



## Contested Motherhood: Overview of Motherhood in Past, Present and the Future

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### Abstract

*Motherhood is a social reality; the very social intuition existed in society since time immemorial. It is associated with women's reproductivity and their socio-cultural life. It determines the woman's status and their identity in the family and outer world. This paper attempts to understand motherhood as both a concept and a social institution by locating how motherhood is being constructed in the society as a social reality. Further, it discusses how feminists respond to the idea of motherhood. Finally, this paper examines the impact of reproductive technology on motherhood and how it is changing the structure and meaning and idea of motherhood.*

**Key Word:** Feminism, Motherhood, Mothering, Patriarchy, Social construction, Surrogacy, Reproductivity.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of women as a mother is established by long standing tradition since time immemorial. Historically women's biology has been the destiny. The virtue of mother has been extolled and women have been denigrated. Women were considered inferior and weak in every aspect with men and yet at the same time were entrusted with the exclusive responsibilities of raising children across societies. The concept of motherhood helps us to understand more about the power relations between women and men than perhaps any other concept (Gupta, 2000:80). In general, understanding the term mother is known as a female person who give birth a child. Mother is encouraged, to provide substance for, to educate (Olesen and Jussim, 1987:105). The role of mothering is very much associated with motherhood. As per traditional patriarchal definition, nature and role of mother is associated with reproduction and nurturing the children (Kakar,1981). The action also a verb meaning "to nurture ,to cherish, to nurse, to care for ,to entitled in being a mother do not specify that the actor must be female, yet this is commonly assumed and associated to female only in the society. Throughout history, many attempts have been made to construct femininity. Women were chained to their homes by various rituals, customs and traditions that acted as unwritten laws which must be complied with. The construction of femininity became more intense day by day with changes in time and space and also became more complex with the changes of society from simple to complex.

However, motherhood has been ignored for so long, because it is a woman's issue. Motherhood as an institution is idealised. However idealised motherhood can never be more than an ideal (McBride, 1973). Throughout history, motherhood was described as the woman's basic mission, profession, and an inseparable part of her nature. Women are supposedly drawn into motherhood by their inner instincts which at the same time guarantee their children's healthy growth and development. This natural ability makes the woman the best possible educator. Motherhood was equated with femininity. It was considered the most beautiful and the most natural profession for the woman, as were the relations within a heterosexual family which could not be avoided or concealed. Women's only reality is child bearing and feeding, as if they have no other existing reality. In another explanation of this kind, women are mothers because that is what they have been since time immemorial. It is a biological fact that cannot be changed, argued by the proponents of this explanation. Motherhood therefore appears as a natural fact that is uninteresting and self-explanatory (Chodorow, 1978:13-15).

However, the present work is an extension of understanding of motherhood. Here, I am trying to bring together ongoing debates and arguments on the concept of motherhood; how it is constructed and its relationship with modern reproductive technology. This paper also explores the relationship between feminism and motherhood. How motherhood has been changing as a concept and institution through the passage of time and different spaces.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF MOTHERHOOD

Over the passage of time, cohort of scholars have tried to deal with the question of motherhood and variety of ideas have been put forward. Women are supposedly drawn into motherhood by their inner instincts which at the same time guarantee their children's healthy growth and development. This natural ability makes woman the best possible educator. Motherhood was equated with femininity. Here I have tried to bring together the ideas and understanding of various scholar and engaged with their arguments and debates to understand the concept motherhood.

Gupta (2000) argued that the concept of motherhood was mostly associated with the reproductive activities of women. She stated that to be mother was associated to the traditional role of mothering. As a consequence of the control exercised over women's reproductive activities and their reproductive roles is that their mobility is reduced, which makes the household their primary sphere of concentration as compared to men who are free to participate in social production (Gupta, 2000:80). She says:

*“motherhood shapes not only the relationship of the women with her children, but also relationship between her and father of children”* (Gupta, 2000: 89). She stated that, *“the ideology of motherhood defines all women as mother and concomitantly housewife”* (Gupta, 2000: 92).

Similarly, Martha L. Fineman (1995) argued that motherhood:

*“as a colonized concept an event physically practiced and experienced by women, but occupied and defined, given content and value, by the core concepts of patriarchal ideology”* (Roberts, E. Dorothy. 1995:99).

