

A STUDY OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT: *In India Gender inequality found among every state, Social class and this inequality have an impact on growth of Indian economy from improving the lives of Indian people. Gender inequality in India is exists in every arena such as education, employment opportunities, income, health, cultural issues, social issues, economic issues and many more. In this paper we try to find out factors which are responsible for gender in equality in India. What are the consequences of gender inequality in economic, social, cultural and legal environment and to key challenge for policy-makers to establish proper Gender equality in India? With the help of review also put forward few relevant tactics to overcome gender inequality and to endorse the dignified position for Indian women.*

Keywords: *Gender Inequality, Economic, Social & Cultural issues*

After the Independence, in India, one of the concerns was gender inequality among the policy makers. In India gender inequality is common among Government, Non-Government organizations, and even in the politics in India. The policy makers are supposed if the gender equality is found in India it will 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 INEQUALITY:-

Gender Inequality means consider women inferior as compared to men in different social, economic & political, cultural and legal disciplines. In simply terms this is consider as gender biasness, which in simple term means the gender stratification or making difference a male or a female. According to the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report (2017), India ranks 128 out of 189 countries on the gender inequality index- lower than Pakistan (123). The report states that 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.

Forms of Gender Inequality: - various form of gender inequalities found at present in India. Here is a brief explanation of all the types of gender inequality.

- Impermanence Inequality
- Nasality Inequality
- Employment Inequality
- Ownership Inequality
- Special Opportunity Inequality
- Basic-Facility Inequality
- Household inequality

HISTORY OF GENDER INEQUALITY

In ancient India, an Indian woman was at position of honor and was marked by the term of maata (mother) or Devi (goddess) in the Vedas and Upanishads. Same as Manu Smriti, woman was considered as a precious being and in the early Vedic age, girls were looked after with care. Then practice of bigamy declined the position of woman and in the medieval period, in this period dowry system, and sati system came into existence. The new insight in science and technology being the practice of female in India. This has also led to a drop in the female ratio. As per Indian census Kerala state represents the highest sex ratio with 1086 females per 1000 males and Haryana states represents the lowest sex ratio with just 878 women per 1000 males. The main cause of female infanticide practices in few was dowry system.

Indian Society is male dominating; a woman still needs the anchor-person and a family. Their dominating nature has led women to walk with their head down. It was all practiced from the beginning and is followed till date. But to remove this disparities the woman's reservation in parliament, is one of the commendable step taken by Government of India

In many parts of India, women are viewed as an economic and financial liability despite contribution in several was to our society, economy and by their families. The crime against women is increasing day by day. Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual harassment, molestation, eve-teasing, forced prostitution, sexual-exploitation, at work places are a common affair today. So, it's an alarming issue for our country.

The major reasons for the gender inequality are identified as the need of a male heir for the family, huge dowry, continuous physical and financial support to girl child, poverty, domestic – violence, farming as major job for poor and the caste system.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jayachandran, S. (2014), has presented the main cause of gender inequality in developing countries. This paper also discussed the several tools that helps in reduce the gap of women & men inequality.

Dve, D. (1990), has focused on the situation of women of weaker sections of people and to safeguard the interest of these people. Paper focus on the scheduled caste and tribe women's status in Indian society and also suggested that socio- economic development plays an important role to reduce the disadvantage of scheduled group women.

Chaudhary, & Sarkar, D. (2012), focused on the main factors that cause the inequality i.e. educational status, work participation, level of

gender inequality and suggested some relevant strategies to overcome this gender inequality to promote the deprived women.

Raju. (2014), has examined the gender perception in India on the basis of demographic, social, economic and political context. The paper has broadly discussed the issue of gender inequality, women empowerment & reproductive health among women of India. Some measures undertaken by the International and national organizations were also discussed in this paper.

Rustagi, (2015), this paper focus that if the participation of women increase in different sector it would eliminating gender inequalities in income & wages, only through the changing attitudes towards women's role & contribution that are protected by different negotiators within the labor market.

Sharma, R.E. (2015), this paper highlights the inequality among the different states of India in today modern era. It has presented gender inequality with the help of some evidences & statistics and signifying the inequality practiced in India & its comparison with other Asian & Western countries.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To find out the gender inequality factors.
- 2) To suggest how to reduce gender inequality.

