

## Women's Development and Gender Inequality in India

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**Abstract:-**The principle of gender equality in the Indian constitution lies in its preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties and directional principles. The Constitution not only provides equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt positive discrimination measures in favor of women. Within the framework of a democratic politics, the purpose of our laws, development policies, plans and programs is to advance women in different fields. India has ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments to safeguard equal rights of women. The principle of gender equality lies in its introduction, fundamental rights, fundamental duties and instructions in the Indian Constitution. The Constitution of India not only provides equality for women, but empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women. The first international effort which lays down the equality of rights for both the sexes is the rule list of the U.N.O. This rule-set reads that the whole mankind enjoys glory and right by birth. All men and women without exception must enjoy the same freedom and rights. The member states of the U.N.O. were supposed to ascertain due social, economical, cultural and political rights for all their entire citizens irrespective of their sex.. Discrimination with women is considered to be equal rights of rights and a violation of human dignity. India has created several constitutional and legal measures and special plans, programs, plans, policies to protect gender equality in all field of life.

**Keywords: - Women, Gender inequality and Development.**

**Introduction: -** Gender is a common word where gender discrimination is only for women because women are victims of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is not biologically determined, but it is socially determined and discrimination can be changed from fair and enduring efforts. To deny equality, rights and opportunities and repression in any form on the basis of gender is gender discrimination. Half of the world's population belongs to women. They are doing two-thirds of the total work in the world, but only a tenth of the world's total income

has been received. Nearly two-thirds of the women are illiterate and they have only one percent of the world's total assets. Only one fourth of the world's families are under the leadership of women. India is a patriarchal society and gender bias is habitually optimized. The status of women of any country is the parameter of their national progress. This means that any attempt for the development of a country is meaningless and meaningless unless the same efforts are made for the development of its women. According to sociologists, it is impossible to measure the condition of women because the values, norms and other factors of every society are their own set, and all these variations affect the status of women. Factors affecting the status of women in Indian society include locality (rural and urban), artist, community, education, economic and political status, psychological environment or environment, rituals and traditions. There is a tradition here that women can eat their own food, when he served it to his husband. Both men and women are part of society and parcel and stand as a strong pillar of social fabric. History hates such instances which prove that women had received great respect in the past and they were considered to be goddesses of respect. The names of Sita, Radha and Gauri were used before their male counterparts to show their respect. This time it was marked by women's supremacy, social structure and the backbone of humanity. In his absence, no religious or social service was considered complete and was not performed. He controls the society towards the predetermined goals. With the passage of time, the situation of women changed. Some ages are famous for their respect, while others have discredited them for their insults. Time passed and we came into a male era. Gradually, the man achieved a God-like status and showed that he was quite capable of dealing with social challenges in himself. The position of women in a civilization indicates the development phase on which civilization has come. Has always been an integral and inspiring part of society.

Gender is a common word where gender discrimination is only for women because women are victims of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is not biologically determined, but it is socially determined and discrimination can be changed from fair and enduring efforts. To deny equality, rights and opportunities and repression in any form on the basis of gender is gender discrimination. Half of the world's population belongs to women. They

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Discriminations From web to death females are facing lots of discrimination against them. Some of them are Abortion of female child, Feticide, Not giving enough and nutritious food, Not allowing to go to school,<sup>™</sup> Not giving needy health care while in ill health ,Early marriage ,Eve teasing, Rape and Sexual harassment ,Dowry, Divorce, Destitution even for silly or without any reason.

