

# Impact of Gender Inequality on Indian Women

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## **ABSTRACT:**

Gender roles may be described in two ways established gender roles of a culture or gender roles of an individual. In terms of culture, it may be described as a social norm or standard that summarizes the culturally constructed characteristics that define feminine and masculine and may cover such diverse features as physical attributes, appearances, and covert attributes including feelings, attitudes motives, and beliefs. During the time of the ancient Vedic culture, women were given a place in society that was considered to be of the utmost esteem. They were members of the Sabhas and Samitis, and among them were highly educated ladies like as Gargi, Lopamudra, and others. In verses 3.55 and 3.56 of Manusmriti, it is said that "Women must be honored and adorned" and that "where women are revered, the god rejoices; but where they aren't, no sacred rites bears any fruits." Manusmriti shows at it has respect for women by making these statements. Education is a powerful weapon to eradicate gender discrimination from top to bottom. The education of girls has a positive impact on the socio-economic well-being of women and their families and society. Indian Government has introduced different schemes and programs for women, especially equal status.

**KEYWORDS:** Impact, Gender, Inequality, Women

## **INTRODUCTION:**

A lot of violence and injustice is meted out against females. Gender inequality has a deep impact on Indian Society. It does not just impact a specific sections of the society but every part. It impacts children as they fall prey to gender stereotypes from a young age. Further, it impacts young people because it impact their behavior, study choices, ambitions, attitudes and more women experience physical violence more than men. Next up, we have gender inequality affecting adults because there is a gender pay gap between the working class. Men earn more for doing the same work as women. In addition, older women have more risk of becoming homeless than men.

## **CONCEPT OF GENDER:**

Gender roles may be described in two ways established gender roles of a culture or gender roles of an individual. In terms of culture, it may be described as a social norm or standard which summarizes the culturally constructed characteristics that define feminine and masculine may cover such diverse features as physical attributes, appearances, covert attributes including feelings, attitudes motives and beliefs. Gender roles typically include but are not confined to domestic, vocational, reproductive and erotic roles. Gender identity, broadly speaking indicates the degree which an individual regards herself or himself as feminine or masculine. It includes an individual sense of belonging to one sex or the other but

is more complicated in that it may include characteristics that are both masculine and feminine by cultural definitions.

### **HISTORY OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA:**

During the time of the ancient Vedic culture, women were given a place in society that was considered to be of the utmost esteem. They were members of the Sabhas and Samitis, and among them were highly educated ladies like as Gargi, Lopamudra, and others. In verses 3.55 and 3.56 of Manusmriti, it is said that "Women must be honored and adorned" and that "where women are revered, the god rejoices; but where they aren't, no sacred rites bears any fruits." Manusmriti shows that it has respect for women by making these statements.

However, as the later Vedic period began, many customs, including as early marriages, polygamy, and the prohibition of women from participating in Sabhas and Samitis, began to worsen the plight of women. This led to a general decline in the status of women.

The dowry system, the sati ritual, the purdah system, and the prevalence of polygamy were all brutal practices that were carried out against women in India throughout the medieval era. The dowry system is still a significant issue in both the urban and the rural areas of India, and it has even been responsible for the deaths of women. Unfortunately, the rise in frequency of female feticide may be traced to the proliferation of contemporary technology and scientific research. The gender ratio in India was found to be 927 girls for every 1,000 men in the census taken in 2001, demonstrating the deeply ingrained nature of gender inequity in Indian culture.

### **GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION:**

Male literacy rate is higher than the female literacy rate. The inadequacy of education to reach out to girls and women can be analysed from four different aspects namely supply, access and demand and participation. Factors like distance, of girl schools having toilet facilities, privacy to girls as they move to upper primary level are important for girls participation in education. Other social factors hindering female literacy are parental attitude; social norms related to women's education, employment potential as return of education, expensive involved in schooling, health and sanitation facilities in schools, etc.

### **MAHATMA GANDHI VIEWS ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION:**

Mahatma Gandhi commented that "Womanhood is not restricted to the kitchen" his opined and felt that "only when the women is liberated from the slavery of the kitchen, that her true spirit may be discovered". It does not mean that women should not cook but only that household responsibilities be shared among men, Women and children. He wanted women to outgrow the traditional responsibilities and participate in the affairs of nation. He criticized Indians passions for male progeny. He said that as long as we don't consider girls as natural as our boys our nation will be in a dark eclipse.

