



## Gender Inequality and the existence of Patriarchal System in India: A Study

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**Abstract-** Empowerment has no limitations. Both men and women may continue to do so. But that is not a solution to violence against women. Violence against women in public are known, but domestic violence is out of reach for legal authorities. Many measures are being taken, for protecting women from violence, but violence does increase. The protective mechanism is not fool-proof, and there are loopholes in the system. Long tradition and cultures are the main culprit of it. The family system does not encourage a woman to stay alone. This is a cultural deficiency. Women's submission to men are not questioned. It is a traditional issue. Women should not be considered as vulnerable in a society and should be respected being a member of the family. The label of widow or divorcee, should be banned. Women as a whole, should be agreeable for such major changes, if a system is to be reformed.

**Keywords:** Gender discrimination, women empowerment, patriarchy, matriarchy, male disposability, female domestication.

### I. INTRODUCTION

The right to have the power and to take responsibility for the outcome of his own life<sup>1</sup>, the direction of social and economic order<sup>2</sup>, have been felt to be recognised both nationally and internationally<sup>3</sup>. "Empowerment is anytime an individual or a group of people pursue what is right, even when it is unpopular, uncommon, or rejected." Everyone picks something that matters to them. Or it's selected for them by virtue of genetics or circumstance, or whatever the case may be.

Empowerment is when someone presents an idea that is unheard of and represents it confidently<sup>4</sup>, even while no one or very few are on board with it. Demanding change is empowering. Having discipline and resilience is empowering.

The term gender justice has no meaning because the idea cannot be falsified or confirmed. The mere existence of gender makes equality impossible. The call for it is based on assuring that the cost of gender can be eliminated while the benefits of it can be preserved. Most efforts for achieving gender justice have been aimed at eliminating gender when the vast majority of people want to be either male or female. As such most attempts at gender justice are by their very nature unjust<sup>5</sup>. True equality can only be achieved when we have equal access to the most basic human rights regardless of gender it seems like a sensible approach<sup>6</sup>.

There are two main approaches to human rights, viz. "a. *Human rights as minimum protection - A guarantee that all humans can attain at least the minimum of a good life.* b. *Human rights as an expression of equal respect - All humans have an equal right to respect, dignity and chance to develop their own humanity as a unique individual.*"

Gender identity is the social expression of our sex identity - male or female. Gender is generally seen as the role performance of our sex<sup>7</sup>. Neither sex nor gender are fixed in biology. They are both socially determined to a large extent and therefore fluid, contingent, culturally and socially malleable.

### Society and Gender Inequality

India is light years behind many countries in respect to gender inequality<sup>8</sup>. Large sections of people of India lives in its villages where gender inequality plays a crucial role in keeping a certain prohibitive culture<sup>9</sup> in play which is the result of centuries of oppression of women in the society<sup>10</sup>. Gender inequality gets the shape through the norms a society is regulated from ancient days. There may be certain notions which are accepted in a society for a long time and continue to be accepted and preached vehemently.

The root cause of gender inequality lies in patriarchy system. According to the famous sociologist Sylvia Walby, "*patriarchy is a system of social structure and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Women's exploitation is an age-old cultural phenomenon of Indian society. The system of patriarchy finds its validity and sanction in our religious beliefs*".

Once the woman is on the move, the whole family moves. Then the village moves. At last, the nation also moves<sup>11</sup>.

### **Obstacles in women empowerment**

1. Mainstream thinking.
2. Dependency on men.
3. Early marriage.
4. Gender discrimination
5. Lack of education.
6. Crime against women etc.

### **Need of Gender Equality**

Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest sons of India, quoted that, "*There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved, It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing*". The inclusion of "Women Empowerment" as one of the prime goals in the eight Millennium Development Goals underscores the relevance of the fact that it is the high time to recognise and maintain the gender parity between the different genders. This concept is very less understood in India, which has given rise to stereotypical beliefs about certain genders. Equality is a basic right for which a person in India has to fight for example people are worshipping the SC for scraping the section 377, but thinking it in a more practical way, has become the need of the hour.