Nancy Chodorow and Evelyn Glen (1961) argued that is solely associated with women who do the work of mothering. So the idea of motherhood is attached with the notion of femininity which is enforced through gender role (O'Reilly, 1961:1234). Further, motherhood is most desired act to become a woman and has become the ultimate goal for women to achieve it (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Nicolson 2001).

Adrienne Rich in her work *“Of Women Born”* (1976) states that, motherhood as an institution is often oppressive experience of the mother or women. She stated that motherhood has a long history; it is an institution which has its own ideology and principles which is maintained through appropriation of women's bodies. The nature of being a mother is learned through socialization which women internalises in their everyday life. By doing such internalisation, they learn and accept their suffering and subjugation. She suggested that motherhood weakens women, and relegates them to the state of powerlessness and oppression. She further rejected the biological origin of motherhood and argued that it is socially constructed in the form dominant ideology by patriarchy.

Thus, the ideology of motherhood is believed as:

*“ the quality of maternal sensitivity and attachment, and only that maternal quality, is directly and integrally related to the ideal growth and development of children, and which conceptualizes women primarily as producers of children”* (Johnston, D. Deirdre and Debra H. Swanson.2003:22)

Maher (2010) noted that motherhood is linked with mother, child and society which include emotional, psychological, physical and social aspect of women in relation to their children. The experience of motherhood is a range of practices which is determined through the external conditions of the society. Sociologist Barbara Katz Rothman (2004) theorized that as an ideology, a set of practices can be situated in broader socio-political context of patriarchy, capitalism and modern technology.

In the context of India, motherhood is historically associated with women reproductive and gender roles. Manu, the Hindu Law giver placed significance of women only through her motherhood and reproductive capacity. The identity of women in Hindu India is subsumed as her ability and role as mother. The traditional Indian culture celebrates motherhood as divine and most desired for all women. The religious leaders praise motherhood by diminishing all other aspects of women (Gupta and Dasgupta, 2010; Bhattacharji, 1990). Swami Ranganathananda, the revered Hindu spiritual leader of the Ramakrishna Ashram, stated:

*“Motherhood is a spiritual transformation of wifehood. The wife may and does demand and take; but the mother feels it her privilege to give. If woman as wife is socially significant, woman as mother is spiritually glorious”* (Gupta, Sayantani Das and Shamita Das Dasgupta 2010:134).

Sukumari Bhattacharji (1990) argued that *“it was obligatory; a girl was trained to be a good wife and a good mother and was blessed with “the motherhood of sons”* Bhattacharji (1990:2). She noted that motherhood in Ancient India was glorified, it is emotionally attached to women for which women feel mandatory to become a mother. She also discussed examples from Veda, Upanishad, Ramayana and other religious texts, where a mother's life is fully devoted for the welfare of her son and husband.

According to Bhattacharji,

*“the definition of a good woman is "one who pleases her husband, gives birth to male children and never speaks back to her husband. The mother looked after her children's needs without discrimination, but again quite evidently she shared society's preference for the son. All her social prestige depended on her being the mother of a son or sons”*(Bhattacharji ,1990:4).

She said, "Women's mothering was the primary cause of the sexual division of labour and of the continued domination of women by men (ibid,4) Motherhood involved suffering and deprivation for most women under patriarchy." Indeed maternity was, as Rich put it "a keystone of the most diverse social and political system of male control (ibid,6). Indian societies strongly promote the view that women fulfil their nurturing (and ideal) role when they become mothers. Even though motherhood is celebrated in general, women in India gain higher social status when they become a particular kind of mother; that is, the mother of sons (Kakar, 1988). Poonacha (1997) in her work *“Rites de Passage of Matrescence and Social Construction of Motherhood: Coorgs in South India”* defined that, motherhood is a act of giving birth and nurturing children. She observed that becoming mother is essential aspect of women identity and biological motherhood is must desired and essential for a women which is highly revered (Poonacha ,1997:24).

However, the arguments made by different scholars that are discussed in the above paragraphs show a clear picture about motherhood. It is observed that two types of motherhood can be derived from above discussion. The first one is biological motherhood and second is social motherhood. Biological motherhood is mostly associated with act of reproduction and social motherhood is deal with caring, nurturing the children and other family member. Further, Motherhood is a concept which exhibits the power relations between male and female. Motherhood is glorified in Indian society. That does not mean, motherhood is joyous act to which women celebrate and enjoy. Motherhood is also an institution which is associated with women's experience in the society. It is a patriarchal construction; motherhood is regulated by male only and it serves the interest of men not women. The institution motherhood is a site of women oppression, exploitation and powerlessness. The reality of motherhood is very paradoxical in nature, on one hand it glorifies women, becoming a mother provides greatest joy but on the other hand it dishonour women and relegate their status.

