

An Inquiry Into The Reasons For Gender Inequalities

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ABSTRACT

Gender inequality in India refers to health, education, economic and political inequalities between men and women in India. Gender inequalities and its social causes impact India's sex ratio, women's health over their lifetimes, their educational attainment and economic conditions. Reasons for Gender Inequalities are: Patriarchal society, Preference of Male children, Discrimination against girls, Dowry, Marriage laws and Discrimination against Men. Gender inequalities interlock with other forms of social inequality, notably caste, ethnicity and religion. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of the girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas of relating to food and nutrition, health and education. This paper inquires deeply into the reasons for inequalities that are still existing even in the digital society.

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality refers to the discrimination between male and female in the society. When the society feels that men are superior to women or women are superior to men. Whenever a gender is dominated in the society, it is termed as gender inequality. In India, this generally leads to exploitation of rights of women. Male dominating society does injustice with women in rural as well as urban areas of India. This includes crimes such as dowry marriage, female feticide, child marriage, domestic violence and human trafficking. Inequalities not only have to do with the unequal distribution of women in different work places. When they reach the same educational and employment position as men, they are then confronted and employment position as men,

they are then confronted with gender specific forms of discrimination such as barriers for promotion or allocation of activities that do not correspond to their educational background and training. The division of labour in the family makes women responsible for children. Child care is not the only aspect of discriminatory relations or roles in private life.

REASONS FOR GENDER INEQUALITIES

Patriarchal society

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 of India with some exceptions has strong patriarchal, when men hold authority over female members and inherit family property and title. Examples: Prevailing customs where inheritance passes from father to son, women move in with the husband and his family upon marriage and marriages include a dowry. This inter generational contract provides strong social and economic incentives for raising sons and disincentives for raising daughters. The parents of the woman essentially lose all they have invested in their daughter to her husband's family, which is a disincentive for investing in their girls during young age.

Preference of Male children

A key factor driving gender inequality is the preference for sons as they are deemed more useful than girls. Boys are given the exclusive rights to inherit the family name and properties and they are viewed as additional status for their family. The prospect of parents losing daughters to the husband's family and expensive dowry of daughters further discourages parents person entitled to performing funeral rights for their parents. Thus, a combination of factors has shaped the imbalanced views of sexes in India.

Discrimination against girls

The women express a strong preference for having at least one son, the evidence of discrimination against girls after they are born is mixed. Most of the research studies found that

less evidence of systematic discrimination in feeding practices between young boys and girls or gender based nutritional discrimination in India. In impoverished families, these scholars found that daughters face discrimination in the medical treatment of illnesses and in the administration of vaccinations against serious childhood diseases. These practices were a cause of health and survival inequality for girls.

Dowry

In India, dowry is the payment in cash or some kind of gifts given to bridegroom's family along with the bride. The practice is widespread across geographic region, class and religions. The dowry system in India contributes to gender inequalities by influencing the perception that girls are a burden on families. Such belief limit the resources invested by parents in their girls and limit the resources invested by parents in their girls and limits her bargaining power within the family. Most of the studies show that while attitudes of people are changing about dowry, the institution has changed very little and even continues to prevail.

Marriage laws

Men and women have equal rights within marriage under Indian law. The legal minimum age of marriage is 18 for women and 21 for men. Child marriage is one of the detriments to empowerment of women.

Discrimination against men

Some men's advocacy groups have complained that the government discriminates against men through the use of overly aggressive laws designed to protect women. The men's rights movement in India call for gender neutral laws, especially in regards to child custody, divorce, sexual harassment, and adultery laws. Men's rights activists state that husbands don't report being attacked by their wives with household utensils because of their attitude. These activist petition that there is no evidence to prove that the domestic violence faced by men is less than that faced by women.

Gender Inequality in Digital Society

Empirical studies clearly show that women in the developing world have significantly lower technology participation rates than men; a result of entrenched socio-cultural attitudes about the role of women in society. However, as studies are beginning to show, when those women are able to engage with Internet technology, a wide range of personal, family and community benefits become possible. The key to these benefits is on-line education, the access to which sets up a positive feedback loop.

CONCLUSION

All forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive within and outside the family. These would relate specifically to strict enforcement of laws against prenatal sex selection and the practices of female foeticide, child marriage and child abuse etc. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of the girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas of relating to food and nutrition, health and education.

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