to exist. This theory lays stress on '*dignity inherent in every body of custom*'

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Thus, these two theories are based on two different ideologies, where one believes that a unified legal mechanism of rights exist everywhere and the other argues that there exist diverse ways to interpret and implement Human Rights because cultures are seldom unified in their opinions on issues. At first, the theory and ideology on which Cultural Relativism was based i.e safeguarding various cultural groups seemed absolutely reasonable but on analysis, it proved to be highly unreliable and if its notions are followed, it would result in Gender Based Human Rights Violation.

(A) Objectives of Research:

The objective of this research is to discuss the grounds which gave rise to a conflict between Universalism and Cultural Relativism; To analyse the criticisms of Human Rights as Universal and Human Rights as Relative; and Give examples to portray the absurdity and impracticality of Cultural Relativism Theory by laying major emphasis on Women's Rights Violations; and

(B) Research Questions:

1. What are the conflicting views of Human Rights as universal in nature and as culturally relative?
2. Will incorporation of Cultural Relativism constitute Human Rights Violation?

(C) Research Problem:

It has been found that certain societies till date defend the unequal treatment of women in the name of preserving their cultural values and traditions. Moreover, studies show that there is no other social group except women that have so largely in the name of culture suffered Human Rights Violation. With the help of this research paper I wish to address the plight of women by questioning the validity of Cultural Relativism.

(D) Hypothesis:

H1- There exist no reasonable and practical grounds to support Cultural Relativism

H2- The ideologies on which Cultural Relativism is based results in Gender Based Human Rights Violation

(E) Research Methodology:

Qualitative Research- The research paper's main aim is to understand in depth the theories of Universalism and Cultural Relativism for the purpose of finding out the nature of Human Rights. However, the primary focus of this paper is to put forth instances of Woman's Human

Rights being violated due to certain cultural practices and hence based on these grounds refrain from the incorporation of the theory Cultural Relativism.

Doctrinal Research- This paper has adopted Doctrinal Research Methodology as the research has been carried out by understanding international documents of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (CDHRI). Apart from this, a number of research papers, articles, case studies and reports written by eminent legal scholars have also been used to get a better insight on it.

(F) Literature Review:

‘Universalism versus Cultural Relativism in Human Rights’ by Misal Zada & Muhammad Zubair lays emphasis on the long-standing dilemma of whether Human Rights are universal in nature or culturally relative? In this context, issues, questions and concerns underlying the debate are narrated in this paper. From the understanding of the terms ‘universal’ and ‘cultural relativism’ to the grounds which gave rise to a conflict between them and the criticisms associated with the said theories, this paper covers all.

‘Thoughts on Universalism versus Cultural Relativism, with Special Attention to Women’s Rights’ by Istvan Lakatos analyses and understands the oldest legal discussion which was between Universalism and Cultural Relativism. In addition to this, the State’s approach on the issues which are culturally sensitive has also been put forth which comprises of the Women’s Rights in Polygamy and Female Genital Mutilation as they are considered to be the most affected social group by these local cultures and practices.

‘Beyond Culture: Human Rights Universalisms versus Religious and Cultural Relativism in the Activism for Gender Justice’ by Cyra Akila Choudhury delves upon the topic of ‘culture’ and how it’s being used for over decades as an alibi to prevent reforms in the Gender Law. How ‘Culture is being preferred over the Women’ has always very well been explained in this paper by putting forth the traditionalist views of the conservatives on Women and what in their eyes Women really want. A brief reference to ‘Feminists’ and how the Cultural Relativists regards them as ‘foreigners’ has also been mentioned.

‘Female Genital Mutilation: A Violation of Human Rights’ by Fisaha KG discusses the concept, the origin and the rationale behind the practice of Female Genital Mutilation. It then moved forward to the Universalists and the Cultural Relativist in order to demonstrate their approach and views on the said practice and lastly this paper dealt with the Rights of Health, Physical/ Sexual Integrity and Equality that get violated by the practice of Female Genital Mutilation

‘The Influence of Cultural Relativism on International Human Rights Law: Female Circumcision as a Case Study’ by Katherine Brennan, outlines the debate between the two theories which led to the recognition of the Human Rights Violation and then moves towards describing the political and social aspect associated with the practice of Female Circumcision.

‘The Contribution of Polygamy to Women’s Oppression and Impoverishment: An Argument for its Prohibition’ by Vanessa von Struensee links the arrival of the practice of Polygamy with the Asian and African Cultural Practices and how they became a legal issue under the International Human Rights Law. And this Article also brings into light how measures have been taken to eliminate this practice because it is said to put women and children’s life and health at risk.