Causes of Gender Discrimination: The causes of gender discrimination are <sup>™</sup> Educational backwardness <sup>™</sup> Caste <sup>™</sup> Religious beliefs <sup>™</sup> Culture <sup>™</sup> On the name of family history <sup>™</sup> Customs and beliefs <sup>™</sup> Races <sup>™</sup> Low income <sup>™</sup> Unemployment <sup>™</sup> Society <sup>™</sup> Family situation and <sup>™</sup> Attitudes

The importance of women in development is about 50 percent of the total population of women but their representation in public life is very low. The woman has to bear the major burden of domestic work. His primary role is often seen as a homemaker by society. If the female population is out of political empowerment then in cardinal goals of democracy, "people and people" cannot be better fulfilled. Subjectivity of women in society works as a structural obstacle to their involvement in political activities. This barrier operates more or less for all sections of women and communities. The prevailing culture which is very complex and often the decisions behind the scenes are decided, another obstacle can be considered in this regard. Accepting women's rights and acknowledging their potential is essential for the empowerment and development of women. Females should realize their abilities and abilities, which will strengthen their self image and boost them with self-confidence. Political empowerment is not the only right to play a role in life, but to discuss, share and empower politics to know its

professionals and opposition and thus influence policies and decisions. Empowering women is fundamental to the fundamental things of human rights where it neither begs for power nor seeks power hierarchy to gain power against others. On the contrary, he first demands acceptance as a human. It is necessary for himself as a person and it is necessary that all resources be equally accessible to him physically, socially, economically, politically, culturally and spiritually, which are prerequisites for considering the entire question of empowerment. . Indian society has inherited it with male domination, but now society has started to realize the importance of women and women empowerment has accepted women as an active agent for development, participation and guidance in their development.

**Definition and Concept of Gender Inequality:-**Gender 'is a socio-cultural term, which mentions socially defined roles and behavior given to men and women in a given society; However, the term 'sex' is a biological and physical phenomenon that defines men and women. In its social, historical and cultural aspects, gender is a work of power relations between men and women, where men are considered superior to women. Therefore, gender can be understood as a man-made concept, whereas 'sex' is the natural or biological characteristics of humans. Gender inequality, in simple words, can be defined as gender discrimination on the basis of their gender. Women are traditionally considered to be weaker sex by society. She is assigned to the subordinate position of men. Outside our homes and the world, it is exploited, insulted, violated and discriminated. This bizarre nature of discrimination everywhere in the world is prevalent among women and this is the same in Indian society.

**Types of gender inequality:** - Nobel Prize winner Prof. According to Amartya Sen, there is seven types of gender inequalities in India. A brief explanation of all types of gender inequality is as follows: -

**Mortality inequality:** - In this, inequality between women and men directly covers matters of life and death, and takes a cruel form of abnormal high mortality for women and a resultant proportion of men in the total population, as found in societies Contrary to the prefix of women with There is little or no gender bias in health care and nutrition.

**Natality Inequality:** - In this inequality, boys are given preference over girls. It is prominent in many male-dominated societies and they appear as parents who want their newborn to be a boy rather than a girl. With the availability of modern techniques to determine the fetal gender, sex selective abortion has become common in India.

**Employment inequality:** - In terms of employment promotion, women often face more constraints than men. This is clearly exemplary because men get priority in getting better job opportunities and pay scales than their female counterparts.

**Ownership Inequality:** - In many societies property ownership can also be very uneven. The rights of traditional property from ages have favored men in most parts of India. The absence of property claims can not only reduce the voice of women, but also make women difficult to enter and grow commercial, economic and even some social activities.

**Special Opportunity Inequality:** - While there is very little difference in basic infrastructure, including school education, opportunities for higher education can be much lower for young women than for young men. In fact, gender bias can be seen in higher education and vocational training in India.

**Basic-Facility Inequality:** - - Even when there are not too much or anti-anti bias in demographic features, there are other ways in which women can be less than a class deal.

**Domestic inequality:** - There are often substantial, basic inequalities in gender or gender relations within the family or home, which can take many different forms. Even in cases where there is no indication of anti-female bias, even in the promotion for survival or son-priority or education, or even higher executive positions, arrangement of family arranged burden can be quite uneven in the case of household chores and child care.

