

Gender Discrimination : An Overview of Literature

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Gender discrimination is one of the debatable concerns for sociologists, especially those who are really interested in sociology of gender. This paper is an attempt to investigate gender discrimination and highlights the institutional mechanisms for boosting and preserving gender discrimination. The collected information has been analyzed qualitatively. The study provides the reviewed based data on gender discrimination. So, this study is qualitative in nature based on secondary data. For secondary data, a thorough evaluation of related literature has been executed where gender discrimination is highlighted. The studies, reviewed on gender discrimination, points out that patriarchal values of society and valuing males more than females are considered main reasons behind the discrimination.

[**Keywords** : Gender, Gender discrimination, Society, Patriarchy, Patriarchal values, Gender discourse]

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1. Introduction

Gender Discrimination is a major problem that places women at a disadvantage thereby stymieing economic growth and societal advancement. Gender discrimination or gender gap continues to be an immense issue of concern in India despite its achieving high rates of economic growth in recent years. Gender discrimination still exists in India. Gender discrimination not only limits women's access to resources and opportunities but also imperils the life prospects of the future generation. In India traditional patriarchal customs and norms have relegated women to a secondary status within the household and society. This type of gender discrimination reflected in India's low ranking of the world economic forum's Gender Gap Index 2022, with scores below average on parameters such as educational attainment, economic participation and health. As a whole the country ranked 135 out of 146 countries with a score of 0.629 on the gender inequality index, which is very low. Gender discrimination always facilitated with the aid of diverse socio-cultural and relational elements. The foremost among them is the family, which performs a big function in the growth of gender discrimination (Singh, 2022). The normative social order restricts women and tends to prefer men to emerge as the guardians. Patriarchy protects male ideology and nurtures these terrible gender values (Singh, 2022). On the name of culture, discrimination takes place subtly, and it is highly accepted in our society. A girl is forced to fit into a culturally defined role both at home and outside the home. Traditionally, girls are less important than boys, who do not deserve the necessities of life. These regressive traditions have become so deeply ingrained in society. Most of the women have also accepted their secondary status in the society (Nussbaum and Jonathan, 1995 : 49). Such deliberate discrimination against women and girls violates the right to equality and the right to life given by the constitution of India. In the last decades, extensive research has been conducted on gender related issues, studying both their antecedents and consequences. However, existing literature reviews a comprehensive and clear picture of what has been studied so far, which could guide scholars in their future research. This paper offers a scoping review of a large portion of the research that has been published over the last years, on gender discrimination and related issues, with a specific focus on sociological studies. The paper measures the relevance from a point of view and the relationships

among the research highlighting the importance of each topic in the overall gender discourse. This paper prominently relates to gender discrimination, e.g., concerning discrimination in birth, child care, socialization, role, education, decision-making and career progression. This paper offers a map of the main gender-research and presents the most popular and the emerging themes, as well as their intersections, outlining important avenues for future research.

2. Objective of the Study

This paper is an attempt to investigate gender discrimination and highlights the institutional mechanisms for boosting and preserving gender discrimination.

3. Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature based on secondary data. For secondary data, a thorough evaluation of related literature has been executed where gender discrimination is highlighted.

4. Need of the Study

In India, gender discrimination persists. Discrimination based on gender not only hinders women's access to resources and opportunities, but it also threatens the lives of future generations. Discrimination based on gender was always made easier by a variety of social, cultural, and interpersonal factors. The family is the most important of these, contributing significantly to the spread of gender discrimination. Women are subject to restrictions in the normative social order, which typically favors male guardianship. Male ideology is safeguarded by patriarchy, which also fosters these terrible gender values. Discrimination is practised subtly in the name of culture and is widely accepted in our society. These retrograde customs are now so ingrained in society. The majority of women have also accepted their lower social status. Such intentional oppression of women and young girls abuses the right to fairness and the right to life given by the constitution of India. Gender-related issues have been the subject of extensive research over the past few decades, looking at both the causes and effects of these issues. However, the existing literature provides scholars with a comprehensive and precise picture of what has been investigated thus far, which may serve as a guide for their subsequent research.

So, with a particular focus on sociological studies, the need of a scoping review of a significant portion of the recent research on gender discrimination and related issues. There is a need to examine the connections between the research and the significance of each topic in the gender discourse as a whole.

5. Review of Literature

In order to know the gaps in any field, a brief and thorough review of the earlier literature is essential. In this paper, an attempt has been made to review the available literature on different aspects of gender discrimination.