### 3. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF MOTHERHOOD

Berger and Luckmann (1977) have theorized that how social realities are constructed and created through constant social interaction and internalisation of social realities. These realities are attached with subjective meanings and become realities in daily life. Social construction of reality refers that individual and groups interacting in their day to day social life and creates some meaning, concepts and mental representation of each other, action and interaction. That these concepts and mental representation, in course of time becomes habitualized into daily routine which is reciprocally played by the actor in relation to each other. Social life is governed by various norms, values, rules which is placed as social order which is the product of social interaction among individuals and members of society with each other in their different modes of life and it's passed into generation to generation through the process of internalisation, externalisation, legitimatisation and socialisation (Berger and Luckman, 1966).

With following this theoretical framework by Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann, my major concern here is to search for the construction of motherhood. Motherhood presents a value, idea and a world view of mother. Although, in general sense, the ideas concerning motherhood within a society influence the content that women give to their lives. Motherhood shapes not only the relationship of women with her children, but also the relationship between her and the father of her children. The process of reproduction is very much necessary for the stability and continuity of human existence. So motherhood is also very much linked with the process of reproduction.

Billings (2004) stated that the idea of motherhood are constructed and shaped in the mind of women through internalisation of social values and principles. It is legitimatised by the external institutions such as family, law, customs, religion etc. She says that the socialised role and principle of motherhood is transformed and modified by further generation and this process get repetition through the passage of time. The findings of enormous research conducted by feminist scholars argued that the linkages between motherhood and nature were historically constructed in various domain of power relation in economic, legal, socio-political and philosophical domain (Badinter, 1981; Fineman, 1995). In this process motherhood and mothering was constructed what Billings called motherhood is socially constructed (Billings, 2004:92-95)

Similarly, Braverman, L. (1989:22- 26) see both motherhood and mothering are perceived as the product of deep-rooted social interaction and interrelations built by human being since long .She refutes the perception on natural existence of motherhood and observed that motherhood is a dynamic social process and for its best understanding it should be socially and historically situated. She opined that it's not a static phenomenon, neither has a single perception of reality. It varies from time to time, society to society and situating it in its socio-historical context is very essential. Chodorow(1978), Jackson & Mannix (2004) viewed that

motherhood is associated with the notion of femininity. The idea of mother or motherhood is idealized by the society (Baker & Carson, 1997). Jhalani (2010) also argued that giving birth to and nurturing children is neither a biological nor an instinctual desire in women; instead it is an ideological construct imposed upon women by patriarchy and made natural means of cultural discourse.

Further Glenn (1994) argued that motherhood can be seen in specific socio-political and historical context. Glenn (1994) viewed that motherhood is associated with certain ideas, beliefs and values which are constructed and institutionalised in various domain of life such as marriage, family, religion, laws, policies, art, literature, films and other domain of cultural practices. Therefore, for Glenn (1994:4-6) motherhood does not have any biological association, neither it determines motherhood but it is constructed and ascribed in social-cultural domain historically. So, he proposes motherhood as solely social construction. Rich (1977:33) argued that “the patriarchal institution of motherhood is not the ‘human condition’ any more than rape, prostitution, and slavery are”. It is created by the masculine imagination, Rich said, “which had nothing to do with women’s actual sensuality and everything to do with the male’s subjective experience of women” (Rich, 1977:34).

Patel (1994) in her work “Fertility Behavior: Population and Society in a Rajasthan” noted about the social association of reproduction or fertility in Indian context. She says that

*“fertility behaviour can not only looked in the realm of biology but socially also because fertility behaviour including childbirth in the outcome of a complex web of institutional mechanism regulated cosmology”* (Patel,1994:74).

She recorded that giving birth to a child is essential for a women. If a woman fails to give birth to a child within 4-5 years after marriage, then men look for another marriage/wife. The status of barren women is very vulnerable in the patriarchal Indian society, whereas, fertility of men is rarely questioned. Male rarely undergo fertility test but its compulsory for women to do so (Patel, 1994). The status and security in the family and society is highly determined by their fertility which is largely controlled by men in the patriarchal society. Pateman (1989) observed that undermining and devaluing women and motherhood is the outcome of patriarchal construction of gender difference in the society. The patriarchal social values relegate women to nature and assigned the task of childbearing, nurturing and mainly the task of reproductive work. Patriarchy has developed social contract between men and women where men is part of culture/civilization while women are linked to nature. Under such conditions, women surrender their body, self, offspring to men and society. (Fineman1995).

