



MAHAMUL03014/13/1/2012-TC
Special Issue No. 1, March 2018

ISSN : Online : 2320-8341
Print : 2320-6446

RESEARCH FRONT

An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal.

91



Social and Economic Justice- Past, Present and Future

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**GENDER EQUALITY AND JUSTICE: A CRITIQUE**

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Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics,
Chandrabai-Shantappa Shendure College, Hupari**Introduction**

Gender inequality is sensitive and persistent problem, especially in developing countries. In India, the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution in its Preamble. The Constitution not only guarantees equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures in favour of women. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. In the last phase of twentieth century it has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. Women are looking at their new personality and trying to understand its dimensions. This empowerment of women will no doubt consolidate the society and it will establish the gender equality expected in the constitution. This is positive aspect of gender equality. However, in practice this equality, it seems, it is hijacked by the male. The present research paper will critically review the gender equality and social justice in the present era and will provide some suggestions in this direction.

Background of the study:

The issue of the gender discrimination created pressure on gender justice in every field of life after the last decades of twentieth century. This positive seen naturally brought new dimension to the personality of women. Government launched number of programmes and activities for the gender equality. This attitude widely accepted by the NGO's as well as in private organizations. This all contributed to the empowerment of the women. In the light of this development, present study will explore the various dimensions of gender equality in the context of justice in India.

Objectives:

1. To critically study gender equality in India
2. To comment on the gender inequality

Research Method:

The present study follows critical and analytical method as well as secondary data.

Constitutional and legal Provision for Gender Equality in India:

In the ancient period the status of women was equal to men, in medieval period it greatly deteriorated. In the nineteenth century, due to the pressure of social reforms the status of women brought to the notice of society. In the renaissance period i.e. beginning 20th century the rational thought influenced the total life and it brought the women on the forefront of all sections of life. This is real beginning of gender justice. Today women are seen on the all the prestigious positions, its roots are in the work of reformers in nineteenth and twentieth century and especially in the constitution of India.

The constitution of India not only guarantees equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures for betterment of women. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties

National Skill Development Programme (NSDP) has identified 231 modular courses for women. Efforts are needed to link skill development programmes to the NSDP to ensure relevance and enhance the employability.

Ravindran G in his research paper suggests, focusing on the contribution made by women workforce to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India. He concludes, on the basis of the size of women work force, that they contribute 23.4 % of the GDP in the informal sector and 16.2 % in the formal sector in 2004-2005 with their overall GDP contribution being 19.8 %.

From the last decade of twentieth century it is seen that participation of women in different economic sectors is increased. Besides agro sector in the area of manufacturing and service sector the participation of women is 40.6% which is encouraging for the future of women. No doubt, this is a positive picture but at the same time large mass of women is still struggling to bring them in this new course economic development.

Gender Equality and Education:

Women's education is extremely important. It is their human right and required for the flourishing of many of their capacities. For long period women were kept away from not only education but all their rights also. But the Social Movements in the ninetieth and twentieth century brought new changes in the society. Specially, *Savitribai* and *Mahatma Phule*, *Maharshi Dhondo Keshav Karve* had taken great efforts for women education.

In recent times, it is, however, noticed that most programmes for education of girls and women in India have reinforced Gender roles. Empowerment of women is closely related to formal and informal sources of education. Education improved self efficiency and esteem. Many innovative efforts are accelerated after the NPE. Kanya Vidya Dhan, free uniforms, mid-day meal, and school attached crèche; mothers meetings have all had positive results. There is marked improvement in girls' enrollment and steady decline in dropout rates. Enrollment of girls at primary level and upper primary level increased over the years. Data also shows that the number of girls in school in the age group of 5-14 years increased 79.6 percent in 2004-05 to 87.7 percent in 2009-10. Similarly, the number of girls in the educational system in the 15-19 years age group increased 40.3 percent to 54.6 percent and the age group 20-24 years from 7.6 percent to 12.8 percent over the same period.

Though there are statistically positive trends, some studies show that privileged spaces in classrooms are occupied by boys. Girls are rarely addressed by their names. Government's new policy of education has opened new avenues for the gender equality. Women are seen in various fields of education. Due to education women realized self respect, self esteem and self identity. But the other side is that the participation of women in higher education is very meager.

Gender Equality and Political Participation:

Women's political participation has been considered a major measure of women's empowerment. In histories of the world we have records of very few regents, sovereigns, and active agents in nobility who were women. In the last century more women heads of state could be counted in Asia as compared to Europe and the struggle for women suffrage in India was physically less violent but this is not reflective of greater acceptance of women in decision-making in public spaces. To measure women's empowerment, three indicators is

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In India, several laws have been made for women empowerment in political sphere. In central, state and local governments some seats are reserved for women who is increased not only participation in government but empower the women in decision making process. Women's education, livelihood and personal exercise of agency have to be systematically promoted.