Feminist researchers acknowledge their role in the production of knowledge to transform women's situations. In this order some sociologists have done studies related to gender discrimination, e.g., The sociologist, Anoop Khanna (2003) studied on foeticide associated with son preference and female infanticide in Rajasthan, Anupama Esther Ghosh (2003) has examined existing knowledge and attitude toward female foeticide, Satinderjit and Sushma Jaswal (2004) have studied the attitudes of rural parents with respect to female education, Rohini Pandey and Anju Malhotra (2006) have investigated the gender discrimination and gender preference of mother and families, Madhu Nagla (2007) has examined whether boys more likely to have vaccination coverage than girls, S. Guruamy (1999) has explored the causative factors and circumstances leading to the practice of female infanticide in Tamil Nadu, Ramakant Sharma (2002) has studied social and demographic background of pre-natal and Medical Termination of pregnancy service seekers. T.V. Sekher and Neelabar Hatti (2010) studied the factors responsible for the increasing discrimination against girls, even before they are born, Saumya Chand (2011) has emphasized the practice of gender discrimination in the health care facilities such as prenatal and maternal case, Tulsi Patel (2007) has explored the relationship between the ultrasound technology and sex selective abortions, Sneha Lata Tandon and Renu Sharma (2006) have analyzed the magnitude of the incidence of female foeticide and infanticide in India, Institute for development and communication, Chandigarh (2002) has studied the value of a male child in a patriarchal society ensured differential treatment of the girl child in comparison with male child, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child development, New Delhi (2008) has studied the various social cultural economic

demographic factors that contributed to the declining sex ratio, Shweta Prasad (2001) studied the prevalence of sex determination (SD) tests in U.P., Anuapama Bishnoi (2001) assessed the impact of developmental programmes on empowerment of mother and girl child, Prabhat Jha, et al. (2006) have investigated prenatal sex determination affects sex ratio at birth as measured by previous birth sex, Lund University, Department of Economic History, Lund, Sweden (2006) attempted to conceptualized the process of declining child sex ratio in Karnataka and Uttaranchal, Usha Nayar (1995) has studied the causes for the adverse and declining sex ratio in the age group 0-6 years in Punjab and Haryana, Sita Ghirmire (2000) analysed the impact of seven organizations working to prevent violence and discrimination against girls in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Mohammed Hussain, Arab Naaz, Wasim Khan, Umar daraz and Kausar Khan (2015) investigated the role of family include in calculating gender stereotyping in culture and its impact on gender role development conducted in public sector universities of Malakand division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.

Sunita Boss (2012) analyzed 18,519 families with opposite sex children from (NFHS-3) are used to test the impact of maternal son preference and context on the gender differential in education in India. Jafar Hassanzadeh, Noorollah Moradi, Nader Esmailnasab, Shahab Rezaeian, Pezhman Bagheri, and Vajihe, Armanmehr (2014) were aimed to analyzed gender inequalities and their health associated factors in world countries.

P. S. Raychaudhury (2014) examined the attitudes, reactions, and perceptions of women consumers such as housewives and modern girls who live in cosmopolitan cities, including Delhi. Rebecca L. Collins (2011) collectively analyzed gender roles in media in quantitative terms. Apoorva Bharadwaj, Ritu Mehta (2017) in the present paper examined the construction of gender roles in two recent Indian television commercials that depict Indian women essaying supervisory roles in their corporate jobs. Liot Kulik (2001) examined differences in job search intensity, attitudes towards unemployment and related responses among a sample of Israelis, based on gender and marital status (single vs married). Paula Kantor (2002) examined the contribution of a sectoral approach to understanding gender constraints on economic success in the informal sector, using the example of self employed women in home based garment production in Ahmedabad, India.

J. Maselco and V. Patel (2008) described the risk for attempted suicide in women when it is associated with social disadvantage and physical and mental illness. Apoorva Bharadwaj, Ritu Mehta (2017) in the present paper examined the construction of gender roles in two recent Indian television commercials that depict Indian women essaying supervisory roles in their corporate jobs. Natasha Quadalin (2018) conducted an audit study by submitting 2,106 job applicants that experimentally manipulated applicants' GPA, Gender and college major.