Gupta and Dasgupta (2010) argued that in traditional Indian society motherhood has highest value in cultural sense and culturally rewarded although it does not get equal economic rewards. The notion of motherhood in India therefore is very much attached with cultural ideals and notion (Gupta and Dasgupta, 2010:132). Akin to this, Poonacha (1997) observed that motherhood is a socio-cultural construct which is governed by religion and various socio-cultural practices. She emphasised that motherhood is a patriarchal construction to impose men’s control over female body, identity and their life which denigrate their status by justifying male control over women and children (Poonacha, 1997). Through the above explanation and discussion we can say that motherhood is product of human action and interaction with each other in their everyday life. Motherhood is constructed throughout the history and according to time and space it nature and functions also different. It is a historical and political construction of patriarchy and it is constructed by masculine imagination. In motherhood, women’s role of mothering is alienated, their labour is devalued. It is motherhood served for the interest of men only.

#### **4. FEMINISM AND MOTHERHOOD**

It was post 1980s, several feminist scholars brought out their perception, position and differences on the category of ‘women’ as a concept. It highlighted one of the key aspects that women have been defined in relation to men and conceptualised problems of women as outcome of patriarchy. It is important to note that motherhood has been one of the key focus of feminist discourse which closely associated with feminism and feminist movements. So in this section an attempt has been made to engage with debate of various feminist scholars on motherhood in the following ground.

Simon de Beauvoir in her book “*Second Sex*” (1953) argued that due to motherhood women are seen as ‘other’ and it resulted in their lower status in the society. She argued that motherhood is neither a willing decision nor choice of women taken with complete freedom and liberty rather it is ‘enforced maternity’ (de Beauvoir, 1953: 724). Merely changing institutions, laws or social context would not change the condition of women neither relief them from the ill impact of motherhood. She argued that it’s the demolition or complete rejection of motherhood which can relief women from their suffering.

Wegar (1973:83) argued that motherhood is a source of women oppression. However, Jo Reger has a different opinion on motherhood. She suggested that motherhood is a positive experience which devalued women and alienated them from their self and children in the patriarchal social structure (Snitow, 1992:37). Feminist scholars argue that motherhood is not innate in women rather constructed and enforced by patriarchy; socialised and internalising the role of mother as a natural responsibilities (Bock and Duden, 1977). Rothman (1994:14) noted that, both biological and social motherhood create, maintain and legitimize male

domination over women and women's subordination. She argued that becoming mother is enforcement by patriarchy over women which deny the right to self-determined motherhood or motherhood by choice. She argued that the terrorization motherhood must be linked with gender, racial and socio-cultural and political domain of society. Questioning political and legal system, she argued that motherhood has facilitated the exploitation of women by the normalising biological determinism of motherhood.

Shulamith Firestone's views on motherhood differ from the arguments given by scholars in the above paragraphs. Firestone did not view to destroy motherhood completely as De Beauvoir (1953). Firestone was not in favour of biological motherhood. She argued that reproductive work makes women to suffer physically, emotionally and psychologically. Therefore, she wanted it to be replaced with artificial technology. She wanted women body to be liberated from reproductive work. She said that pregnancy is barbaric in nature and it is the main reason for the distinction between men and women. Therefore, this distinction between men and women can be put an end by replacing it with artificial motherhood (Firestone, 1945:198). The abolition of biological motherhood would cease the culturally perceived genital difference between two sexes. She said that technology is bliss and claimed, "For the first time in history, technology has scope to make women free from natural preconditions of pregnancy. This would help women to withdraw from motherhood and without motherhood the system of patriarchy would turn apart."