**Factors behind Growing Gender Inequality:-**There are many factors that are fully responsible for gender inequality in India. These factors are as follows: -

**Labor participation:** - In India there is wage inequality among women and men. Generally thirty-three women enter the labor market after thirty decades, usually after completing their reproductive roles of childbirth and upbringing.

**Access to Credit:** - There are major disparities between men and women in terms of access to banking services. Due to the low level of property ownership, women often lack collateral for bank loans and micro-credit schemes fall under scrutiny for strong lending practices.

**Professional inequality:** - Women are not allowed to compete in military services. Women officers cannot be given permanent commissions because they have neither been trained for command nor responsibility has been given in India.

**Rights to property:** - Although women have the right to equal property under the law and they have equal heritage rights, in practice, women are in loss. The Hindu Succession Act of 2005 provides inheritance rights similar to ancestral and jointly owned property; the law has been implemented vulnerably.

**Education:** Female literacy rate in India is lower than male literacy rate. According to the 2011 census of India, female literacy rate is 65.46% compared to men, which is 82.14%.

**Health:** - On the issue of health, women are better off compared to men in good health due to gender inequality and violence, illness or other relevant factors between life expectancy of women and men.

**Patriarchal society:** - In most of India, there is patriarchal practice, where men hold rights over the members of the female family and receive property and degree. This is the practice where legacy goes from father to son, women go with husband and his family at the time of marriage and marriage involves the cost of bride or dowry.

**Dowry:** - Dowry practice in India affects gender inequality in the notion that girls are a burden on families. Such belief restricts the resources invested by the parents in their girls and limits their bargaining power within the family.

**Gender Based Violence:** - Gender-based violence is practiced on rape, sexual assault, insult of modesty, kidnapping, kidnapping, intimate companionship or cruelty by relatives, harassment of girls, harassment for dowry, indecency and all other crimes. These crimes show high levels of inequality in India.

**Supporting old age with sons:** - A major factor in running gender inequality is the priority of sons, because they are considered more useful than girls. They are going to support the protection of old age of their parents.

**Patrilineality system:** - This is a general relation system in which a family member receives a family membership and is traced through the father's lineage. It usually involves inheriting the property, name or title by the respective individuals through a person's male relatives.

**Role of sons in religious ceremonies:** - Another factor is that of religious practices, which can only be done by men for the life of their parents. Sons are often entitled to funeral rights for their parents.

**Son Priority:** - Boys are given special rights to receive family names and qualities and they are given additional status for their family. Apart from this, parents are frustrated by the loss of daughters in the family of their parents and daughters due to dowry expensive dowry. There is a strong belief that Daughter is a liability.

**Legal and political factors:-**According to the Constitution of India, both men and women are equal in view of the law and hence they have equal rights. But, unfortunately, legal and political bias has prevented the law from achieving equality in gender. This is another reason for gender disparity.

#### **Legal and Constitutional safeguard against Gender Inequality:**

Indian Constitution positives to end gender inequality provides orts; The preamble of the Constitution talks about achieving social, economic and political justice for all and the goals of providing equality of status and opportunity to all its citizens. Apart from this, women have the equal right to vote in our political system. Article 15 of the Constitution provides for the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex, in addition to other grounds such as religion, caste, caste or birth place. Article 15 (3) authorizes the Sate to make special provisions for women and children. Apart from this, the Directive Principles of State Policy also provide various provisions which are for the benefit of women and provide protection against discrimination.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties and directive principles. The constitution of India not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The first international effort which lays down the equality of rights for both the sexes is the rule list of the U.N.O. This rule-set reads that the whole mankind enjoys glory and right by birth. All men and women without exception must enjoy the same freedom and rights. The member states of the U.N.O. were supposed to ascertain due social, economical, cultural and political rights for all their entire citizens irrespective of their sex India has taken several constitutional and legal measures and special schemes, programmes, planning, policies to secure gender equality in all walks of social economic, cultural and political life. A number of important laws were passed during the British Raj. These laws, aimed at reforms in women's life, were as under:-