SriVidya Rama Subramanian and Parul Jain (2009) focused on gendered spousal Expectations and sexual preferences in contemporary media of a globalizing India. Tanja Hentschel, Madeline E. Heilman and Claudia V. Peus (2019) used a multi-dimensional framework to check the current stereotyped status of males and females. Specifically, they sought to determine (1) how men and women were characterized by male and female raters, (2) how men and women characterized themselves, and (3) the degree of confluence between self-characterization and characterization of one's gender group. Tabassum Naznin and Shankar Bhabani (2021) aimed to check in this investigation that contemporary management culture does not critically engage with the social theories of gender studies, which could help in developing gender-neutral affirmative action-oriented managerial perspectives.

Usha Ram, Lisa Strohschein and Kirti Gaur (2014) described patterns of gender socialization among youth in India and evaluated how these patterns are associated with their mental health. Nasrina Siddiqi (2021) has investigated the objective to explore the concept of gender equality in India, from an indigenous-cultural point of view. Our Watch (2018) conducted a survey to ask parents of children from 0 to 3 years old what they think about gender equality and violence against women, how they divide key household tasks and child rearing responsibilities within their family and whether they believe that gender has an impact on their children. Rashmi Umesh Arora (2012) examined gender inequality, economic development and globalisation in the different states of India. Specifically, it examines whether gender inequality differs across the Indian states and whether it is lower in more open and 'globalized States.

Nandita Kapadia Kundu, Manisha Khale, Sachin Upadhyay and Deepti Chavan (2007) studied aimed to provide contextual

information on gender roles, household and family dynamics and the occurrence of physical violence. Sonalde Desai and Lester Andrist (2010) explored the impact of three dimensions of gender : (1) economic factors such as availability of wage employment, dowry expectations and wedding expenses; (2) indicators of familial empowerment, such as women's role in household decision-making and access to and control over resources; and (3) markers of gender performance, such as observance of purdah and male-female separation in the household.

Sharon R. Bird and Stephen G. Sapp (2004) examined the gender gap in small business success in urban and rural places. Gay Young, Lucia Fort and Mona Danner (1994) aimed to bridge theory on gender relations and measurement of the reality of gender for women and men by means of a set of social indicators of gender inequality. Rohini P. Pande and Nan Marie Astone (2007) analysed the determinants of son- preference in rural India. Voluntary health Association of India (2003) investigated the sharply declining child sex ratio in India indicating female foeticide at the grass root level.

Irada Gautam (1999) focused on the difficulties faced by girls, their parents and siblings, community leaders' feelings about them, and suggested ways to remove their problems. Aarti Shrivastava (2005) investigated the attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child; analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child; evaluate awareness and attitude towards Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act 1994; and create awareness about the dangers of female foeticide. N. Diamond Smith, Nancy Luke and Stephen Mcgarvey (2008) specifically addressed fertility preferences among the rural poor in Tamilnadu. Today gender discrimination is a pressing issue- which calls to be addressed at once. Arti Srivastava (2005) investigated the attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child; analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child; evaluate awareness and attitude towards Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act 1994; and create awareness about the dangers of female foeticide. Although gender discrimination was observed by religion and economic status, respondents with high education denied discriminating between daughters and sons.

Gay Young, Lucia Fort and Mona Danner (1994) aimed to bridge the gap between the theory of gender relations and the measurement

of gender equality for women and men by using social indicators of inequality. These findings show that women's rights remain dismal across all levels of national income and that they face disadvantages in the interaction between social relations of production and reproduction, whether they are in rich or poor countries. The more complex measure of gender inequality may provide valuable information to guide gender equality policies and practices.

Anupama Bishnoi (2001) analysed the impact of developmental programmes on the empowerment of mothers and girls in Fatehabad district of Haryana, and he identified problems beneficiaries faced in utilizing these programmes. Three sample villages were evaluated on three programs : the Apni Beti Apna Dhan (ABAD), Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY) and National Maturity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). During The years 1998-1999 to 2000-01 saw 6,548 beneficiaries participating in the ABAD programme, 824 beneficiaries participating in the BSY programme, and 1105 beneficiaries participating in the NMBS programme. A sample of 90 beneficiaries was interviewed. Data was collected from interviews; it was found that some beneficiaries had a neutral attitude towards BSY, while others had a favourable attitude. Most beneficiaries took advantage of the program once, and the majority received the amount within the specified period. BSY had little impact on mothers and girls. NMBS beneficiaries were mostly satisfied with the current distribution system. Data collection was conducted by interviewing 90 beneficiaries. The study found that 76.7% of those interviewed reported poor coordination between village staff and district headquarters staff. It is necessary to begin more programs exclusively for mothers and girl children, as 73.3% of beneficiaries were not aware of educational and communication constraints. They also received inadequate support from family and society. It is necessary to begin more programs exclusively for mothers and girl children, as 73.3% of beneficiaries were not aware of educational and communication constraints. They also received inadequate support from family and society.

