

GENDER DISCRIMINATION -IN MODERN INDIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract:

This paper mainly focuses of the Indian scenario system. Gender discrimination is the question here. The word 'gender' refers to the socio-economic definition of man and woman - the way societies distinguish men and women and assign social roles to them. The distinction between genders was introduced to deal with the general tendency to attribute women's subordination to their anatomy. The reality of gender inequality in India, origin of gender inequality and how to deactivate it are discussed in this paper. Gender-based inequalities in India translate into greater importance being placed on the health and empowerment of males than of females. In India, health and population indicators that are driven by gender differences include sex ratios at birth, infant and child mortality by sex, and low ages at marriage for women. Main objectives of the studies are To analyze the status of different states regarding gender discrimination To provide reasons and facts of Gender discrimination. To suggest measures to reduce gender discrimination in India. Methodology of the study was a theoretical research paper, where secondary information produced by different authors and researchers has been used. For obtaining necessary information, various books magazines, journals, periodicals and different websites have been explored by the researcher which has been mentioned in the reference section. At the household level, dis-empowerment of women results in less access to education, employment, and income, and power and freedom of movement. Considering all these fact, India and its society has a mammoth task of empowering women to provide them the basic needs and to prepare them for a safe and productive future.

Keywords - Women in India, Gender Inequality in India, Modern India Problem

INTRODUCTION

Gender discrimination is the major problems of the Indian traditional systems. After the World War II, in the post modernization era, one of the issues which had attracted the attention of the policy makers and social scientists was gender issues and concerns. Gender issues mean the discussion on both men and women, though women who suffer from gender inequality. From all gender issues, gender inequality is the most prevalent in India. Consideration of gender inequality is now common in Government, Non-Government organizations, and in the politics in India. The policy makers are strongly believed that a positive commitment to gender equality and equity will strengthen every area of action to reduce poverty because women can bring new energy and new sights. A lot of debates are going on women and their development since last few decades. Thus, several national and international organizations are trying to promote the advancement of women & their full participation in developmental process & trying to eliminate all forms of inequality against women. The importance of feminism has been steadily growing and gaining intellectual legitimacy.

Gender is closely related to the roles and behavior assigned to women and men based on their sexual differences, families and society begin the process of gendering with the birth of a child. The birth of son is being celebrated while the birth of a daughter begins with pains. Boys are encouraged to be tough and outgoing but girls are encouraged to be homebound and shy, these gender differences are created by our society. The word 'gender' refers to the socio-economic definition of man and woman - the way societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles. The distinction between genders was introduced to deal with the general tendency to attribute women's subordination to their anatomy. Gender is closely related to the roles and behavior assigned to women and men based on their sexual differences. As soon as a child is born, families and society begin the process of gendering. The birth of the son is being celebrated while the birth of a daughter is filled with pain. Boys are encouraged to be tough and outgoing but girls are encouraged to be homebound and shy. All these differences are gender differences and they are created by society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jayachandran, S. (2014), has presented the roots of gender inequality in developing countries. This paper also discussed the several mechanisms through which the economic development could improve the relative outcomes of women & gender gaps can be reduced as country grows.

Dunn, D. (1998), has focused on the situation of women in scheduled castes and tribes groups which are considered to as „weaker sections of people“ and granted special safeguards and concessions under the Indian Constituents. This paper represented a descriptive picture of scheduled caste and tribe women’s status in Indian society and also suggested that socioeconomic development plays an important role to reduce the disadvantage of scheduled group women.

Thomas, R.E. (2013), has highlighted his paper with the state of gender based inequality in the modern India. It has presented gender inequality with the help of some facts & figures and representing the inequality practiced in India & its comparison with other Asian & Western countries.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION:-

Gender Discrimination means disparity between men and women in different social, economical & political, cultural and legal aspects. This problem is simply known as gender biasness, which in simple term means the gender stratification or making difference a male or a female.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To analyze the status of different states regarding gender discrimination
- 2) To provide reasons and facts of Gender discrimination
- 3) To suggest measures to reduce gender discrimination in India

Methodology

This is a theoretical research paper, where secondary information produced by different authors and researchers has been used. For obtaining necessary information, various books magazines,

journals, periodicals and different websites have been explored by the researcher which has been mentioned in the reference section.

TYPES OF GENDER DISRIMINATION: -

According to Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen (2001), there are seven types of gender inequalities at present in India. Here is a brief explanation of all the types of gender inequality.

1) Mortality Inequality:- In this, Inequality between women and men directly involves matters of life and death, and takes the brutal form of unusually high mortality rates for women and a consequent preponderance of men in the total population, as opposed to the preponderance of women found in societies with little or no gender bias in health care and nutrition.

2) Natality Inequality: - In this kind of inequality a preference is given to boys over girls. It is ardent in many of the male dominated societies and these manifests in the form of parents wanting their newborn to be a boy rather than a girl. With the availability of modern techniques to determine the gender of foetus, sex selective abortions has become common in India.

3) Employment Inequality: - In terms of employment as well as promotion at work women often face greater handicap than men. This is clearly exemplified as men getting priorities in getting better work opportunities and pay scale than their female counterparts.

4) Ownership Inequality: - In many societies ownership of property can also be very unequal. Since ages the traditional property rights have favored men in the most parts of India. The absence of claims to property can not only reduce the voice of women, but also make it harder for women to enter and flourish in commercial, economic and even some social activities

COMPOSITION OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA:

Table 1: Population Composition of India

Current Population of India in 2021	1.29 billion As of Jan 02, 2016
Total Male Population in India	667 million

Total Female Population in India	625 million
Sex Ratio	943 females per 1,000 males

Source: Govt. of India India,

with 1.29 billion people is the second most populous country in the world, while China is on the top with over 1.40 billion people. Table 1 shows total male population and female population. Table 2 shows the highest and lowest composition of sex ration. The data of five highest and five lowest states is depicted.

