WOMEN IN INDIA GENDER SENSITIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The present paper tries to focuses on gender issues, how women are facing gender in the family and society. The woman has second status in compare of men in the traditional patriarchal Hindu society.thegenderdiscriminationsarestartsbeforethebirthafter birthandduringherwholelife,anditscreatesvariousseriousissuesforthesocietyi.e. female feticides, illiteracy or less literacy, domestic violence, dowry, rape, harassment, etc. with this concern the paper is highlighting the said issues and tries to shake the society..

INTRODUCTION

The prime subject matter of the paper is gender discrimination, it is a multidimensional issue which is the improvised and traditional cultural settings in Indian society and it is considered as a major constraint towards the development process in the country. That's why the study made an attempt to determine the root causes of pervasive gender gap persists in the Indian society. With this the study is given the conceptualization of some terminologies on gender issue.

1.1 conceptualizationbackground:

a)   **Sex**: sex refers to the biological difference between men and women, boys and girls. It is defined the property by which organisms are classified as males or females based on reproductive organs and function. Biological and physiological differences between males and females are represented by sex such as reproductive organs, chromosomes and hormones etc. distinguish men and women, boys and girls(who2010). Sex being a biologically determined

attribute is not easy tochange.

b) **Gender**: Gender describes socially constructed differences between men and women, boys and girls etc. gender is defined on the basis of social norms, behaviors, activities, relationship, responsibilities which are assigned by the society as appropriate for male and female (who, 2010) understanding of gender varies in different races, nations, castes, ethnic groups, religion gender. According to Ann Oakleywhointroducethetermtosociology,,,sex"referstothe biological division into male and female, ,,gender" to the parallel and socially unequal division into feminist and masculinity. Gender draws attention, therefore, to the socially constructed aspects of difference between women and men. But the term gender has since become extended to refer not only to individual identity and personality but also, at the symbolic level, to cultural ideals and stereotype of masculinity and femininity and at the structural level, to the sexual division of labour in institutions andorganization.

c) **Gender Equality**: the gender equality means that both men and women, as human being have equal rightsand opportunities irrespective of gender. It also refers thatall people (men and women) must have equal right to develop their personal abilities and free to make personal choices. The Indian constitute provides equal right to all the people and as per the constitutions the state and society will not discriminate between men and women on the basis of gender. Moreover, gender equality emphasis that natural or biological difference between men and women. According to World Bank (2012), gender refers to social, behavioral, and cultural attribute, expectations and norms that distinguish men and women. Gender equality refers to the extent to which men's and women's opportunities and outcomes are constrained or enhanced solely on the basis of their gender.

d) GenderDiscriminate:

Gender discrimination is the consequence of persistent inequality between men and women in all spheres of life. In the 1970s sociological and psychological interest was focused upon demonstrating that gender exist; that is to say, upon showing that the difference and divisions between men and women cannot be accounted for by biological difference, and that culturally dominant ideas about masculinity and femininity are stereotype which correspond only crudely to reality. It was shown that there are huge cross-cultural variations in ideas about gender and in the roles of men and women. There were studies of the ways in which baby boys and girls are turned into adult men and women by the processes of socialization in child –rearing, education, youth culture, employment practices, and family ideology. At the structural level, there were studies of the unequal division of labour in the household, even between women and who both have full time jobs outsides, and of discrimination in employment, where sex (rather than individual skills and qualifications) plays a large part in determining types of job and chances of promotion. More recently, interest has turned to the changing formation. More recently, interest has turned to the changing formations of gender at the cultural level. Much of this work has been interdisciplinary,

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drawing upon anthropology, history, art, literature, film, and cultural studies to explore issues such as the interconnections between ideas of racial purity, white women „s sexual purity and black masculinity in the united states; or the myth of motherhood as natural and universal. The norms of traditionalpatriarchal society are the main responsible factors of the gender discrimination for still continuing in Indian society.

1.2 Statement of theProblem:

Much research work has been done for women studies with the various issues and development agenda in India and out of nation. The gender discrimination is the prime subject matter of the study, the dimension and degree of discrimination against women manifests itself in different culture , politics , race, region, countries and economic differently. However, gender discrimination is considered as tremendous constraint towards the development process and it is found as a casual factor of violence against women. Therefore gender discrimination is the current subject of concern among the policy makers of the world because of enhancing economic growth and maintaining continuity of the development process. To address the aforesaid issues, the study has following specificobjectives.