Similarly, Adrienne Rich argued that "*the patriarchal institution of motherhood is not the 'human condition' any more than rape, prostitution, and slavery is*" (Rich, 1977, 33). According to Rich, it is not biology which destine but the conceptualization and organization of motherhood, which is responsible for women's powerlessness, negative self-image and vulnerability in the society. Akin to Firestone (1945), Rich (1977) suggested to demolish the institution of motherhood. By this, women would have right over their body and sexuality. She stated that it is not reproductive ability which oppress women rather the experience of motherhood is the problem. She has proposed for gynocentric motherhood as an alternative to biological motherhood. It is the source of women's power. She wanted to restore the glory of reproductive capacity of women. For that it requires courageous mothering. It would regenerate and rediscover the power of motherhood by giving women right over their body and sexuality. Andrea O' Reilly(2008) also making similar kind of argument on motherhood. She argues that, motherhood ideology is described as the value of mothering to women, children and society, and portray motherhood itself as empowering rather than problematic and is viewed as an important job in the world. (O' Reilly;2008: 211).She views motherhood and mothering is a positive act, the reproduction of children is very valuable act of women which men cannot do. Therefore, she says that motherhood can be seen as positive manner and it can be used to glorify women and used as their empowerment.

According to Hart (1988) motherhood and mothering were re-examined, in relation to masculinity and femininity and suggested that these were culturally constructed. The important distinction between sex and gender was found extremely useful to uncover the so called natural activities and identities of women and men were socially constructed in time and space rather than being eternal universals. She argued that in European and North American conceptualizations overemphasize on the ambivalent and negative aspect of motherhood as source of oppression and powerlessness, while, on other hand Asian and African notions of motherhood views it as an undeniable source of respect, joy and freedom (Hart, 1988: 87-88).

O'Brien also conceded that reproductive capacity of women is exploited by men by controlling their body, manipulating reproductive consciousness which resulted in diminishing the women's status. Patriarchy idealised the notion of motherhood in men's perspective and imposed on women, thereby women fails to imagine their being without men's orientation. As Betty Friedan (1982) argued optimistically, "it is historical, political reality that when motherhood was women's only function, status and identity, as well as, her biological necessity; it kept her, or was used as an excuse to keep her, from education or opportunity to use her abilities in the mainstream of our evolving society."

However the argument on motherhood made by different feminist scholars in this section on feminism and motherhood reflect the multiple understanding on the issue of motherhood and scholars have showed their different takes on the same. Here we can also see two types of motherhood that is biological motherhood and social motherhood what we have already observed and explained the section 'conceptual understanding of motherhood' of this paper. However, all the scholars have maintained that motherhood is a source of exploitation, powerlessness and backwardness and lower status of women. And it is constructed by the men's notion and idea and regulated by men only. But the discussion and analysis is not finished here. We can observe three broader takes on motherhood. Firstly, some scholar argues for the complete destruction of motherhood. They saw it as a source of degradation of women status, de-valued the role of women and keep them isolated. They say women's problem associated with motherhood can be solved by the complete destruction of motherhood as notion and institution. Simon de Beauvoir has a different position in comparison to these scholars. She argued that brining legal reform or changing entire social context would not relief women from the suffering or oppression of motherhood. The abolition of women suffering can be only possible by complete destruction of motherhood.

Then, Second groups of scholars also viewed motherhood as a site of women' exploitation and powerlessness and it is codified and regulated by patriarchy; as argued by the first group of scholars. But they don't want complete destruction of the notion or

institution of motherhood. They believe motherhood as a form of empowerment of women but suggested to destroy biological motherhood and argue to replace it through artificial motherhood which can cease the culturally perceived difference between men and women. Through which women can exercise their power over men. They believed modern reproductive technology can make women free from biological motherhood and solve their problem.

While third group of Scholars also saw motherhood as source of women exploitation and powerlessness and created, idealised, regulated, controlled and manipulated by patriarchy. But these scholars have hope on motherhood. They saw motherhood as positive because the act of reproduction is very important and unique which only women can possess, not men. With this argument they view the main problems of women is their psychology. So they argue in favour of glorifying motherhood and use it as source of empowerment, honour and status. It can be used to remake women psychology similar with male.

## **5. MOTHERHOOD AND REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

Emergence of new reproductive technology has made influence on the institution of motherhood in a significant manner. The newly emerging reproductive technologies, including ART, has profoundly affected women's reproductive lives and perhaps, transformed motherhood itself. ARTs have brought women's reproductive bodies into the public techno-scientific realm (Gupta and Dasgupta 2010). The reproductive technology has strongly posed challenges on the established patriarchal notion of motherhood and idea of mother. It has questioned the traditional role of women as reproductive worker and gave them scope to be free from the bondage of biological reproductive work. In this context, scholars like Firestone (1945) showed a great hope and positive response on new reproductive technology with regard to motherhood. She blamed and rejected the biological motherhood and says that "the heart of woman's oppression is her childbearing and childrearing role (Firestone, 1945:72). Firestone argues that "it was woman's reproductive biology that accounted for her original and continued oppression".