‘The practice of polygamy under the scheme of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa: a critical appraisal’ by Obonye Jonas, lays emphasis on Polygamy in Africa being not just a marriage of choice but a culture that inspires and moulds the family relations. However, with this practice being challenged due to several Human Rights Violations, this paper portrays how it’s future seems to be in grave doubt.

II. ANALYSIS/ FINDINGS:

1. What are the conflicting views of Human Rights as universal in nature and as culturally relative?

UNIVERSALISM V. CULTURAL RELATIVISM

After understanding both the theories, the one question that comes into our mind is whether the concept of Cultural Relativism and Universal Human Rights can co-exist with each other? To answer this, the debate between these two theories needs to be analysed. The followers of Cultural Relativism challenged Universal Declaration of Human Rights on four grounds:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was criticized in 1977 by the Saudi delegate of the United Nations of being Western and embracing only the Western culture and ideas. He stated that it laid major emphasis on only the individuals and paid no heed to social groups and families. In the year 1984, the Permanent Representative of Iran also objected to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as not being in accordance with the values followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and hence, Iran would not hesitate to violate the same. The Cultural Relativists regard Human Rights as culturally specific where communities

take precedence over individuals and social and economic rights are preferred over civil and political rights;

- The followers of Cultural Relativism were of the opinion that rights relating to religious freedom, marriage cannot be put together with norms of the non-Western societies as if the same takes place, it would be interpreted as a sign of us embracing the Western culture.

- These Cultural Relativists also called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a Foreign Norm which would destroy the cultural values because Universal Human Rights promote personal autonomy which is capable of eliminating social responsibility and communal loyalty and encourage globalization, modernization and urbanization; and

- Lastly, these international norms would not be accepted by the Government of respective countries as it would be in conflict with their domestic and cultural values and they would not appreciate International Human Rights to dictate how they should perform their cultural practices;²

In response to these criticisms, the followers of Universalism put forth their views which are as follows:

- It was underlined that for the purpose of drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a team was appointed that comprised of experts belonging to religion traditions. To be specific, it was drafted by 58 Countries out of which only 20 States comprised of the Western and European. Hence, Non-Western States did play some role and put in their inputs especially on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

- One of the believers of Universalism stated that '*no culture is by nature either compatible or incompatible with human rights and hence can be very legitimately applied to Non-Western Societies too*'³ and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights '*represents a broader consensus on human dignity than any single culture or tradition.*'

- Moreover, certain Universalists are also of the view that traditional societies don't possess the concepts of Human Rights as they tend to lay more emphasis on duties rather than on the rights of the individuals and hence, the third-generation or collective rights are denied as they believe that the subject of Human Rights is solely an individual and not a group.

Hence, from the above discussion, what can be inferred is that when it comes to the followers

² Istvan Lakatos, Thoughts on Universalism versus Cultural Relativism, with Special Attention to Women's Rights, PECS J. INT'L & EUR. L, Vol I, p. 7-9.

³ Ibid

of Cultural Relativism, they are not denying the incorporation of Human Rights but want them to be implemented in a different way which would not in any way hinder their cultural and traditional practices. However, in that case the same human rights when applied would have different results owing to the differences in the culture. This would lead to violation of the law as not all individuals would be kept on the same pedestal and be given the equal treatment.

2. Will incorporation of Cultural Relativism constitute Human Rights Violation?

CULTURE BEING USED AS AN ALIBI TO PREVENT REFORMS

Culture can be defined as *'a way of life where people accept the various beliefs and values without thinking only because it's something that's passed from generation to generation either via communication or through imitation.'*⁴ From their very birth, these Cultural and Moral Values are embedded in human beings which makes it essential for them to follow in order to preserve their cultural heritage and society. This has resulted in Culture being a go-to explanation for any event or belief that especially results in pushing back Women's claims of Equality and Rights.

In addition to this, traditional societies portray Women as being the image of integrity and traditions and hence, if anyone tries to bring about an amendment in this status-quo of Women, they are referred to as outsiders that possess malice intent of destroying their culture and identity of Women. These outsiders are particularly the feminists and the Western Women that are responsible for hampering with their saint culture by imposing foreign values upon them. The Cultural Relativists believe in Multiculturalism and are of the view that traditions and customs performed in different communities should be accepted, protected and tolerated.