1.3 Objectives:
☐ To understand the status of women in the society

☐ To know the cause of gender discrimination in the society

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study used secondary sources like books, journals, research papers, newspapers etc. for collection of the data.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.

The study‟s main aims to highlights the issue of gender discriminate and to determine the causes of gender discrimination. It is a multidimensional issue which is deeply embedded in the improvised and traditional cultural settings in the Indian society, and it is considered as a major constraint towards the development process in the country. The research paper examines

whether there is gender biasness in the Indian society. In this regard the study explained the findings, which are discussing next.

> **Status of Women in IndianSociety:**

This research paper brings some important findings about how practice of gender discrimination is still continues in the society since centauries. We all aware about its root and strong base like norms of traditional patriarchal. Hindu society, in this regards the study attempts to provide a historical context to the study of position of women in contemporary society. Prof. Srinivas made remarks for Indian women, "it (the changing position of Indian women) has many facets and generalization is well nigh impossible because of the existence of considerable variation among regions, between rural and urban areas, among class, and finally among different religious, ethnic and caste groups. While in certain contexts the Indian subcontinent is a single cultural region, in many others it is heuristically more rewarding to look upon it as a congeries of micro –regions, difference between which are crucial

Vedic and Post Vedic Period: during the Vedic period Indian women enjoyed all freedom and equality in the society. The birth of a daughter which was not a source of anxiety during the Vedic period, but in post Vedic phase, it becomes the source of disaster for further. As per the religious beliefthat the birth of son is bliss incarnate, while that of a daughter is the root of family misery. Beside education of women which was an accepted norm during the Vedic period, slowly began to be neglected and later on girls were totally denied any access to education. Upanayna or sacred thread ceremony which was performed to initiate a person into the Vedic studies, was prohibited in the case of women and Shudras by manav codes, thus closing the doors for any formal education to women, by circa 8 th century A.D. the marriageable age for girls was lowered to 9 or 10 years which was not only gave a final blow to any effort at educating women but began the sinister practice of pre puberty marriages. Girls in the ruling class families did receive some training in military, administration and fine arts. There were a few outstanding scholarly women like Gagi, Maitreyi, Atreyi who provided an alternative style of female existence. Similarly Amrapalli, the famous courtesan of Buddhist literature declined to give up her invitation to a meal for the Budha in favor of Lichchhavi princes who wished to edge her out and host the Budha themselves. Meera , a renowned poets of medieval period preferred to live her life as a devotee of Krishna. Last the subservience of women is precisely summed up in famous injunction of manaaav code, where it is stated that a women should never be independent. As a daughter she is under survivelance of father, as wife, of her husband and as widow of herson.

Medieval Period: in this time women were literally seen aspointsofentrance,as,,gateways¨tothecastesystem,ifmen ritually low status, then not only the purity of the women of higher status, then not only the purity of the women but that of entire

group would be endangered. much norms addressed for women like marriage at an early date, marriage within the caste and sub caste, prohibition for Pratilom marriage, marriage as sacrament whereby a women is bound in wedlock till she dies, were all practice which suggest the control of sexuality. Widow was not only forbidden to remarry, but she is considered inauspicious, harbinger of ill-luck for the family. She had to forgo all good things of life so that she may not be attractive enough to lure any man. In medieval period she was even expected to die either on the same pyre with her husband or follow him and become sati(truly devoted wife) treatment to the widow, thus at times bordered on the inhumane and callous levels. Women to a lower position, there are rituals and practices for a women which reinforce her role as a devote wife and doting mother. The ideal women of Indian mythology who have extolled as paragons of virtue like Sita, Savitri, Draupadi, Damyanti etc., are women who have been dutiful, truthful, chaste, self sacrificing women of unswerving wifely deviation whatever the temptation. During the Buddhism period a women had greater freedom and more mobility.

Pre Independence Period: during the period there were two major movements which affected the position of women like social reform movement and nationalist movement, both the movements raised the question of equal status of women with the various issues i.e. sati pratha, the ill treatment of widows, the ban on widow marriage, polygamy, child marriage, denial of property rights and education to women. there were different views of social reformers i.e. Raja Ram Mohan Ray, IswarchandraVidyasagar, M.G. Rande, Mahatma Phuley, Lokhitwadi, Durgaram etc. and social revivalists i.e.