REASONS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION:

Cultural influences favour the preference for sons- reasons related to lineage, inheritance,

- **Identity, status, and economic security.** This preference cuts across class and it discriminates girls. In extreme cases, the discrimination takes the form of honour killing where families kill daughters or daughter in laws who fail to conform to gender expectations about marriage and sexuality. When a woman does not conform to expected gender norms, she is shamed and humiliated because it impacts both herself and her family's honor, and perhaps her ability to marry. The causes of gender inequalities are complex, but a number of cultural factors in India can explain how son preference, a key driver of daughter neglect, is so prevalent. Patriarchy is a social system of privilege in which men are the primary authority figures,

- Occupying roles of political leadership, moral authority, control of property, and authority over women and children. Most parts of India, with some exceptions, have strong patriarchal and matrilineal customs, where men hold authority over female family members and inherit family property and title. For example customs where inheritance passes from father to son, women move in with the husband and his family upon marriage, and marriages include a bride price or dowry.

MEASURES OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA

Since independence, India has made significant strides in addressing gender inequalities, especially in the areas of political participation, education, and legal rights. Policies and legal reforms to address gender inequalities have been pursued by the government of India. For instance, the Constitution of India contains a clause guaranteeing the right of equality and freedom from sexual discrimination. India is also signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Constitution of India ensures gender equality in its preamble as a fundamental right. Government has adopted many measures of positive discrimination in favour of women through a number of legislations and policy reforms. India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights forums to secure equal rights of women, such as ratification of Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1993.

Women have been finding place in local governance structures, overcoming gender biases. Over one million women have been elected to local panchayats as a result of 1993 amendment to the Indian Constitution requiring that 1/3 rd of the elected seats to the local governing bodies be reserved for women. The passing of Pre-natal Diagnostic Tech Act in 1994 also, is a step in removing gender discrimination. This Act seeks to end sex-determination tests and female feticide and prohibits doctors from conducting such procedures for the specific purpose of determining the sex of the fetus. The Government also announced the National Policy for Empowerment of Women in 2001 to bring out advancement, development and empowerment of women.

The Government has also drawn up a draft National Policy for the empowerment of women which is a policy statement outlining the state's response to problems of gender discrimination. As persistent gender inequalities continue, there is need to rethink concepts and strategies for promoting women's dignity and rights. Sania Mirza, the tennis ace, the first South Asian woman, became the United Nations Women's Goodwill Ambassador for the South Asian region, joining the Campaign to end violence against women and girls and also raise awareness on gender equality. Sania Mirza said, "Women face discrimination. They are treated like animals and it is not right. The thinking needs to be changed. Mentality needs to be changed. Men must understand that women also go out to do their work just as they do. But even women have to

realize their own worth. Women's safety is something that has been going on. Nirbhaya case had opened our eyes. Not that it was the first case that had happened, but a lot of people woke up to 'what's going on'

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS AGAINST GENDER INEQUALITY

Indian Constitution provides for positive efforts to eliminate gender inequality; the Preamble to the Constitution talks about goals of achieving social, economic and political justice to everyone and to provide equality of status and of opportunity to all its citizens. Further, women have equal right to vote in our political system. Article 15 of the Constitution provides for prohibition of discrimination on grounds of *sex* also apart from other grounds such as religion, race, caste or place of birth.

Article 15(3) authorizes the State to make any special provision for women and children. Moreover, the Directive Principles of State Policy also provides various provisions which are for the benefit of women and provides safeguards against discrimination. Other than these Constitutional safeguards, various protective Legislations have also been passed by the Parliament to eliminate exploitation of women and to give them equal status in society. For instance, the Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 was enacted to abolish and make punishable the inhuman custom of Sati; the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 to eliminate the practice of dowry; the Special Marriage Act, 1954 to give rightful status to married couples who marry inter-caste or inter-religion; Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill (introduced in Parliament in 1991, passed in 1994 to stop female infanticide and many more such Acts.

Furthermore, the Parliament time to time brings out amendments to existing laws in order to give protection to women according to the changing needs of the society, for instance, Section 304-B was added to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 to make dowry-death or bride-burning a specific offence punishable with maximum punishment of life imprisonment. So there are varied legislative safeguards and protection mechanisms for women but the ground reality is very different. Despite all these provisions women are still being treated as second rate citizens in our

country; men are treating them as an object to fulfill their carnal desires; crimes against women are at alarming stage; the practice of dowry is still widely prevalent; female infanticide is a norm in our homes.

SUGGESTIONS: -

There is a solution of every problem. For reducing gender inequality in India, we should offer high level of education to girls and increase women empowerment. We should also give them opportunity in active politics & social activities so that social integration in Indian society can be made. Government should make policies & strategies regarding stopping the sex identification & abortions. In context of above NGOs can also play an important role to eradicate Gender Inequality. Politicians should frame out policies for increasing social welfare development regarding this issue. The Campaign of our Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” can be successful, when the mindset of Indian society will be changed towards women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensuring that boys and girls have equal access to good-quality education, equal rights and opportunities to successfully complete schooling and in making educational choices;
2. Reviewing and where necessary adapting school and early childhood education curricula, teaching and school practices to eliminate gender discrimination and stereotyping;
3. making the study of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) financial and entrepreneurship issues, as well as education, arts and the humanities, equally inclusive and attractive for both boys and girls; promoting the development of stronger reading habits among boys and girls;
4. campaigning and raising awareness among young men and women, parents, teachers and employers about gender-stereotypical attitudes towards academic performances and the likely consequences of overall educational choices for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, career progression and earnings;

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