

Women's Accreditation and Defense

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Abstract— Women accreditation and defense in India using various indicators based on data from secondary sources. The study reveals that women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. Gender gap exists regarding access to education and employment. Household decision making power and freedom of movement of women vary considerably with their age, education and employment status. It is found that acceptance of unequal gender norms by women are still prevailing in the society. More than half of the women believe wife beating to be justified for one reason or the other. Fewer women have final say on how to spend their earnings. Control over cash earnings increases with age, education and with place of residence. Women's exposure to media is also less relative to men. Rural women are more prone to domestic violence than that of urban women. A large gender gap exists in political participation too. The study concludes by an observation that access to education and employment are only the enabling factors to empowerment, achievement towards the goal, however, depends largely on the attitude of the people towards gender equality. "If a child is not, safe in her mother's womb, -where else in the world will she be safe????"

I. INTRODUCTION

Women's accreditation and defense in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class), and age. Policies on women's empowerment exist at the national, state, and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence, and political participation. As, there are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. As such, women and girls have restricted mobility, access to education, access to health facilities, and lower decision-making power, and experience higher rates of violence. Political participation is also hindered at the Panchayat (local governing bodies) level and at the state and national levels, despite existing reservations for women. The impact of the patriarchal structure can be seen in rural and urban India, although women's empowerment in rural India is much less visible than in urban areas. Urban women and, in particular, urban educated women enjoy relatively higher access to economic opportunities, health and education, and experience less domestic violence. Women (both urban and rural) who have some level of education have higher decision making power in the household and the community. Furthermore, the level of women's education also has a direct implication on maternal mortality rates, and nutrition and health indicators among children. Discrimination against women in most parts of India (particularly the north) emerges

from the social and religious construct of women's role and their status. As such, in many parts of India, women are compared to be less than men, consider a lower status in the family and community, which consequentially restricts equal opportunity in women and girls' access to education, economic possibilities, and mobility. 79 percent of urban women from the highest education brackets and only about 40 percent of rural women without education were allowed to go to the market alone.

Abuse and violence towards women is predominantly perpetrated within the household, and marital violence is among the most accepted by both men and women. Wife beating, slapping, rape, dowry related deaths, feudal violence towards tribal and lower caste women, trafficking, sexual abuse, and street violence permeate the Indian social fabric, and create one of the most serious obstacles in achieving women's accreditation.

II. WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND SECURITY IN INDIA

A. Women's Rights

Policies relating to women's rights have had a positive trajectory in the past few decades with the central government articulating many progressive measures to advance gender equality in social, economic, and political arenas. With a vibrant women's rights movement in India, there are continuous demands for better laws, provisions, and accountability for implementation. Most recent examples include the change in India's rape laws, where in 2006 marital rape was recognized. Currently, women's rights activists are demanding better provisions in Sections 375 and 376 of the Indian Penal Code.

Since then, there have been multiple challenges by the women's movement leading to small but significant amendments. The 2005 Domestic Violence Act provides protection from violence in the household from not only male perpetrators, but also female perpetrators like mothers-in-law and other female members in extended families.

Additionally, women in India face high rates of violence. Some recent statistics on women include:

- India ranks 18th among the highest maternal mortality rates in the world with 540 deaths for every 100,000 births.
- Only 48% of adult Indian women are literate.
- Lower caste and tribal women are among those who experience the highest levels of physical violence.

- 85.3% of women reporting violence claimed that their current husbands were the perpetrators.

B. Women's Security

The multiple forms of violence experienced in the household, at the community level, and in some instances by the state, threaten women's security in India. In many parts of North India son preference is a widely practiced phenomenon. Son preference has direct linkages to sex-selective abortion (illegal across India; however, enforcement by both police and some doctors is still lacking), and discrimination of girl children in access to health, nutrition, and education.

Additionally, at the household level, incest, rape and domestic violence continue to hinder women's development across India. Forty percent of all sexual abuse cases in India are incest, and 94% of the incest cases had a known member of the household as the perpetrator. Dowry related deaths, domestic violence, gang rape of lower caste women by upper caste men, and physical violence by the police towards tribal women all contribute to women's insecurity in India. The class and caste structure inadvertently put poor women from lower class and tribal communities at the most risk of violence. Women and girls in urban India are also at high risk of gender-based violence. The National Crime Bureau claims that a woman is raped every 29 minutes in Delhi. Street violence in urban centers is a growing concern for young women and girls, who are increasingly moving away from rural areas for economic opportunities and higher education. There have been numerous instances of violence perpetrated by state security forces against local and tribal women.