Dayanand Sarswati, Swami Vivekanand, AnniBesentetc.. The social reformer believed that social evils should be eradicated by raising consciousness and making people sensitive to the injustice perpetrated on women. They thought that by giving women the access to education and by enacting progressive legislation, social change could be initiated. Gandhiji also criticized the chid marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage, temple prostitution and pardapratha. Social reformers believed that through eliminated the social devils and established new norms, values and provision of acts etc. these are brings changes and justice in women life. Besides social revivalist were have different views, they believed in reviving the old Vedic society presumed to the ideal society for women. Thus this way justice should be done with women. Due to the attempt of social reformers, revivalist and British government Indian women are getting little justice and also seen little women empowerment. Indian women are slowly entering the political field a more significant mobilization, however, took place after 1920. in the non- cooperation movement of 1921 and the civil disobedience movement of 1930 new techniques of struggle like picketing and boycotting of foreign goods and liquor shops and non –cooperation in various governmental activities were used which provided avenues for mass participation. in this era beginning of awareness of the sufferings of women due to oppressive social customs. During this phase favorable climates was created to improve the status of women through legal reframes, many laws were enacted which tried to eradicate certain social evils. Though the act

legalizing remarriage of widows was passed during 1920-1940, child marriage (sharda act), right to property, women's work i.e. limiting hours of organized sectors, prohibiting night work, restriction work in mines, establishment of crèches etc.With regard the two economic position, women of lower strata have been working for wages, middle class women's entry into the world of work appears more significantly after the second world war. A few women did take up some professions like law, medicine, teaching etc., but their number was very limited. Last through several legal enactments women unequal position was beingrectified.

After Independence: the status of women has substantially improved. The preamble to the constitution of India resolved to secure to all its citizens justice-social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and the unity of the nation. Indian constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights and freedom such as freedom speech, protection of life and personal liberty. That's why Indian women are beneficiaries of these rights in the same manner as Indian men. article 14 ensure equality before law and article 1 prohibits any discrimination, article 16(1) guarantees equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state. Besides education is the most important factor fro the changes in status of women, as per the free and compulsory education, literacy rate is increasing among the women. Moreover Hindu law guaranteeing the right to divorce and remarriage, equal rights in the property, establishment of the principal of monogamy are some of the important innovations introduces in the Indian social structure affecting women's status and role. The termination of pregnancy act, act for rape, etc. the three major policy measures which we have described have affected women's position significantly. Theconstitutional reorganization of equal status for women progressive legal enactments has undoubtedly empowered Indian women with juridical equality. However patriarchal values and normative structure established some two thousand years ago still persist though in a different garb. Motherhood and ideal of a faithful loyal, self-sacrificing wife are projected through the media and the education system. The reality of subordinate position of women is indicated through adverse sex ratio of girls, the growing domestic violence, increasing number of dowry death and rape case. The relative ease with which Indian women secured juridical equality, entered professions and occupied positions of power has led to a myth that Indian women enjoy a very high status in the society. They are able for maintain the dual role. This myth has been eroded during the last ten to fifteen years. thus the dual existence of women holding high positions and yet undergoing various types of suffering continue, besides women have started raising their voice against inequality, patriarchal values and in egalitarian social structure. With all these new era is coming in the society which is discussedbelow.

Global Era:

I n this era women are enjoy their higher status in the society in the every field i.e. social, economic, political, etc. however women issues are still continuance in the society like gender, rape, harassment, murder, owner killing etc.. the study addressing the issue of gender, still in this era women are facing gender issues in the society i.e. at the birth, female feticide, childhood, education etc. various attempt of social scientist, NGO, Act of government however the practice of gender discrimination is still continues in the Indian society.

Last the study is concluding the status of women in the society that women had more freedom and rights in compare of medieval and pre independence period. the women status were being lower during the starting of post Vedic period and medieval period, women kept behind the four wall with pardapratha. During the colonial period due to good attempt of Khristimissionaries, British Officals, Social Reformers, Social Revivalist women had little justice and few rights. After independence women are having equal rights and more freedom in compare of earlier period. Women are being educated one small group arise in the society those who are aware about their rights, and various women issues. in the global era women enjoy her high status of in the society but the small group is not being representative for all the women of country because till today the many women issues are raising in the society like rape, harassment, gender, murder, owner killing in the family (recently happened Arushi and Sheena murder case shake the nation) , dowry death etc. thus the study given the snapshot for the status of women in India in differentperiod.