Till date the stereotypes that are prevalent require Women to adhere to all kinds of behaviour as they are expected out of them in order to fulfil their duties as a wife and mother. Apart from this, take the example of the Muslim personal law where they did not agree to bring about reforms in laws of polygamy, inheritance, Women's Right to Divorce stating that these are set by God and humans have no authority to bring about a change in them. Thus, it's these Cultural arguments that lead to a prevention in the Gender Law Reforms. When it comes to Cultural Relativism and Feminism, they have a very complicated relationship. While Culture shapes the perspective of Women with respect to what is normal and what is not thus resulting in affecting their individually and autonomy, Feminists on the other hand are

⁴ See supra note 1

finding new ways to bring about an improvement in the lives of the Women all across the world by providing them with the very basic Rights of Equality and Justice.

PROTECTING CULTURE OVER WOMEN

When discussing about the relationship between Cultural Relativism and Women's Rights, it's important to understand what do we mean by 'harmful cultural practices.' These are those practices which are harmful when viewed by an outsider but in the eyes of the members of a given culture, these practices are regarded as meaningful and stand justified. Some of these practices which till date are widely prevalent are Child Marriage, Polygamy, Early and Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Veiling, Inheritance, Marital Rape To understand why and how Cultural Relativism brings about bitterness in the discourse of Human Rights, let's discuss in depth two of these cultural activities that are Female Genital Mutilation and Polygamy.

a) Female Genital Mutilation (FMG)

The World Health Organization defines Female Genital Mutilation as '*procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.*⁵' This is a practice that takes around 20-30 minutes, is done on young girls till the age of 15 and has been performed on 100-140 million women in 28 countries of Africa and a few in South Asia.

Social and Cultural Reasons behind this Practice:

In each of the reasons mentioned below, the one thing that's common is to acquire control over a female sexuality.

- To preserve the pre-marital chastity which prevents the women from getting sexually attracted to a man before her marriage;
- It's considered an essential part when raising a girl child as it's said to prepare her for womanhood and marriage;
- This practice is associated with modesty where only after the removal of certain body parts are girls considered beautiful and clean otherwise they are regarded as unfeminine; and
- Lastly, it's motivated by beliefs of Marital Fidelity and to ensure resistance of extramarital sexual acts, this practice is performed.

⁵ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/female-genital-mutilation>

Health Complications of this Practice:⁶

- Once the females have undergone with this practice, they tend to suffer from not only short-term but also long-term health problems that include pain in the kidney, menstruation problems, psychological trauma of the event, issues going to the washroom, immense bleeding, infections, infertility, higher risk of the death of the new born, miscarriage etc;
- In addition to this, as this practice involves of extraction or injury to organs that are sexually sensitive, there has been reports where women have shown signs of reduction in sexual satisfaction and sexual response. Women might also undergo pain while having sexual intercourse; and
- Lastly, as this practice is generally carried by the older women that resides in the same community, they don't make use of sterilised equipment or any sort of antibiotics and the extraction of their organs take place with both their legs tied which leads to immobilisation of their movement and if while the procedure is taking place, due to the immense pain, the female makes certain movements, it might lead to her other parts being mistakenly cut and they can be subject to complications.

Recognition of Human Rights Violation from this Practice:

Due to these harmful and absolutely unjustified effects, Female Genital Mutilation was recognized internationally as a practice that results in grave violation of Human Rights of women and young girls. This practice has been condemned by- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC), Convention Against Torture, and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, Covenant on Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICCPR and ICESCR) because of the following:

a) **Right of Child-** As already stated this traditional practice is performed upon girls and women upto the age of 15 years. This makes them fall into the category of children and not adults and hence this practice is said to be violation of Article 3 of Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) which lays emphasis on 'best interests of child being the primary consideration.'⁷

b) **Right to Health and Life-** This seems very self-explanatory because Female Mutilation leads to not only short term but also term health concerns. In addition to this, there

⁶ See supra note 4.

⁷ Article 3, CRC.

always lies a fear of there being some complication in the procedure itself as it's performed by non-professionals without making use of sterile cutting instruments.⁸

c) **Right to be Free from Torture or Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment-** As this practice is led to cause a lot of pain and suffering for a long-term, it is said to be torturous in nature.⁹

d) **Right to Sexual and Physical Integrity-** By performing this practice without obtaining their consent is an unauthorized invasion into a person's body hence violating the Right of Physical Integrity. And one of the major cultural reasons why this practice is performed in the first place is to obtain control of female sexuality which again is a clear violation of their Right to Sexuality.¹⁰

e) **Right to be Free from Discrimination-** This practice because it takes place as a pre-requisite for marriage can be termed as a Gender-Based Discrimination. It has been found out that in certain places if a woman has not undergone this practice, she would not be able to marry. This pre-condition being only applicable women makes it very gender biased in nature.¹¹

Findings:

In spite of this practice being highly harmful resulting in affecting the physical, mental and emotional well-being of girls and women, yet it's seen that this practice was highly influenced by cultural norms because:

- In spite of the girls and women objecting to it, they were forced to go through with it because cultural pressure made it highly incapable for them to express their autonomy and there always was a fear of stigmatization and then not being accepted by their communities if they don't undergo the procedure. This very well portrays that its culture which classifies what is normative and what is not;

- This practice even got the support of locals which possessed authority and power such as the religious leaders, elderly people and hence, they often acted as a gatekeeper of this traditional practice. Thus, seeing a large number of people supporting the said practice would make the girls suppress their pain and suffering.