### **TYPES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA:**

According to Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, India currently experiences seven types of gender inequalities, which are discussed below.

- ❖ **Mortality Inequality:** More women than men in India face higher mortality rates due to inadequate nutrition and limited access to healthcare, resulting in a higher male population.
- ❖ **Natality Inequality:** A preference for male children over female children leads to sex-selective abortions, which are punishable under the law but still prevalent in India.
- ❖ **Employment Inequality:** Women in India face higher unemployment rates than men. They also experience discrimination, harassment, and lower minimum wages in the workplace.
- ❖ **Ownership Inequality:** Historically, women in India have been denied property rights, limiting their voices and making participating in economic and commercial activities challenging.
- ❖ **Special Opportunity Inequality:** Women in India are deprived of special opportunities such as work and education.
- ❖ **Fundamental Facility Inequality:** Unreported injustices and inequalities persist due to societal pressures related to name, honor, and reputation, impacting women's access to basic facilities.
- ❖ **Household Inequality:** Women face inequality within households, such as the preference for sons over daughters and restrictions on women's employment and higher education opportunities.

#### **EFFECTS OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA:**

- ❖ **Domestic Violence:** Gender Inequality can manifest in different forms, and it concerns both men and women. One of the effects of Gender Inequality in India is Domestic violence. According to National Crime Record Bureau(NCRB) 2019 data, the majority (30.9%) of all 4.05 lakh cases of crime against women are registered under Section 498A of the IPC, which saw a sudden increase in the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ **Women's health:** As discussed above, women have no bodily choices, so their medical health further deteriorates. Rajasthan and Haryana are seeing lower infant mortality rates due to sex determination, and it has become one of the causes that many girls cannot survive until their 15th birthday.
- ❖ Sex determination and sex-selective abortion a crime in India, but various cases have been reported where women are forced to abort if it's a female fetus.
- ❖ Due to gender inequality, girls receive poor-quality education, affecting their economic status.
- ❖ Women also hesitate to participate in politics, so issues like violence against women, childcare, and maternal health remain unaddressed.

#### **CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY:**

On 15 August 1947, India kept her trust with destiny, and the constitution of the free nation was implemented from 26 January 1950 as a vehicle of social transformation to realise the goals of the freedom movement. The preamble declares India as a sovereign, democratic republic, the words secular and socialist were added later in 1976. It recognizes the principles of social, economic and political justice. The Fundamental Rights as guaranteed by the constitution tries to remove the inequalities which Indian Women had suffered. Article 14 promises equality before the law and equal protection by the laws. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race caste, sex, or place of birth. And also provides that the state make special provisions for women and children. Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment. Article 23 prohibits traffic in human beings as well as forced labour. Apart from the important provisions in the fundamental rights, some guidelines are given the Directive Principles of the state policy which are non justiciable. Article 39 directs the state to adopt a policy of equal for equal work for both men and women, and asks the state to ensure that the health

and strength of men and women workers is not abused. It further seeks protection of children and youth from exploitation and from moral and material abandonment. Article 42 directs the state to make provisions for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Article 44 wants the state to endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code. Article 51 inserted in 1976 by 42<sup>nd</sup> constitutional amendment imposes a fundamental duty on every citizen to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women. (Neera Desai & Usha Thakkar).

### CONCLUSION:

Women have played a key role in the Indian society, national economic growth and development. Discrimination was start from birth to death, like feeding, schooling, dressing, recognition. Female education is the key tool to break the different types of gender discrimination. Education is a powerful weapon to eradicate the gender discrimination from top to bottom. Education of girls has a positive impact of on socio-economic well being of women and their families and society. Indian Government has introduced different schemes and programmes to women, especially equal status. The programmes and schemes was implemented successfully. But most of the people was not change their mind set on discrimination on women. The Non Governmental organisations also playing vital role in the equal status to women. Most of the Non Governmental organisations has organizing special awareness programmes in rural and urban areas on gender discrimination.

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