➢ **Causes of Gender Discrimination**:

we all aware that patriarchal system of social structure exists in Indian society wherein women has second status in compare of male and have a little control over the household decision making process. Besides women have very limited access to resources in the country and they are socially, culturally and economically dependent on men throughout their whole lives. The major causes of women are powerless and dependency on men is literacy, lack of awareness, poor knowledge and skills. Moreover they are lacking of self-esteem andconfidence. Furthermore, women are assigned to carry out the household chores and caring, cooking and cleaning etc. responsibilities have to fulfill in the family. The detail causes of gender discrimination is discussing below.

a) **Hierarchical Family Settings**:

Historically, hierarchical family settings still remain in the country, in which men hold the controlling position i.e. in terms of resource allocation and domestic decision making

process in the household and women as whole hold relatively lower hierarchy which largely discriminate women from birth to adulthood, even in wholelife.

b) **Learning at the Childhood**:
conditioning of girls and boys starts immediately after a child is born at home; at the same time, different roles and attitudes of the family are observed based on gender of the new born baby which demonstrates the social norms and values. These social norms reveal, whether girls and boys get equal access to early childhood education. For example, socialization goals and child rearing practices of the parents in the society different for boys and girls. In the early age, a girl is taught how to achieve pain bearing capability, hardships and modesty which favors the boy of that family. Moreover a girl of tender age is taught to earn domestic skills such as cooking, sewing, caring and cleaning, responsibility of child bearing and rearing and he is sent to school on the prioritybasis.

c) **Neglected Behavior During the Birth Time**:
as per the belief of importance of the born of son in the Hindu religion therefore female children are often neglected in the Indian society. it happens even in the well developed higher class people during the earlier era the system is known as DudhPitiKarvi, much practiced in the miidle age but attempt of social reformer Raja Rammohan Ray the British officials passed act for remove the said system. But now days due to sonography system the said system turn in new dress. Government made act for bane on sonography however hide practice for same is exist in the society. Thus the importance of born of boys, behind it one more belief is also responsible like if the parents have son they will go to heaven after the death. That"s why regied families are preferring born of boys and make neglected behavior towards the born of girl child. Due to same sex ratio is decreasing in the society and raise very serious issues in the society like imbalance in the male and female population, problem in the marriage,etc.

d) **Discrimination in Education**:
lack of education is one of the root causes of gender discrimination in the society. Due to gender the regied families or members of male dominate society didn"t preferred for girleducation. Sometimes girls have to engage in domestic chrome and have to do marry in the childhood.

e) **Religious Influences on Women Lives**:
Hindu is the major religion in India, as per the religion belief and rules put significant impact on the lives of her people. It is well known that Hindu itself does not devaluate the status

of women, the local practice and wrong explanation of Hindu rules creates discrimination against women. For example importance of son because through the son the parents will get the heaven and that‟s why society people are having neglected behavior towards girl child. Moreover Hindu community, it is mandatory that sons are responsible to perform the last rites at their parents funeral and it is strictly maintained in the society which influences the patterns to have a malechild.

f) **Work Participation:**
most of Indian women are engaged in household chores such as child rearing, cooking, cleaning and caring of others. a little number of women are engaged in paidwork.

CONCLUSION:

The principle aim of this paper is to estimate gender discrimination and find out the causes of gender discrimination against women exist in the society. The study reveals that there is clear gender discrimination in the society. Moreover the study pays attention in determining the root causes of pervasive gender discrimination against women in the community. it has been raveled in many empirical studies that in spite of poverty rate, increase in enrollment rate in primary and secondary level, increase in women participation in labor force etc. over last two decades, still higher degree of gender discrimination in Indian society almost all sectors like health, education, employment and access to and control over resources etc. it is found that socio-cultural norms, religious beliefs, patriarchal family setting and dominance of male counterpart women contribute to the regular forms of discrimination against women. the study highlights some basic causes of gender disparity against women includes patriarchal family settings, ignorance of female children at birth, lacking of opportunities for education, poverty among women, less health care and soforth.

Last the study concluded that after independence and in the global era, till today women has second status in the society in compare of male counterpart. A woman also dominates and became victim of gender discrimination in the societyyet.

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