1. Sati Prohibition Act – 1829
2. Widow Remarriage Act – 1856
3. Special Marriage Act – 1875
4. Married Women Property Act – 1874
5. Child Marriage Restraint Act – 1929
6. Hindu Women's Right to Property Act – 1939

The constitution of India guarantees justice, liberty and equality to all citizens. The fundamental rights and the directive principles are the conscience of our constitution. The fundamental rights and directive principles of our constitution have made extensive safeguard in favour of women and tries to remove inequalities which exist between man and women. To attain this goal, the constitution guarantees fundamental rights. Fundamental rights ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on ground of religion, caste, sex or place of birth race and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens. The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the

State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them. Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14, 15, 15(1), 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(b), 39(c), 42, 51, 243(3), 243d (2), 243d (4) and 243T (4) of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard.

**Legal provisions:** - To uphold the Constitutional mandate, the State has enacted various legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights, to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and to provide support services especially to working women. Although women may be victims of any of the crimes such as 'Murder', 'Robbery', 'Cheating' etc, the crimes, which are directed specifically against women, are characterized as 'Crime against Women'. These are broadly classified under two categories.

**The crime identified under the Indian panel code:-** Rape (section 376 IPC), Kidnapping and abduction for different purpose(section 363-373), Homicide for dowry, dowry death or their attempts (section 302/304-B), Torture ,both mental and physical (section 498-A IPC), Molestation section (354 IPC), Sexual harassment section (509 IPC)

**The crime identified under the special laws:** - A number of laws by the government of India have been made to ensure the protection of women and their interests in various fields. Some important acts in this regard such as Special Marriage act ,1954, Hindu Marriage Act 1955,Hindu succession act 1956,Dowry prohibition act 1956,Medical termination and pregnancy act 1971,Married women's property extension 1959,Equal remuneration act 1976,Immoral traffic (Prevention) act 1956,Indecent representation of women (prohibition) act 1986,Muslim women (Protection of Right on Divorce) act 1986,Family courts act 1984,Hindu widows remarriage (repeat) act 1983,Factory act 1948,Hindu succession act 1956 with amendment up 2005,The Hindu women's right to property act 1937,The maternity benefit act 1961 (amendment 1995),The prohibition of child marriage act 2006,The criminal

law(amendment) act 1983,The protection of women from domestic violence act (PWDVA) 2005,Sexual harassment of women at workplace (prevention, prohibition and redressal) bill 2012

**Special Initiatives for Women:-**At present, there are so many policies and programmes implemented at national, state and local level in many sectors including education, health, employment and economic opportunities. The main objectives and functions of these schemes/plans/programmes are to provide legal, economic and social facilities to women and to protect the women. The mains schemes, plans, and programmes aiming at women empowerment and gender equality in India at present are as under:-

**National Commission for Women:-**The national commission for women (NCW) was constituted in 1992 as an apex level statutory body under the National Commission for women act 1990 with a specific mandate to study and monitor all matter relating to the constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women and to review the existing legislation and suggest amendment wherever necessary.

**National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001:-** In 2001, the national policy for the empowerment of women (NPEW) was formulated under the department of women and child development in the ministry of human resource development, as the blue print for the future with the express goal of addressing women's felt needs and bringing about their advancement, development and empowerment.

**Planning Process and Women Empowerment:-** Earlier the focus of the planning, process has evolved from welfare oriented approach to women's centrality to empowerment module and now to recognize women as change agents. Many schemes and programmes were introduced like SABLA, IGMSY, Ujjawala and Dhanlakshmi. The plan further envisaged the strengthening of the gender budget cells set up in various ministries and departments. The twelfth plan has also identified the key elements for gender equity to be addressed in next five years.

**Reservation for Women in Local Self –Government: -** The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Acts passed in 1992 by Parliament ensure one-third of the total seats for women in all elected offices in local bodies whether in rural areas or urban areas.