Human beings need equality. It is so easy to fall into the mindset of seeing the differences and subsequently saying one thing is better than the other. A Few of people were raised that way and have to decide to change for themselves, some don't see colour or gender, and some thrive on inequality and use their prejudice to hide the fact that they are scared of what they don't understand. The bottom line, maybe the question should be, why don't the society treat each other as equals and embrace the differences to create strengths?

When it comes to female the general thinking, 'women belong in the kitchen' has somewhat changed but it still has a long way to go. A man is equally responsible for kitchen, children and the household work and the society should accept and imbibe within their members.

Equality is a noble goal and there are many facets of human existence of it. There are, however, some aspects of the lives that will never be equal<sup>12</sup>. If one person has a mind for mathematics and another does not, the equality between them cannot be reconciled in that part of their lives. For example, in women's sports, there is a certain expectation that the female physical structure is of a particular index. That will not change by thinking differently, choosing an alternate worldview, or applying sensitive feelings to the reality, regardless of exercise and preparations. Men's bodies ARE significantly different.

When someone talk about Gender equality, they must ensure that they are following the proper tracks. Gender equality has to balance a multi-faceted relationship to be equitable itself<sup>13</sup>. It makes no sense to look at one aspect of the relationship and pretend all the others away.

Gender equality is mythical concept in many parts of the world. Gender inequality is deep rooted, until and unless all the members of the society face it<sup>14</sup>, there is no way getting out of it<sup>15</sup>. Gender equality dose not means 'privileges' it means equal opportunities purely based on talent and passion.

## Empowerment of women guarantees gender equality

Empowering women is one step towards gender equality. Results depend on a lot of factors, like how men respond to it, how far the older women embrace the change and let it happen to their younger generation, how accepting the society as a whole becomes to this.

Because more often than not, people can't handle a strong willed, opinionated woman. A lot of men and women would rather like their daughters and daughter in laws to be meek, silent sufferers instead of taking a stance and fighting. Thus, empowerment of women will bring nothing if their mothers and fathers don't like the new freed version of the previously subdued daughters. Slowly and steadily times are changing, it is long way to go, but and the destination is not too far to be achieved.

## II. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Gender Empowerment is necessary because in order for there to one day be world peace people must seek to truly understand one another. Society must learn to accept that people are individuals and quit trying to label groups of individuals as being a single individual. After all it is being individuals is something that everyone has in common and overlooking that and trying to apply gender, sex, race, or stereotype will create barriers in our mind which will lead to not understanding people as well as individuals and run-on false assumptions

Nature has given both the genders it's specific roles, and has given them bodies and minds accordingly<sup>16</sup>. There is no way that both the genders can be made to do same things equally. Disparities in a society lacks in cohesiveness and invites higher rates of anti-social behaviour and violence<sup>17</sup>. Countries with greater gender equality are more connected<sup>18</sup>. Their people are healthier and have better well- being. The four things need to be eliminated to achieve gender equality: 1) Patriarchy and matriarchy 2) Male disposability 3) Female domestication 4) Gynocentrism and androcentrism.

In the current system women are disadvantaged in a lot of employment prospects and men are disadvantaged in a lot of domestic prospects. By disadvantaging both halves of the human race in important parts of our society, the society is wasting a lot of potential. By involving women in the work force, the talents of women can be fully harnessed and diverse viewpoints can be discussed with involving women. They can add insights which some men may miss. By involving men in domestic life, the benefits of paternal influence in humans can be fully utilized. It has been scientifically proven that involvement of fathers is mega helpful for children. Firstly, the societal members should tackle their unconscious biases. This will be a very difficult task as biases are pretty much ingrained within the society from the very childhood of a person, but the benefits of tackling these biases will be greatly beneficial for current and future generations.

"I raise my voice — not so that those without a voice can be heard ...We cannot succeed when half of us are held back."-Malala Yousafzai

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