FACTORS CAUSING GENDER INEQUALITY

1. ECONOMIC FACTORS
2. SOCIAL FACTORS
3. CULTURAL FACTORS
4. LEGAL & POLITICAL FACTORS

ECONOMIC FACTORS

- **Labor participation:** - There is wage inequality between man and woman in India. A substantial number of women enter the labor market after thirties, generally after completion of their reproductive roles of child bearing and rearing.
- **Access to credit:** - There are large disparities between men and women in terms of access to banking services. Women often lack collateral for bank loans due to low levels of property ownership and micro-credit schemes have come under scrutiny for coercive lending practices.
- **Professional inequality:** - Women are not allowed to have conflict roles in military services. Permanent commission could not be granted to female officers because they have neither been trained for command nor have been given the responsibility in India.
- **Property Rights:** - Although women have equal rights under the law to own property and receive equal inheritance rights, yet in practice, women are at a disadvantage. The Hindu Succession Act of 2005 provides equal inheritance rights to ancestral and jointly owned property, the law is weakly enforced.
- **Women's inequality in proper legacy:** - Women are insignificantly deprived of their proper inheritance culturally and religiously as well. The religious constitution doesn't give women equal inheritance; there is a segregation of giving the property to women as they will not be given the property as men can have. Though Islamic constitution permits women having at least half of the property as man, society is reluctant to give the desired property to women let alone giving the equal share.
- **Employment inequality:** Women in India are still not found at higher position & if they found at later stage of their career. In the workplace the men usually hold the higher positions and the women often hold lower paid positions such as secretaries.

SOCIAL FACTORS

- **Education:** - In India female literacy rate is lower than the male literacy rate. As per census literacy rate of female is 65.46% as compared to males which are 82.14%.
- **Health:** - On health issue, the gender inequality between women's and men's expectancy and women live compared to men in good health because of lots of violence, disease, or other relevant factors.
- **Patriarchal Society:** - Most of India has strong patriarchal custom, where men hold authority over female family members and inherit property & title. It is the custom where inheritance passes from father to son, women move in with the husband & his family upon marriage & marriages include a bride price or dowry.
- **Dowry:** - The dowry system in India contributes to gender inequalities by influencing the perception that girls are a burden on families. Such belief limits the resources invested by parents in their girls and limit her bargaining power within the family.
- **Gender-based violence:** - Gender-based violence such as rape, sexual assault, insult to modesty, kidnapping, abduction, cruelty by intimate partner or relatives, importation or trafficking of girls, persecution for dowry, indecency and all other crimes are practiced on women. These crimes show the high degree of inequality in India.
- **Women's inequality in decision making:** In India, Women have less authority than men to legal recognition and protection, as well as lower access to public knowledge and information, and less decision-making power both within and outside the home. This is also one of the reasons for inequality in gender.

CULTURAL FACTORS

- **Old age support from sons:** - A key factor driving gender inequality is the preference for sons, as they are deemed more useful than girls. They are supposed to support the old age security of their parents.
- **partial system:** - It is a common empathy system in which an individual's family membership derives only through his or her father's lineage. It generally involves the inheritance of property, names, or titles by persons related through one's male kin.
- **Role of sons in religious rituals:** - Another factor is that of religious practices, which can only be performed by males for their parents' afterlife. Sons are often the only person entitled to performing funeral rights for their parents.

- **Son Preference:** - Boys are given the exclusive rights to inherit the family name and properties and they are viewed as additional status for their family. Moreover, the prospect of parents „losing” daughters to the husband’s family and expensive dowry of daughters further discourages parents from having daughters.

LEGAL & POLITICAL FACTORS

As per our Constitution men & women are equal according to the laws and means they have equal rights. But, unfortunately, legal & political bias has prevented the law to attain the success of equality in gender. This is another reason for inequality in gender.

CONCLUSION: -

In India economic, social, cultural, legal and political factors are responsible for gender inequality in India. India needs to neutralize the gender inequality. The needs of the day are trends where girls are able not only to break out of the culturally determined patterns of employment but also to offer advice about profession opportunities that might be different from the traditional one. Man and Woman are like two wheels of a carriage. The life of one without the other is incomplete. For reducing gender inequality in India, we should offer high level of education to girls and increase women empowerment. NGOs also play an important role to eliminate Gender Inequality in India through the various societal programs. 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.

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