**The National Plan of Action for the Girl Child (1991-2000) :-**The plan of Action is to ensure survival, protection and development of the girl child with the ultimate objective of building up a better future for the girl child.

**National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001):-** The Department of Women & Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development has prepared a “National Policy for the Empowerment of Women” in the year 2001. The goal of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women.

**National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW):** - NMEW has launched by president of India on 8<sup>th</sup> march 2010. It is an initiative taken by Govt. of India for empowerment of women by introducing many schemes and programmes.

**Rajeev Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls(SABLA):-** It was introduced in 2010. It was implemented in 205 districts across the country. SABLA aims at an all round development of adolescent girls of 11-18 years of age by making them self reliant by facilitating, learning, vocational training, nutrition and health education, counseling on family welfare, child care practices, home management, accessing public services and national skill development programmes.

**Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna (IGMSY):-** It was a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women. It was introduced in Oct 2010.The scheme ensures favorable environment by providing cash incentives for better health and nutrition to pregnant women. The scheme attempt to partially compensate the pregnant & lactating women for wage loss both prior to and after delivery of the child.

**Support to Training & Employment Programme for women (STEP):-** The scheme was launched in 1986-87. It aims to make impact on women by upgrading skills for employment and income generation especially in SC/ST households and families below poverty line. The scheme provides significant facilities to both rural and urban women such as health, child care, legal and health literacy, elementary education, gender sensitization, training for skill development, marketing linkages and access to credit facilities.

**Hostel for Working Women (HWW):-** This scheme aims at providing safe and affordable hostel accommodation to working, single working women, women working at places away from their home town & women being trained for employment.

**Women Empowerment & livelihood Programme in Mid-Gangetic Plains-PRIYADARSHINI:** - The ministry assisted the 'PRIYADARSHINI' in 13 blocks spread over 5 districts Uttar Pradesh and 2 districts in Bihar. The objective of the scheme is to empower the adolescent girl socially and economically both and adolescent girls through formation of women self help groups (SHGs) & promotion of livelihood opportunities.

**Swadhar-A Scheme for Women in difficult Circumstances:-** It was launched during the session 2001-02 under the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare for the benefit of women who are living without any social and economic support in difficult circumstances. The aims of this scheme are to provide food, clothing, shelter, emotional support, specific clinic, legal support and help line to the women and children.

**Ujjawala-A comprehensive scheme to combat trafficking:-** It was formulated on December 04, 2007 by Ministry of Women and Child Welfare to combat trafficking and sexual exploitation of women at commercial place. The scheme is being implemented mainly through non-government organization. The scheme is focused on prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, re-integration and repatriation.

**Conclusion:** - Several important provisions have been made in the Constitution of India to make women equal to men. The status of women in India has not been same and equal in all ages. It is subject to many great changes since ancient times. In ancient times, they received equal status in men. Their status worsened later in the Mughal period. The British period struggled for the upliftment of women, because it is known by its various efforts. Although many attempts had been made during the British period to improve the situation of women, it is a fact that all these efforts failed to give equally qualitative reactions. The situation of women, to be honest and fair, is still more or less the situation today. It is not enough for the upliftment of women only by the government initiative, it should also take initiative to create a good environment for the society,

which has no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities in different areas of life, equality. A nation or society cannot achieve development without women's participation. If we eliminate gender discrimination, then women will provide all the potential, skills, and knowledge to develop the family, nation and the whole world. We can explain that economic, social, cultural, legal and political factors are responsible for gender inequality in India. India has to disable gender inequality. The requirements of the day are such instances where girls are not only able to get out of the culturally designed patterns of employment, but also offer advice on career prospects, beyond the traditional list of jobs. It is surprising that in spite of so many laws, women are still in tension and tension. We are still miles away to ensure the equality of the situation for our women. Man and woman are like two wheels in a car, without one the life of the other is incomplete.

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