B. Trafficking of Women and Girls

India is both a source and destination for trafficked women and girls into prostitution and bonded labor. While exact numbers of trafficked women and girls are difficult to ascertain, there have been figures projected by various national and international NGOs. Anti-trafficking measures in India have increased with India's commitment to international human rights protocols, and through strict legal provisions at the national level. The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956 (ITPA) is the widely used law to prosecute traffickers, but also is invoked to target prostitution. Sex work is a debated subject in the women's movement in India. The anti-prostitution law is seen by many to criminalize and further marginalize women who are in the sex trade. Women's rights organizations, activists, and organizations such as the Durbar Mahila Samanway Committee (a nationwide sex workers' collective) have long supported legalization of the sex trade in India. The debate over legalization of sex work continues today and sex-work supporters are lobbying to change the ITPA for better rehabilitation measures for those who have been rescued

during brothel and street raids. The ITPA also does not give adequate measures for those who are trafficked for purposes other than sex work, and disproportionately targets women, making them further vulnerable to poverty and exploitation.

III. WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIA

Now a days India is growing fastly in economics, specially the women from middle class are going in workforce. It is noticed that young women from semi-urban and rural part comes to urban cities like Delhi and Bangalore they lives alone and surviving themselves. However the economic empowerment for women is not narrative story; but it is located in a complex set of caste, class, religious, and ethnic identities.

As the diversity of women's economic opportunities between states is due to the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of each state. In Northern states like Delhi and Punjab lag far behind on gender equality measures, including the alarming sex ratio between men and women (due to son preference and sex-selective abortion), low female literacy levels, and high rates of gender-based violence. In 2009, the Global Gender Gap reported by the World Economic Forum ranked India 114th out of 134 countries for inequality between men and women in the economy, politics, health, and education. On equal economic opportunities and women's participation in the labor force, India ranked 127th and 122nd respectively. The number of women in the workforce varies greatly from state to state: 21% in Delhi; 23% in Punjab; 65% in Manipur; 71% Chhattisgarh; 76% in Arunachal Pradesh.

In rural part of India, women do not allows to put their step out of home because of social, cultural, and religious barriers. Women from rural area, particularly from lowest cast, does not take education because of their surrounding so they are unable to make contact and get busy in unorganized sector. There are some organization such as Self-Help group(SHG) which gives opportunity to manage loans and savings that can be used by members for varying needs. Members of SHGs have used their experiences as to enter other local institutions such as the Panchayat Khap. In India, 70% women from rural area are mainly devoted to domestic works. India's growing economy has allowed for many upper and middle-class women to enter the workforce, and while poor rural women have little access to education and training, there is a high demand for domestic workers in urban hubs. The best way to avoid mental attack on women it is necessary give education to girls so they can do what they want and able to understand what is right and wrong.

A. Women's Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

The movement to assure women's economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR) as basic human rights is just emerging in India. The movement aims to locate women's rights within

the larger human rights framework, and by doing so moves away from looking at women's issues only within the framework of violence against women and reproductive rights. ESCR attempts to look at the broader issues facing women, namely poverty, housing, unemployment, education, water, food security, trade, etc.

While the human rights movement on ESCR is largely contained at the international policy level, there are emerging social movements around the world. In the Indian context, projects like the Program on Women's Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (PWESCR), for example, is creating linkages between the international human rights movement and the local articulation of women's rights. PWESCR aims to build a women's rights movement in India that create equality in all spheres of women's lives. By empowering women economically and socially, ESCR provides for a broader discourse on rights that moves women's rights from a victim centered approach to one that cuts across other fundamental human rights issues. Women's economic opportunity in India is a rapidly changing landscape. Women are increasingly entering the workforce particularly women professionals and are creating change, but there remains a large number of invisible women workers in unorganized and volatile sectors. However, organizing at the local level, albeit small, is widespread. Implementation of national and state level policies lags behind in ensuring that women workers have equal pay and are free from exploitation

IV. WOMEN IN POLITICS IN INDIA

Historical Context

During the independence movement, women were visible and active as nationalists, and as symbols of "Mother India". Gandhi, in particular, was instrumental in creating space for women through his non-violence (and some would argue feminized) mode of protest. Gandhi's legendary salt march initially excluded women, but due to demands from women nationalists he later realized the power of women organizers at the local level. His inclusion of women, however, was not located within a gender equality framework, but was a means to achieving a stronger and unified Indian state. The inclusion of women in the nationalist movement was also to debunk the British colonial assertion of "needing to save the poor, vulnerable women" of preindependence India.