Paula Kantor (2002) looked at the contribution of a sectoral approach to understanding gender restrictions on economic success in the informal sector, examining the experience of self employed women in Ahmedabad, India, who produce garments at home. The findings show that the women-exclusive constraints are all found within this sector. However, there is variation among the

women-exclusive constraints in their differential gender effects, and some sector specific constraints are more intense for women than for men. The latter two findings suggest that economic activity needs to be considered in understanding the causes and extent of gender inequality in economic outcomes.

Rashmi Umesh Arora (2012) analyzed gender inequality, economic development, and globalization across the states of India, in particular whether gender inequality differed across the states and whether it was lower in more open and 'globalized states. The study's findings show that at the sub-national level in India higher per capita income is accompanied with lower gender inequality. However in some high income states gender inequality is also very high.

Kishore Parasram ji (2017) investigated the gender gap in illiteracy, child marriage, and spousal violence among women using data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4). An analysis of secondary data was conducted on ever married women reaching reproductive age in 15 states and three UTs in India. The study shows that in rural areas, women's illiteracy is significantly higher than men's in all states except Meghalaya and Sikkim. Bihar and Madhya Pradesh had higher illiteracy rates among women, 53.7 % and 48.6 %, relative to men, 24.7 % and 21.5%. In four of the most populous states, child marriage rates are higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

In earlier 2017 Our Watch (2018) conducted a survey to ask parents of kids aged 0-3 about their views on gender equality and violence against women, the way key household tasks and child rearing responsibilities are divided within their family, and whether they believe that gender influences their children's behaviour and development. In the survey, 858 respondents were polled in 8 territories of Australia. The results showed that most parents want gender equality for their young children. They believe that young children are not influenced by gender stereotypes. There are many practical challenges parents face when implementing gender equality in their household. It is consistent with existing research that men are usually more likely than women to support traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Compared to mothers, more fathers are unlikely to feel comfortable allowing their sons to play with dolls or cry when they are sad. Finally, most parents want to challenge traditional gender stereotypes.

6. Findings from the Studies

Almost all the studies, reviewed on gender discrimination, points out that patriarchal values of society and valuing males more than females are considered main reasons behind the discrimination. Girls are discriminated against in health and nutrition from an early age (Pandey and Malhotra, 2006). There is frequent gender inequality in nutrition, with girls receiving an insufficient nutrition. A major manifestation of gender preference is the excessive mortality of female children (Chand, 2011). In addition to the adverse sex ratio, there are other unfavorable gender indices, such as wife beating, rape, bigamy, and sexual abuse (Institute for Development and Communication, Chandigarh, 2002). There is a belief that investing in a girl is a waste of money and that there is nothing to gain from doing so. According to the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi, a girl's safety is a concern, and the girl is feared as a threat to the family's honour (National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi, 2008). Instead of being an example of sex-determination, sex discrimination and sex selective abortions are deeply rooted in patriarchal social structures' attitudes and values (Prasad, 2001).

According to Anoop Khanna (2003), women who desired a son were motivated by lineage, the belief that a girl would be a burden to their families, and the dowry culture. The study also found that respondents regretted being a girl in addition to dowry and poverty as reasons for discrimination against girls. Another study reveals that dowry and wedding expenses for daughters are one of the primary reasons people do not want to have daughters (Usha Nayar, 1995). Son preference is one of the primary causes of female feticide and gender discrimination in India, according to nearly all reviewed studies (Das Gupta, 1987 : 92; Bose, 2001 : 3429). Son preference among women who desire a male child is based on lineage, the belief that a girl is a burden to the family, and dowry culture (Ghosh, 2003). Rural parents have a poor attitude toward female education (Jaswal, 2004). There is a significant role for misuse of prenatal and MTP (medical termination of pregnancy) techniques to contribute to the growing sex gap in India. The majority of women claim that their husbands have compelled them to kill their babies (Tandon and Sharma, 2006). A review has been done on pre-birth and MTP administration searchers. Tulsi Patel has investigated how the

combination of legal abortions and the illegal foetal sex test is handled through relatives or friends rather than local health care professionals (Patel, 2007). The study revealed that the majority of women who aborted their pregnancy through private agencies aborted their fetuses because they were female (Ramakant Sharma, 2002). According to a study, the majority of parents stated that they underwent sex determination tests to avoid dowry-related issues. Indeed, a significant number of couples took the test during their second and third pregnancies.