Important LG, women's participation in economic, political and professional activities. Within political power it is measured mainly women in parliament, judiciary or in local bodies.

(Part II) 2320 - 646, (Online) 2320 - 8341

ISSN

The 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution have impacted nearly 600 million Indian people in 500,000 villages. Interestingly the percentage of women at various levels of political activity has risen from 4.5% to 25-40%. Both nationally as well as at the state and local levels women in elected bodies have been very few and even those who have been elected when observed again choose quarets present a complex picture. The more and muscle associated with the electoral process inhibits a large number of women from joining politics. Restriction on mobility, lack of control over resources and low literacy rates are well known obstacles but recent *Panchayat* elections have evidenced a phenomenal large number of elected leaders much beyond reserved 33% seats. More than one million women have now entered political life in India and 43% of the seats are occupied by them distinctly, province and national level. Women's participation is understood in terms of voter turnout, less aware of the political process so there is need to organize longer trainings and orientations programme for women for political awareness.

Women and Health:
No doubt, women participation in national, state and local bodies increased but in an interesting study sponsored by State Planning Commission in U.P. 2006 about 45% women both rural and urban reported being influenced by men of the family (father/husband) in decision-making in the exercise of their ballot. 9 per cent reported external influence while 46 per cent exercise independent choice. Because illiteracy, men dominated society women are less exercise of their ballot. Overall fertility rate has declined from 3.4 to 2.7. The states of Punjab and Maharashtra have reached the replacement level of fertility, i.e. around 2 children per woman. Women in Chhattisgarh and Orissa are expected to have an average of about 2.5 children at current fertility rates.

The five state studies show regional imbalances in post natal care from only 23 per cent in Chhattisgarh to 54-59 per cent in Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat. More than 40% ever married women and about one third men in Orissa and Gujarat are thin for their height, under nutrition is much lower in Punjab (12-14%) obesity is the major problem in Punjab 38% women are overweight. Overweight or obese women percentage has increased in the last 7 years in NFHS - I and 2 between rural and urban women but have increased from 65 to 77% total. 10 or more years of schooling. Trends in antenatal care have remained more or less constant in NFHS - I and 2. The five state studies show regional imbalances in post natal care from only 23 per cent in Chhattisgarh to 54-59 per cent in Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat. More than 40% ever married women and about one third men in Orissa and Gujarat are thin for their height, under nutrition is much lower in Punjab (12-14%) obesity is the major problem in Punjab 38% women are overweight. Overweight or obese women percentage has increased in the last 7 years in NFHS - I and 2 between rural and urban women but have increased from 65 to 77% total. The five state studies show regional imbalances in post natal care from only 23 per cent in Chhattisgarh to 54-59 per cent in Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat. More than 40% ever married women and about one third men in Orissa and Gujarat are thin for their height, under nutrition is much lower in Punjab (12-14%) obesity is the major problem in Punjab 38% women are overweight. Overweight or obese women percentage has increased in the last 7 years in NFHS - I and 2 between rural and urban women but have increased from 65 to 77% total.

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promising face of India.

The status of women is a benchmark of social process and is a very important part of the human development index in the human rights jurisprudence. The Constitution of India guarantees equality for women. In recent times, no doubt, there is positive picture of gender equality in India. It has contributed to strengthen the women empowerment and integration of women in all fields. Besides urban women, the more focus should be on the women in remote and tribal areas. The increasing gender equality will no doubt project the very empowerment in all fields. Besides urban women, the more focus should be on the women in the society at large. Though these are some positive signs, there is great scope for the women equality in India. It has contributed to strengthen the women empowerment and integration of guarantees equality for women. In recent times, no doubt, there is positive picture of gender equality in India. It has contributed to strengthen the women empowerment and integration of women in all fields. Besides urban women, the more focus should be on the women in remote and tribal areas. The increasing gender equality will no doubt project the very

Conclusion:

Due to active participation of women in various fields and their involvement in higher education has seen the paradigm shift of the status of women in India. This status is highly respectable and it has created its place in male dominated world.

Women and Social Status:

The questions regarding crimes against women are most entrenched, as most of them are committed within the family NCRB records that the highest percentage of crime against women is torture followed by Molestation, Rape, Kidnapping and immoral traffic, Dowry Death and eve teasing were recorded. The further details report that in victims of rape. No age is safe for women. In U.P. nearly 32% crimes against women were committed within the family by husbands and relatives. This figure when compounded with 12% dowry deaths makes 45% of crimes domestically located. Incidents of honour killings and battery through severely blighted. In caste ridden society women's caste membership increase her vulnerability. Small efforts to train police by UN agencies and state initiatives are not large are often threats to women's functioning and their emotional development is not fully encouraged but very small in scale. They require follow-ups and support monitoring.

Gender Equality and Violence:

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