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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER PAY GAP AND WHY IS IT SO WIDE IN INDIA?

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ABSTRACT

The society is full of inequality. Let it be the among different groups, among different religious groups. Or let it be between men and women. The highest inequality is seen among the men and women. Lack of opportunities, backwardness in the education might be the reason. It can also be because of lack of ignorance. The situation needs to be analysed and studied.

Keywords: Society, Inequality, Opportunities, Backwardness, Ignorance

INTRODUCTION

Gender gap means the unequal treatment between men and women. It can be in any phase or in any part or in any situation. This is not a new in any terms. Since, the ancient times women face a lot of problems within the society. They have been neglected and have been presented as backward. We saw that during the ancient India women were respected as goddess and were given equal respect as mother in the society. They enjoyed equal rights and privileges as men. They even studied the Vedas and took part in the discussions. But soon, the time changed and proceeded and during the medieval era women were thought to be less capable than men. The birth of women was considered as dusk for the family. The society was patriarchal in nature. Even women have don't right to have property. They didn't have right to work and even to marry. They were very much neglected sections. Moving towards the modern era. The society remained the same. The condition became more complex as we saw sati, child marriage. The condition of women was just like hell. They seemed to live a pathetic life. Efforts were done but the conditions more or less remained the same. The women had to suffer and more. Looking forward after 100 years, the condition remained the same or it has gone more worse. It might also happen that the situations have improved. We will discuss in detail in the following article.

GENDER GAP INDEX

Gender inequality or gender gap still exists in India. It is a major issue that has acquired its roots. Looking at the earlier situation the condition of women, several laws have been made since the establishment of democracy. So that equal rights and opportunities can be provided. But in spite of it the gap still exists and it creates a hindrance in development of the country. It is currently at 127th position out of 146 countries. As compared to the previous times India as raised its position but still it is very behind. the row ranking is because of backwardness of women in four categories- education, health, economy, politics. As per the recent research the ratio of women as compared to men in India is 44 % is to 55%. This shows that women constantly rank low in the field of medicine in terms of participation. The report presented also shows that women favour to have general practice after completion of degree rather than going for the higher studies. Now, looking at the higher education. The women 48% participation and men have 51%. There is a clear distinction seen in the condition of women. Next comes

the participation in economy. As the percentage suggests women contributing to economic participation is 22%. and as compared to men it is very low. Men contribute to 83%. The gap is very high. Finally, comes the politics. According to the report published in 2021, the participation of women is 10.5% of all members in the Parliament. The huge difference is seen in all the four fields. And because of the gap between the percentage, the ranking of India seems to be very low. Apart from this we cannot ignore the violence against women which is still continuing.

CAUSES

Let us look at the different causes of that lead to gender gap within India. First reason or the foremost reason for the gender gap is illiteracy. Women are denied from the education. The education is seen not so much compulsory for women. Ignore 1- 2% people and you will find that condition is same everywhere. People don't value education too much. It is important for the boys because they have to earn for the family. But what's the need for girls. They can depend on men and nourish the children. But till how much extent will you find it correct. I don't think even one percent. Why? because if a girl is education, she can be helping hand for her husband. She can take care of her children education and uplift the status of family. Hence, we can come to a solution that the gender gap can be reduced by providing proper education. Second reason for the gender gap is the setup of the society. The society is very much patriarchal in nature. It is the issue since the earlier time. And even today this thinking penetrates among the mind of many families. They think that women must depend on others to fulfil her needs. She is not allowed to work. What's the need. She even has to depend on decisions taken by her family on her behalf. Till how much extent it is correct? why will family choose what is right or what is wrong for the girl. She has own brain, own thinking capacity. Let her think. Don't become too selfish and restrict one from living her life.