However, Jaggar (1983) had a different opinion on the role of technology in liberating women from biological motherhood suggested by Firestone (1945). Jaggar in her work "*Feminist Politics and Human Nature*" (1983), has raised the concern that technology is largely under the control of men and therefore she doubted its liberating capacity for women (Donchin, 1986:132). Stanworth (1987) also had similar observation like Jaggar (1983) which differs from the views of Firestone (1945). Stanworth (1987) argued that reproductive technology has affected motherhood and the relationship of women in more ways than anticipated. First, she argued that motherhood is more seen as a full-time occupation, than in the past. Second, that the reproductive decision continues to be dominated by the male members of a family. Third, there is still the natural perception of motherhood dominant in the society and biological motherhood is the most desired one even today. Denial of biological motherhood by women is often treated as selfish or sick psyche. Stanworth (1987) further argued that reproductive technology is bliss for single mothers, lesbian women or infertile women to have child. It is often observed that technology has treated women as a material being, treated pregnancy as disease and devalued the emotional, psychological and emotional aspect. Instead of liberating women, technology has also created new forms of control, regulation and manipulation of women's body and lives. Therefore, it can be argued that it has not liberated women from the traditional exploitation but has produced new forms of suppression and domination over female life by male (Stanworth, 1987:14-15).

Snitow (1992) also made a similar argument like Stanworth (1987) and Jaggar (1983) and her argument also contradicted to Firestone (1945) on reproductive technology and motherhood. Snitow(1992) argued that artificial motherhood never allow women to choose their rights to be a mother. The artificial motherhood is controlled and regulated by the medical scientist and legal experts and it has led motherhood as commercialised practice. So it has failed to provide freedom to women, furthered controlled them and devoid them from their choices (Snitow, 1992: 40). Similarly, Raymond (1984) observed that reproductive technology enforce patriarchal ideology and treat reproduction as a form of commodity which lead denegation of emotional and physical aspect of women and inflict women's oppression. For them, artificial reproduction has made mothering and role of mother more obsolete (Donchin, 1986:135).

The above discussion clearly shows dialectics between motherhood and reproductive technology. We found two kinds of argument on the relationship between reproductive technology and institution of motherhood. The first kind of argument showed the positive impact of reproductive technology over the institution of motherhood. Scholar like Firestone believed that artificial reproduction can liberate women from the problem which is associated with motherhood. Technology will make women free from the long standing reproductive activity which is the main reason for women powerlessness and reason for women exploitation. She says that through the emergence of reproductive technology, the social and cultural ideology of motherhood has been changed and reformed. On the other hand, another group of scholars argue that reproductive technology commoditised the reproductive activity and treats pregnancy as disease. Further, it has increased and brought out new form of domination over women by male (patriarchy). They argued that reproductive technology devalued women reproduction and treats women as patient and reproduction as a disease and mothering as job or occupation.

## **5.1 Motherhood and Surrogacy**

With the advent of new technology rapid change in the field of reproductive technologies has occurred since 1970. In vitro Fertilization (IVF), Donor Insemination (DI) and surrogate arrangements have revolutionized the reproductive environment and have given a new ray of hope in the life of infertile couples by raising a child genetically linked to at least one of the parent. The word “surrogate” is derived from Latin word “Sub Agare” which mean “to substitute” or “appointed in place”.

Though, adoption and surrogacy have same objectives, both are popular ways to give a chance to infertile couples who have been waiting eagerly to have their legal heir yet, surrogacy has few clear cut advantages over adoption. Genetic factor is one of the main reasons to go for surrogacy by which the parent can carry their blood line and her partner’s egg or sperm or both. The couple feels the responsibility creates more emotional bonding between the parent and the child. India only allows gestational Surrogacy. For surrogacy the identity of egg donor or intending mother is kept anonymous. There is a requirement in practice of surrogacy, one of the indenting parents need to be genetic parent and another one’s identity is hidden and kept anonymous. In India, citizenship rights are not given to commissioned children where the genetic parent is overseas citizen of India (OCI). There is amalgamated pool of socio-ethical and legal issues that are hovering around the practice of assisted reproductive techniques including surrogacy. This hints towards the preposition that women are being treated simply as means for producing babies.