The first post-independence Lok Sabha (the People's Council or the Parliament) had 4.4% women. The period between the early 1940's and late 1970's saw an emergence of the Indian women's movement, but it was not until the 1980s that the women's movement gained real momentum

A. Reservation at the Panchayat Level

In 1976 the Committee on the Status of Women in India was established and published a report recommending an increase

in elected women at the grassroots level, which led to the introduction of the 33.3% reservation at the Panchayat level in 1988. It was only in 1993 that an amendment in the constitution made the proposed reservation at the Panchayat (village level governing councils) a reality.

A survey made in 2008 shows that women made up close to 50% of all the village councils across the India. The number of women representatives has certainly increased at the grassroots level; however, questions still remain regarding their decision-making power within the councils. A study in West Bengal and Rajasthan by the Institute of Management Studies (Calcutta) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) found that where women Panchayat members were active, there were more robust programs on water, irrigation, and infrastructure. The study conclusively states that in Panchayats where women were present policies were more beneficial to the community than in Panchayats where women were absent. Initiative also states that in Panchayats with female presidents, the participation of women in the larger council rose close to 3% in one year. The reason for the increase in women's participation is correlated to two possible factors: first, women representatives exemplified new possibilities for change; and second, women leaders took up issues that would have a positive impact on the community as a whole possibilities for change *Caste and Class Politics*. The complexities of politics in India are embedded in class, caste, and religious identities For women politicians, class, age, and caste all have significant impact in their political lives. India is one of the few countries in the world that has elected a woman leader. Indira Gandhi was among the very few women leaders in the world during her time in office. However, her role as the Prime Minister was not seen as a win for the women's movement in India. She was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru and represented the political dynasty of her family. In 2007 India elected its first female President, Ms. Pratibha Patil. While the President holds a mostly ceremonial role in Indian politics, Ms. Patil's election was show a drastically move towards a more equitable representation of women at the highest levels of government. Although representation of women and members of the lower castes in Indian politics is rapidly changing, complexities of caste politics continue to govern representation

B. 33% Reservation for Women

The Women's Bill in April 2010, which gives 33.3% reservation for women in all levels of Indian politics, took 14 years after its introduction to finally pass by the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of parliament). It is yet to be passed by the Lok Sabha (the lower house of parliament). The reservation bill will ensure 181 out of the 543 seats at the Parliament level, and 1,370 seats out of the 4,109 seats at the State Assembly level. This is a historic move in the Indian political landscape, as currently women occupy less than 10% of seats in the national Parliament The Women's Bill will also

significantly change the demographics of class and caste among women politicians in leadership positions in the Indian political structure. It will create a path for women from lower classes and castes (who are currently confined to local-level governance) to enter state and national level governments. In addition to the existing reservations for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, one third of the SC and ST candidates must be women. Other Backward Class (OBC) members are not included in the reservation due to the wide disagreement about who constitutes OBC and a lack of existing data on the OBC population. The bill mandates that all political parties reserve one third of their electoral ticket for women, including in the already mandated reservations for SC and STs. This will inadvertently create spaces for lower caste and class women to enter state and national level politics. The passage and implementation of the Women's Bill, and its impact on the existing gender, class, and caste barriers, is yet to be realized, but one thing is clear: India's politics is moving closer to equitable inclusion than ever before.

"Eliminate Inequality, Not Women"

"Destroy Dowry, Not Daughter."

Say "NO" to Sex-Determination

Say "YES" to Empowerment of Women.

Say "NO" to Sex Discrimination.

Say "YES" to Gender Justice

V. CONCLUSION

Women is an important part of society and her empowerment is must a development. In developed countries, every member of society is in equal position. But in developing nation like India, we need to empower people who are not receiving equal treatment.

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