

An Overview of Gender Inequality in India

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Abstract: *After the World War II gender inequality attracted the attention of the policy makers and social scientists in India. In our society the offense against women is increasing day by day. Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual harassment, molestation, eve-teasing, forced prostitution, sexual-exploitation, at work places is a common affair today. So, it's an alarming issue for our country. The main objectives in this study are to find the factors which are liable for gender inequality and to give suggestions to reduce gender inequality. The study examine that in India there are so many factors which are completely responsible for gender inequality such as social factor, communal factor, cultural factor, financial factor and legal factor. Study suggested that we should recommend high level of education to girls as well as increase women empowerment for reducing gender inequality in India.*

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Communal issues, Social factor

I. INTRODUCTION

After the World War II gender inequality attracted the attention of the policy makers and social scientists in India. It means discrepancy between men and women in different social, economical & political, cultural and legal aspects. This difficulty is merely recognized as gender biasness.

Out of 187 countries India ranks 132 on the gender inequality index – lower than Pakistan (123), according to the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report 2013. The report said all countries in South Asia, with the exception of Afghanistan, were a better place for women than India, with Sri Lanka (75) topping them all. Nepal ranked 102nd and Bangladesh 111th. According to Prof. Amartya Sen (2001), there are seven types of gender inequalities at present in India namely mortality inequality, Natality inequality, Employment inequality, Ownership inequality, Social Opportunity inequality, Basic-facility inequality, Households Inequality

II. HISTORY OF GENDER INEQUALITY

If we draw attention to ancient India, we found that an Indian woman was in the situation of high admiration and was marked by the word of maata (mother) or Devi (goddess) in the Vedas and Upanishads. As per Manu, woman was considered as a precious being and in the early Vedic age, girls were looked after with care. Afterward put into practice of polyandry deteriorated the situation of woman. Also in the medieval stage, the practices of purdha system, dowry system, and sati system came into being. But with the passage of time, the status of woman was lowered. Women feticide is being practiced by large number of people after the development of science and technology which has also led to a fall in the female ratio. As per Indian census 2011 shows that Kerala signify the highest sex ratio with 1084 women's per 1000 males while Haryana represents the lowest sex ratio with just 877 women per 1000 males. Since the 1980s, In India, a sex-selection phenomenon has been in place with men born during this period now at marriageable age. After that since the 1990s where a lot of families and men have encouraged to cities to look for work. People are much richer but at the same time there's pressure to produce sons as an heir, so educated, wealthy families are now more likely to have sex selection. These entire factors are coming to play and creating this toxic mixture, which has turned violence against women into a bigger issue today. The creation of the gender inequality has been always the male dominance. Also dominating nature of husband has led women to walk with their head down. In our society the offense against women is increasing day by day. Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual harassment, molestation, eve-teasing, forced prostitution, sexual-exploitation, at work places is a common affair today. So, it's an alarming issue for our country.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jayachandran, S. (2014), in his study he has presented the roots of gender inequality in developing countries. It also showed 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 paying attention on the situation of women in scheduled castes and tribes groups which are considered to as „weaker sections of people The paper also represented a expressive picture of scheduled caste and tribe women’s status in Indian society

Thomas, R.E. (2013), has decorated his paper about gender based inequality in the modern India. It has found gender inequality with the help of some facts and figures which representing the inequality experienced in India . Chaudhary, & Sarkar, D. (2012), in his paper found some inequality factors like educational status, work participation and suggested some relevant strategies implication for reducing this gender inequality to promote the deprived women in the state of West Bengal. Raju, E. (2014), has examined in his paper that gender discrimination on the basis of context like demographic, social, economic and political. Also the paper has roughly discussed the various issues of women like gender inequality, women empowerment and reproductive health in India. Further the study analysis some measures under taken by the International and national organizations to overcome the problem.

IV. STUDY OBJECT

1. To found the factors which are liable for gender inequality.
2. To give suggestions to reduce gender inequality

V. GENDER INEQUALITY INCREASING FACTORS

In India there are so many factors which are completely responsible for gender inequality. These factors are as follows:

5.1 Monetary Factors

1. **Participation of Labour:** In India there is wage inequality between man and woman. . A considerable number of women enter the labor market after thirties, generally after completion of their reproductive roles of child bearing and rearing.
2. **Credit Access:** In terms of access to banking services there are huge disparities between male and female. Due to low levels of property ownership women often lack collateral for bank loan and only micro-credit schemes have come under scrutiny for coercive lending practices.
3. **Occupational Inequality:** In military services women are not allowed to have combat roles in India. Enduring commission could not be approved to female officers for the reason that they have neither been trained for command nor have been given the responsibility in India.
4. **Property Rights:** Even though women have equal privileges under the law to own property and receive equivalent birthright rights, nevertheless in put into practice, women are at a disadvantage while The Hindu Succession Act of 2005 provides equal inheritance rights .
5. **Employment Inequality:** In the workplace are the gender-based imbalances of individuals in power and command over the management of the organization. Female are not able to move up into superior paid positions rapidly as compared to men.

5.2 Communal Factors

1. **Education:** In India the female literacy rate is lower than the male literacy rate. Literacy rate of female is 65.46% compared to males which are 82.14% as per to census of India 2011.
2. **Health:** On health issue, the gender inequality between women’s and men’s life expectancy and women live compared to men in good health because of lots of violence, disease, or other relevant factors.
3. **Dowry:** In India the dowry system contributes to sex inequalities by influencing the opinion that girls are a burden on families.
4. **Gender-Based Aggression:** Gender-based aggression such as rape, sexual assault, persecution for dowry, indecency and all other crimes are practiced on women. These crimes prove the high degree of inequality in India.

5. **Inequality in Decision Making:** Women have less ability than men to lawful appreciation and fortification in India. Also women have lesser entrée to public knowledge and information as well as less decision-making power both within and outside the home. This is also one of the reasons for inequality in gender.

5.3 Cultural Factors

1. **Old Age Support:** A key aspect pouring gender inequality is the preference for sons because they are deemed extra helpful than girls. They are believed to support the old age safety and security of their parents.
2. **Role of Sons in Spiritual Rituals:** A further reason is that of spiritual practices which can only be performed by sons for their parents' eternal life. Sons are frequently the only person permitted to performing funeral rights for their parents.
3. **Son First Choice:** Boys are given the exclusive human rights to come into the family name and properties. At hand is a strong faith that daughter is a liability.

VI. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion we can understand that economic, social, cultural, legal and political factors are responsible for gender inequality in India. But Man and Woman are like two wheels of a carriage. The life of one without the other is incomplete. Study suggested that we should recommend high level of education to girls as well as increase women empowerment for reducing gender inequality in India

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