Gestational surrogacy is also known as Outsourcing motherhood. Some author compares it as renting a womb or womb on labour, which raised question about ethics and morals involved in surrogacy. Many critics have contended that Surrogacy is Immoral and it comes within the ambit of trafficking and is direct contravention to Article 23 of Indian Constitution. Evaluating surrogacy as a need of the hour, Shashi Bala (2012) put forward her arguments in favour of surrogacy. She opined that surrogacy is a very important development and it is advantageous to humanity on the condition that the legislation acknowledge the rights of reductive technology experts and medical practitioners, clinics and rights of intending parents through surrogacy. She has raised concern to make legal provision to prohibit commercial surrogacy and to adopt the pragmatic approach towards humanist surrogacy. Similarly, Mishra (2015) also acknowledges the importance of surrogacy and argued that surrogacy is bliss for the society. He proposed for sanctioning legal status to surrogacy in India. He gives summary of all relevant provisions of law and concluded that commercial surrogacy is beneficial for both commissioning parents and surrogate mothers. His reports also proved that surrogacy is more successful in urban areas as compared to rural areas.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Motherhood is a social institution, a social reality which is existed in human society from the long time. However, it is associated with particularly women. Motherhood is understood as women’s role as a mother, mothering, child rearing and caring. We identified in this study motherhood is of two types. First one is biological motherhood which is associated with women reproductively and second is social motherhood which is associated with women role of mothering, rearing, caring and nurturing. However, scholar views differ on the institution of motherhood acceding to their research in different society. In some society like Ancient India it is considered as a joyous act of mother, it is increase her status in the family and society. It is a moral duty of women to produce baby, be mother and take care of them. But in other society like USA, Africa motherhood is considered as source of women’s exploitation, powerlessness and site of backwardness. In this study we have identified both negative views and positive views of motherhood as an institution. The positive view shows that, in some society motherhood is considered as a joyous and pious act and it is mandatory to be a mother. Motherhood is glorifies in these societies .The negative view shows that motherhood is an institution which is codified and defined by patriarchy. Motherhood is a women experience but it is structured on male views in the society. It is a source of women powerlessness, exploitation, and backwardness. It has devalued the women role, dishonoured and lowered their status in the society in cases of childlessness. The institution of motherhood is not derived from the biology or not origin from the nature but it is socially constructed. Motherhood is a social construction which is constructed through the human being in their everyday action and interaction with their fellow being. It’s got emerged through the human social process of habitualisation, internalisation, externalisation, institutionalisation, legitimisation and socialisation. However, motherhood is constructed by patriarchy; it is regulated and codified by men; for the benefit of male. Then we have identified three broad arguments of feminist scholars on motherhood. The first argument of scholars show negative views on motherhood. They argued to destroy the idea and institution of motherhood, because it is a source of women exploitation, it devalued women, it’s not less than rape or murder; it’s never permit women’s liberty or freedom. The second argument suggests that motherhood itself is not a problem but biological motherhood certainly is. They argue for the replacement of biological motherhood with artificial motherhood. Because women’s biological motherhood is the main reason for the male dominance over women. By replacing women, they will be equal with men and their problems will be solved. The third argument shows motherhood as empowerment. They argue, giving birth to a baby is very unique and important act of women which man cannot do. So they claim that women should feel proud for this and it will help women to regain their status and honours in the society.

Further, we have identified two types of argument with regard to reproductive technology and motherhood in the present study. The first argument says that reproductive technology has made a positive impact on motherhood and women status. It has relieved women from their long standing problems which is associated with biological reproduction. The second argument say that it did not solved the women's problem but it has added new variations to their problem. It has commoditised women's body and treated pregnancy as disease.

However, to conclude we can say that, motherhood is an institution which is one of the main reasons for women's backwardness and it never give women to live their life on their own terms and never provide ultimate freedom to choose their life according to their will. Finally we can say that destruction of biological motherhood or acceptance of artificial motherhood will not fully solve the problem of women which is associated with motherhood. There are no ultimate measures which will solve the women problem. The study reveals that, understanding the central problem is the male way of thinking of the world, even patriarchal thinking which women also do consciously or unconsciously. So the patriarchy is the central problem and it could be destroyed by any means.

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