Third reason is poverty. The poverty is another major for the gender gap. India is not a developed nation yet. It's still in progress but as we can see many people are below poverty line. Being under poverty also deprives from sending girls to school. Parents think it's better to send boys as they will support the family. Hence, parents sacrifice their need to support boys rather than girls. It is because of narrow thinking which persists within the society. Fourth comes the lack of awareness. Though constitution has given enough rights to women but still they are unaware related to it in many fields. This prevents them from achieving the goals they had dreamt for. We see that various things and thoughts penetrate within the society. For ex – women should speak less, listen to men, follow the norms of family. And all this restricts them for being self -independent. They become indulged in all these thinking and hence limits their capabilities. We should make all women realize the rights which they have got. The values which they must peruse. And this will in a sense will try to limit the gap.

The next reason comes is the traditional customs. In which women are seen as inferior to men. It is seen mainly in rural areas. sons are assumed to be more precious than daughter. Women are seen as weak. Let it be the economic, political and even in other fields.

Finally, comes the child marriage. Even the age bar is set for the marriage. But the preparations start before. They are prepared mentally and hence they don't make effort to do the things better. As an individual we must try to reduce this mentally so that problems are solved.

CONSEQUENCES

Seeing the different examples, we have understood that problems exist. Let's see the effect or the consequence of gender inequality. Because of gender gap women lose opportunities. They end up with child marriage as discussed before. They have teenage pregnancy. The girls are not made up with the mindset. As a result, they are unable to take care of themselves and even the newly born. Even it creates domestic work for child. Poor education and even health issues are seen. Finally, gender gap also creates exploitation among girl section.

SOLUTIONS

If problem persists there must a solution for it. There are various ways we as I individual, government as a responsible can adopt in order to overcome this long - lasting gap.

First, the women participation must be increased in politics. If number of women increase, they will know the problems better that is prevailing among the society. They can raise the issue related to it. And finally, the steps can be taken to make women more and more accurate and responsible.

Next, the violence against women needs to be reduced in the work places. So that women can take jobs and work freely. It will also help in individual and community development.

The health and nutrition among girls specially the adolescent need to be reduced so that they can have better health. Even the awareness related to the hygiene need to be spread. this all factors will try to uplift the condition of women in terms of health. And health is also a parameter in judging the gap.

Government is even trying to reduce the gap through Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao Scheme, Sukanya Scheme and others. Even the steps like Mahila Police Volunteers, Mahila Shakti Kendra have been added to encourage the reduction in gap. All these steps can improve. to promote the equality The Equal Remuneration Act, Special Marriage Act have been launched. The Right to Equality is also ensured within the constitution from Article 14 to Article 18.

Problems are many and solutions are infinite. One has to take a closer look regarding the problems and the solution. I don't say that gender gap through these methods will finish completely. But if we take steps, if we concentrate on the solution, we can try to remove the gap at much extent. Society is very complex and more complex is the thinking. The old orthodox practice is still continuing. It will take a lot of efforts especially in the rural areas to change the mindset of people. Even education has extended in the urban areas in cities and towns. People are trying to understand the changes. But rural society is still growing at a very slow pace. Efforts need to be done so that the gender gap is reduced to much extent. The gender equality is not a woman's issue, but it is a human issue. It affects us all.

CONCLUSION

Even though the steps and programmes have been launched. But there are limitations that have not allowed the schemes to develop at a rapid pace. This includes the law design. The laws are only made but not implemented in accordance to what it should be made. Skill development programmes have also been not initiated as it should be. Gender equality is not seen as a boon but merely a thought. Social thinking and customs prevail over the law. The women are not even provided much opportunities to speak and to initiate. As a result, things are not becoming right. We as an individual can spread awareness among our own community. If we do, we will try to improve at least in our place and in our neighbourhood. The small steps will benefit the society and benefit us. It will also make us strong in terms of gender gap index. Achieving

gender equality requires the engagement of women, men, boys, girls. It is everyone's responsibility. Gender equality must become a lived issue.

Malala Yousafzai even commented that she raised her voice not because she could shout but she raised so that those don't have a voice their voice can be heard. as success cannot come when half of the people are held in backward position.

There is no scientific proof required for gender equality but there must be an acceptance that women are equal to men. But not less not superior. It is even the business that has been unfinished in 21st century. Lastly, both men and women should be free, both must feel strong and it's the time to change the perspective. And it should begin with family first.

It is rightly said "your power is your radical, find it itself."

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