⁸ Fisaha KG, Female Genital Mutilation: A Violation of Human Rights, J POL SCI PUB AFF, Vol 4 Iss 2, p. 4-6

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

- Sometimes in order to preserve their ethnic identity, this practice is performed as it makes a distinction from those groups that don't practice this.

b) Polygamy

In the recent years, there have been a couple of cultural practices that have been in the limelight and have been a topic of debate, one of them being the Female Genital Mutilation. Another cultural practice that has led to Women compromising their Rights and hence calls for an equal scrutiny is a less sensationalized practice of Polygamy. Polygamy is where a person is allowed to have more than one spouse at a time. This is a legal practice in Asia, Africa and Middle Eastern countries. Under this, major emphasis would be laid on Polygamy which backed by the religion and custom leads to inequality of women.

Social and Cultural Reasons behind this Practice:

- A man's wealth is measured by the number of wives and children he has;
- To satisfy their sexual desires because it's said that when a man has more than one wife, it leads to reduction in the sexual exploration outside of his marriage hence preventing adultery;
- With more number of wives, a husband is able to make more political alliances which leads to an increase in their family status; and
- As children are said to create a bond between the husband and wife, Infertile Women tend to accept their co-wives because they fear divorce.

How does the Practice of Polygamy result in Gender Discrimination?

Polygamy when viewed from the perspective of the Westerners, is a violation of the Women's individual freedom. While in some cultures and religions, a man is allowed to have more than one wife and can divorce them without any judicial ruling, these particular religions don't provide the women with the right of having more than one husband. They are permitted to be married only to one man and can seek divorce only when its proved that specific grounds for the same exist. This portrays how men have been given full power and autonomy over family and economic matters. And raises a question that how is this practice morally correct where one sex is allowed to marry more than once while the other is prohibited. This renders *'one gender as a peripheral spouse, as opposed to the ethical correctness of marriage that encourages equity and shared rights'*¹²

¹² <https://ivypanda.com/essays/polygamy>

Moreover, this increase in the number of wives leads to rivalry among them and puts them in low self-esteem and loneliness as they are bound to share their resources with their co-wives. It tends to create even a detrimental effect on children as the more the wives, the more the children which brings in the feelings of emotional security and less parental attention. It was also seen that because of the lack of a legal framework in those areas where customary and religious laws prevail, women tend to suffer from discrimination because of non-uniformity in marriage laws, inheritance laws, divorce laws. All of this leads to Human Rights Violation under Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of the following:

a) Right to Health- Polygamy is violative of Article 12 of CEDAW. As wives are said to have no legal power when it comes to preventing their husbands from having multiple wives, this increases the risk of contracting HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases because the more the number of sexual partners, the more is the risk of contracting these diseases.¹³

b) Right to Gender Equality and Equality in Marriage and Family Matters- Polygamy is violative of Article 5 (a), 16 and 23 of CEDAW. Polygamy is regarded as a direct attack on the self-worth of women. It not only leads to controlling but also limiting a Women's ability to affirm their rights in their marriage. They are even regarded as chattels to their male counterparts. When talking about Gender Equality, the Women are not vested with equal rights as that of men when issues of dissolution, divorce, inheritance pops in.¹⁴

c) Free Consent- It has been argued that when a Women's free consent to enter into a marriage that is polygamous in nature is obtained, this would not amount to Violation of her Human Rights. However, one thing that seems to be hidden is the fact that what people mistake as Women's Choice is actually a Societal Choice that is imposed upon a woman and told to be her choice. And hence, this Women's so-called Choice is an illusion and is no consent at all.¹⁵

Findings:

- It has been found out that many women believe that *'before Allah or God, no inequality between the sexes exist and the division of labour along sex lines is beneficial to*

¹³ Article 12, CEDAW.

¹⁴ Article 5, 16 & 23, CEDAW.