According to Prasad (2001), the issue in the SD tests was not sex determination but rather sex discrimination and sex selective abortions, which were rooted in patriarchal society's attitudes and values. In India, sons are viewed as having a higher economic benefit to the parents for cultural and economic reasons. Daughters are thought to be of less economic benefit and won't take care of them when they get older. In addition, Hindus believe that a son is more important than a daughter because he must perform rituals at his parent's funeral and on every anniversary of their passing. All of the previous research has demonstrated that son preference is strong in many parts of India, particularly in the North West. According to a study by Das Gupta (2005), people, particularly women, are compelled to bear sons rather than daughters in order to conserve scarce household resources. There appears to be a strong preference for sons, and the sex ratio is closely related to the sex composition of the children already in the family. (Coale, 1991).

The reviewed studies have indicated that Gender discrimination is still at its peak in Indian Society. The areas related to gender discrimination which are studied by the researchers are as follows :

- The role of family include in calculating gender stereotyping.
- The gender equality in terms of illiteracy, child marriages, and spousal violence among women.
- The attitude and practice of gender discrimination in an urban family setup.
- The gendered experiences of involuntary childlessness and the societal perceptions of the state of being childless.
- The social and demographic background of prenatal and MTP (Medical Termination of Pregnancy) service seekers

and implementation status of Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PNDT).

- The factors responsible for the increasing discrimination against girls, even before they are born how does fertility decline and son preference manifest at the village level, particularly in the context of widespread availability of sex selection techniques at low cost.
- The practice of gender discrimination in healthcare facilities such as prenatal care, maternal care and impact of gender discrimination in healthcare facilities especially on female mortality and sex ratio and regional variations in healthcare facilities, female mortality and sex ratio.
- The relationship between the ultrasound technology, sex selective abortions and the culture of reproduction medical by informal social networks of the multi-layered relationships between members of the community and their relationships in organizing social and biological reproduction.
- The magnitude of the incidence of female foeticide and infanticide.
- The value of a male child in a patriarchal society insuring differential treatment of the girl child in comparison with the male child.
- The various socio-cultural, economic, demographic, cultural and other factors that contribute to the declining sex ratio.
- The prevalence of sex determination (SD) test and impact of Pre-natal Diagnostic techniques, Act 1994.
- The impact of developmental programmes on empowerment of mother and girl child and to identify problem faced by beneficiaries in utilizing these programmes.
- Prenatal sex determination affect sex ratio at birth in India.
- The process of declining child sex ratio.
- The causes for the adverse and declining sex ratio in the age group 0 to 6 years.
- The foeticide associated with son preference.
- Examined existing knowledge and attitude towards female foeticide.

- The attitudes of rural parents towards to female education.
- The gender discrimination and gender preference of mothers and families.
- Boys are more likely to have vaccination coverage than girls.
- Gender achievement and major effect employment outcomes among recent college graduates.
- Gender spousal expectations and sex role preferences in contemporary media of a globalizing India.
- Gender equality and violence against women.
- Gender inequality, economic development and globalization in the different states of India.
- Impact of maternal son preference and context on the gender differential in education in India.
- Differences in job search intensity, attitudes towards unemployment and related responses.
- Gender constraints on economic success in the informal sector.
- The risk for attempted suicide in women associated with social disadvantage and physical and mental illness.
- Gender roles, household and family dynamics and the occurrence of physical violence.
- Economic factors such as availability of veg employment, dowry expectations and wedding expenses.
- Indicators of familiar empowerment such as women's role in household decision-making and access to control over resources.
- Markers of gender performance such as observance of purdah and male-female separation in the household.
- Gender gap in small business success in urban and rural places.
- Gender inequality.
- Determinants of son preference in rural India. ? Declining child sex ratio in India.
- Difficulties faced by girls, their parents and siblings community leaders feeling about them.
- Attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child, analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child.

All these are the areas of gender discrimination on which sociologists have done extensive studies and found that after all the development and progress, women still discriminate in the society.

7. Summing up

The conclusion from the paper that can be reached is that females are subjected to discrimination, which is a serious issue. The common belief among society is that males are more capable than females. As a result, males play a more significant role in society and females are still discriminated against. So There is a need to pay more attention to these issues in society. The researchers must highlight these issues to solve this problem.

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