

GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA AND ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ITS REDUCTION

Pragya Singh*

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.

Developments in India:

The most deep-rooted forms of gender inequality had been built into the structure of traditional Indian society. Through gender inequality exists a large measure in the society under different dimensions for long time, its importance has grown in the recent times only. In the traditional society the inequality between males and females existed to a large extent. Women were looked down socially, economically and politically. Women became scape goats of many traditions and customs.

She was brutally killed in the name of Sathi. The practice of child marriage, Kanyasulkam, Prostitution was taken it granted by society and women has no voice what so ever for centuries together. Women"s role was restricted to domestic life especially kitchen work and bearing and rearing of children. She has no place in economic and political activities. Girl children were discriminated in terms of basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter. Woman is the last person in the family to eat. She is the person who does all types of menial jobs. There is no respect for her work. Most of the women"s work outside the domestic front is restricted to agricultural labour activity (in agriculture) and unorganized activities in urban sector. The census of India did not consider their work while counting the number of economically active persons in the country for quite a long time.

The Government of India has taken several measures and also making endeavourer to hoist the status of women in the society in order to promote equality of men and women. The different plans, programmes, and policies have laid emphasis on women empowerment and raising the economic, educational, health and political participation of women to match with that of men. The draft national policy on empowerment of women envisages 1) to setup councils at the national and State levels to review the implementation of the recommendations of the national and State Commissions for women. 2) The center and State to draw up time bound action plans to translate this –policy into concrete action in consultation with the Central and State Commissions for women. (3) Every ministry

* Research scholar, Department of Education, University of Allahabad

Article 15 of the constitution prohibits any discrimination on grounds of sex. The directive principles of State policy also urges that the State shall direct this policy towards securing an adequate means of livelihood for women and ensuring equal pay for equal work for both men and women. Since seventy's the objectives of *Gender Discrimination in India*

www.iosrjournals.org 56 | Page

The objective of present study is to examine the present condition of gender discrimination in India, and to discuss about the role of education in its removal. The women discrimination can be visualized on various angles. In a male dominated society like ours one has to accept that women are at the receiving end. The sex ratio is unfavorable to women and it has declined overtime. The literacy rates are low among women. The expectation of life is low for women in India up to the recent times. The opportunities and access to decision-making institutions are not equal to both men and women. There is clear division of labour among men and women, designating certain tasks exclusively to each and another. Mostly activities, which have low market value, are attached to women. Women mostly spend their time in household maintenance. There were also gender differences access and control over resources, which were important elements to consider in development, programmes especially where interventions may change the value of resource and reduce women's access.

Types of Gender Inequality -

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.
- 5) **Special Opportunity Inequality:** - Even when there is little difference in basic facilities including schooling, the opportunities of higher education may be far fewer for young women than young men. Indeed, gender biasness in higher

6) **Basic-Facility Inequality:** - Even when demographic characteristics do not show much or any anti-female bias, there are other ways in which women can have less than a square deal.

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
- Hindu Succession Act, 1956 (Amended in 2005; Gives equal inheritance rights to daughters and sons – applies to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs)
- Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937, (The inheritance rights are governed by Sharia and the share of females are less than males as mandated by Quran).

Since its 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, or CEDAW. However, the government maintains some reservations about interfering in the personal affairs of any community without the community's initiative and consent. A listing of specific reforms is presented below.

- ## Gender equality through curriculum

It is important to deal with the concern that even though India has a clear policy on undifferentiated curricula for both sexes, biases and stereotypes creep through the learning materials as well as through those who handle them. One should spell out the concerns that are to be addressed by the teachers and administrators for eliminating sex biases in an endeavour to promote gender equality and positive self-concept through curriculum and life skills approach. It should be brought home to every one through curriculum that biological sex and social gender are separable concepts from a development point of view.

National Policy on Education (NPE)

The NPE emphasizes the core values such as equality between sexes, ending social evils and practices derogatory to women,

small family norm, etc. The NPE and Programme of Action (PoA) highlight the need to improve the social, nutritional, and health status of the girls and also to strengthen support services such as drinking water, fodder, fuel, and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as an integral component of the Universal Elementary Education (UEE). The PoA emphasizes the need to revise textbooks to remove gender bias and gender sensitize all educational personnel so that equality between sexes could be internalized through gender sensitive, gender inclusive curriculum and its transaction.

Some suggestions for gender-sensitive curriculum transactions may be given. One, effective pictures and illustrations should shown to the children that a woman is not merely a mother, but she can be a teacher, a doctor, a professor, an engineer, etc. It should be included in the textbook and reading materials. Two, depicting men and women in shared roles. Three, one can display the talent of women. Fourth, one can counter, prejudicial references in textbooks, if noticed. The textbooks are to be made free of gender bias and sex stereotypes. A gender sensitive life skills approach to curriculum transaction includes all the skills necessary for day today functioning and covers areas such as family life education, legal literacy and life saving skills, etc. This approach could be a bid to alter the unequal gender relations and empower both boys and girls for a shared future by breaking down gender stereotyping and gender barriers in skill development.

Gender scenario in school education

India has the second largest educational system in the world after China with a total enrolment of 191.63 million out of whom 80.54 million (42%) are girls (MHRD, 2000-01). Due to the strong gender focus of the government initiatives during the 1990s as

also the pro-girl child, pro-women policies, and programmes during this decade, girls' education has progressed and the gender gaps have narrowed.

Women's educational and occupational choices

It was suggested that although expectations for success and personal efficacy predict occupational choice, they are not the only predictors. A survey suggests that positive expectations are a necessary, but not sufficient, predictor of occupational choice. Believing that one can succeed at an occupation is critical to one's decision to enter that occupational field. The particular occupation selected also believed to depend on the value attached to various occupational characteristics.

It is beyond doubt that the gender discrimination is existence for long time. The education sector could certainly play a pivotal role in eliminating this gender inequality. It is very much essential to bring awareness among people about the benefit of gender equality. It is important to know that the inclusion of the concept of gender equality in the curriculum and making of laws to remove gender inequality have significant impact on the need to achieve constitutional goal of establishing egalitarian society. Ultimately, it is the change in social mindset and involvement of all sections of society is required to achieve the ends.

References-

Dr.E.Raju,(2014) Gender Discrimination in India, *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF)* e-ISSN: 2321-5933, p-ISSN: 2321-5925. Volume 2, Issue 5 (Jan. 2014), PP 55-65
www.iosrjournals.org

Jacquelynne S.Eccles (1994), Understanding Women's Educational and Occupational Choices, *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 18, 585.

NCTE (2003), Discrimination Based on Sex, Caste, Religion and Disability: National Council for Teacher Education.

Priti Jha, Niti Nagar (2015), A Study of Gender Inequality in India, The International Journal of Indian Psychology ISSN 2348-5396 (e) | ISSN: 2349-3429 (p) Volume 2, Issue 3, Paper ID: B00344V2I32015 <http://www.ijip.in>.

"Periodic Review: India report 2005" . United Nations. Retrieved 28 November

"Report on the State of Women: India" . Center for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics. Retrieved 30 November 2017.

Rajendra kumar 2013, The Role of Education Sector in Removing Gender Inequality Retrieved

from <http://www.legalservicesindia.com/article/article/the-role-of-education-sector-in-removing-gender-inequality-1448-1.html>

"Social Institutions and Gender Index: India Profile". OECD. Retrieved 25 November 2017.

Sarah Winslow (2010). Gender Equality and Time Allocations Among Academic Faculty, Gender & Society.