¹⁵ Obonye Jonas, The practice of polygamy under the scheme of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa: a critical appraisal, JOURNAL OF AFRICAN STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT, Vol 4 Iss 5, p. 146-147.

all members of the society. ';

- Moreover, according to the religious texts, it's the role of the women to subordinate her individuality which would not only strengthen but also preserve her family;
- The State which permits a practice like this defends it by stating that adoption of this practice will bring about a prevention of the extra-marital affairs.
- In such circumstances, Women themselves are seen to be hesitant in getting a divorce in spite of feeling insulted because the traditional societies would then call her a failed Women and the divorce would bring some negative implications upon her family. People would point fingers at them grooming a girl not of marriageable material. And hence, in order to keep the good name and dignity of her family, she restrains herself.

Hence, from the instances mentioned above, one can understand that by giving Culture, Traditions, Rituals so much importance, we tend to overlook the negative effects of their implementation. Is it fair to give Polygamy, Female Genital Mutilation the title of cultural practices when all they do is cause physical and mental agony to women? No doubt, one must respect their cultures and traditions but not those that result in costing the life of a female. This was further realised when the practice of Female Genital Mutilation and Polygamy were internationally recognized as Human Rights Violation. Several Conventions, Policies, Legislations have been put in place for prohibiting and abolishing such practices and progress for the same has been achieved however, there is still a long way to go to achieve a global uniformity on the same.

III. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Hence, it's become essential to involve the States, Government and Law for taking appropriate measures in order to bring about some amendment into the cultural and social practices that promote stereotyped gender roles. For bringing about this transformation, in my opinion the following measures can be adopted:

- a) The Women who are undergoing this grave injustice are not even aware of the existence of the Conventions and Charters which would provide protection to them. To change or uproot the inequality which is rooted so deeply into these traditional societies, there is a need of imparting education. By education, the individuals will get an opportunity to examine their values, beliefs, cultures in a more dynamic and open environment. This will enable them to not see it as threatening;
- b) In addition to this, as practices of Polygamy and Female Genital Mutilation result in

gender equality, the one way which would bring about an elimination is by addressing the Empowerment of Women via debates and education. This would help bring forth the Human Rights available to Women and Girls, the differential treatment that takes place between boys and girls, men and women with respect to their roles in the society. In large, it would help in the formation of that kind of culture where Women's Rights are not only understood and appreciated but are also promoted;

c) It is not easy to eradicate or bring about amendment in the cultures as that is generally perceived to be a pressure from the Western. Therefore, in order to bring about a change in these discriminative cultures, we need to see where it originates from. Thus, this would require cooperation from policy-makers, local community leaders and those individuals that have been subject to the hardships resulting from the harmful practices in that particular society. This is because the religious and traditional leaders have great influence on these religions, customs, practices and traditions, it's they that tell the people how they will live and will be governed hence, by empowering these leaders to abolish these harmful practices, the same would be followed by the people and will prove to be highly effective in bringing about change;

d) In this context, for upholding the Human Rights a different approach is required to be taken as it involves the society and its culture. We need to keep in mind that in no way do we make them feel like the integrity of their culture has to take a back step or that their culture is disregarded. While imparting education, we should lay more emphasis on putting forth the negative effects of the practice rather than directly getting into the Violation of Human Rights and the Legal Aspects associated with it;

e) There have been a couple of legislations enacted and a few of the existing provisions applied for prohibiting Female Genital Mutilation and Polygamy. However, putting sanctions always comes with a risk of practice taking place underground. Hence, the legal measures should be taken along with information that facilitate increase in the support of the public for ending these practices;

f) It has been observed that legislation alone cannot bring about an elimination in such a deeply entrenched cultural practice of Female Genital Mutilation and Polygamy. Hence, Criminalization of such practices could be considered as a step into the right direction; and

g) To prevent the practice of Female Genital Mutilation, the Health Care Providers can prove to be of great help. These Medical Providers can give information to the women on reproductive and sexual health and the harmful effects of this practice. Moreover,

Disciplinary Action in the form of suspension of medical license should be undertaken when the Medical Practitioners are found promoting and engaging in this activity.

Hence, it can be said that by incorporating the theory of Cultural Relativism, one would commit a grave Human Rights Violation because the society is so heavily influenced by these cultures and rely massively on the religious scriptures that they fail to understand the gravity of the situation. However, as mentioned before there have been progress with respect to elimination of the harmful cultural practices but we haven't yet been successful in providing Women the Rights they very well deserve. But, the only difference then and now is that we at present have more knowledge in terms of the reasons for its existence, continuation, ways of eliminating it and thus, by applying this knowledge and passing it further on, we can make a difference and bring about a brilliant transformation in these discriminatory cultural practices.
