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Women empowerment & gender sensitization: The status of women in society

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Abstract

Gender inequality and Gender discrimination are one of the major problems of our society and the female gender is always discriminated in various ways in the social context of the world although women have legally equal rights in comparison to males. Still, there is a high need to sensitize the world on gender issues so that there will be no gender inequality and discrimination. Women Empowerment can be done through gender sensitization and through gender sensitization especially in the field of education to deal and to make strategies which need to be adopted especially in education field to promote gender sensitization with all this, this paper will give us the glimpses of the status of women in our society. This paper will give us a look of mechanisms through which the participation of women's in decision-making at every level can be ensure. How women can improve situations and conditions for them and for the coming female generation. How the women's can be empowered and can get equality in the society.

Under the heading of Women Empowerment and Gender Sensitization, this paper will talk about the need and importance of Women Empowerment and Gender Sensitization. In earlier times women's were always considered as a second sex and always dominated by males but in present era this scenario has changed, women start empowering themselves specially by educating themselves. On the other side society and culture also started taking major steps towards gender equality and gender sensitization.

Keywords: Women empowerment, gender, sensitization, teachers role, discrimination

Introduction

Our country India has taken the challenge very seriously of modernizing its culture and tradition, its economy, of reducing illiteracy and poverty and to improve the living standards of its citizens. The power and roles of females play a very crucial role in the economic growth of the country. The constitution of our country has given equal rights to the females but in real they are treated differently. Still, a girl child is unwanted and undesirable. In present time also girls get less attention and care from her parent's side in comparison with the boys. A country cannot make any kind of development and cannot prosper as a developed nation until efforts and practices are not made to empower women which encourage the participation of the females in the economic development of the country.

The gender differences can be meet only through gender sensitization. Gender is related to the behaviour, activities and roles of males and females in all social contexts i.e. The concept of gender is created by the society and it is dynamic in nature which is flexible and changes with time and situations. On the other side the concept of 'sex' is biological and describes the physical characteristics which are not dynamic in nature. The term 'Sensitization' means the awareness that can be created so that the prejudices and discriminated behaviour towards women's and different discriminated sections of the society can be eliminated.

A detailed discussion is required for the clear and deep understanding of the above-said topic. A long perception in the society and tradition is that males always have greater physical and mental strength so better considered for warfare, hunting and land clearing whereas the females are believed to be physically and mentally weak and considered as fit the works related with house, child care and breastfeeding. There is a surely negative and discriminated attitude towards the natural capacity and characteristics of male and female.

Even today in most of the families of our society it is noticed that-

1. Parents give their more focus and concentration on boy's children whereas girls left with less attention and focus.

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2. Society is of the viewpoint that boy's need not to indulge themselves in the household works as these works are meaningless for their career and for their future life.

At workplaces also it is noticed that

1. Men's are associated with heavy and risky jobs.
2. Females are denied for challenges and risky jobs and most of the time paid with less wages in comparison to males.

On the top of it, a recent survey presented its observation and claimed that it had taken young school boys for their survey. In survey they were asked which family member should sacrifice their meal if the meal felt short on the dining table. In answer to it most of the boys replied that mother will be as their first choice and the 'sister' will be the following choice. So the conventional rules and norms are responsible for this type of responses that males are having this type of thinking that the first person to sacrifice food should be their mother followed by their sister.

Here the questions arise that why always a male member get meal served first in homes and the women are accepted to eat in last? A sharp discrimination between male and female gender in relation to their wages, strength, social acceptability and ability is observed from our homes in many situations. The general belief is that the women section is weaker than males section and needs protection and security and hence dependent on men. This misconception and wrong thinking regarding the gender ideology are responsible for creating these types of gender discriminations. The upbringing of children with these types of misconceptions and wrong thinking play a major role in developing gender differences and inequality in coming generations also. So there is a need to change the thinking of young children to eradicate the gender differences and gender inequality from the very ground level.

Status of Women in India

Generally females are almost half of the total population of India. A country or community cannot be regarded as the activist nation or community where the females are not honoured. In our country females can enjoy high position in our society. They are on high rank like IAS, IPS, and IFS etc. They also work in defence sector, their participation in sports and games can also be noticed. They serve as representatives like MLA, Governors, MP, and ministers. Women are of recent times like Indira Gandhi, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Mother Teresa, Sushma Swaraj, Indira Gandhi etc. have gained international fame.

Females of our country have gained high fame in the field of literature, acting and music. With all this women are joining the area of science and technology also. There is no field or area of work for which woman is unsuitable or incompetent. But in real the status of females in our country is far below than the status of males. The discrimination against the women is rising in our country with time like a woman is tortured or sometimes burned when her family is failed to pay the dowry as demanded. These types of cases are increasing every year and this is a matter of shock. In the field of education also, the rate of literary women is lower than the rates of educated males. All these things reflect that the social status and conditions of females are more pathetic

and globally also the picture related to the women's are not encouraging.

Need of Gender Sensitization

Women in society and in our culture are given multilateral roles to play, yet they are discriminated not only in womb, but also in every walk of life. Women's of India played and playing an impressive role in the development of the society as well as in the development of the country.

In spite of all these contributions and roles they have to meet with number of challenges, problems and limitations in their day-to-day life. Some of challenges are –to create a significant position for themselves in a male domination society, to overcome from verbal abuse, domestic violence, early marriage, dowry violence, sexual harassment at home and workplaces, female infanticide and foeticide etc. Based on the above-mentioned discriminations, it becomes duty of individual to be open minded, unbiased and sensitive to overcome and meet with the various disparities and the problems existing in the field of gender equality. From the past time, the need for this type of sensitivity towards gender equality has been felt in almost every field across the globe.

Strategies to Enhance Gender Sensitization

After getting deep knowledge of the socio-economic inequality and by knowing the psychological perspectives of the people different strategies can be planned to remove gender inequality. Through following strategies we can easily and effectively promote gender sensitization and women empowerment.

1. By giving priorities to the education of women. In this context UGC has been enhancing the context related to the women's studies.
2. Particularly for the female students school and classrooms must have environment which can provide space to the females to carry out their choices.
3. Developing educational activities in education field for developing moral values among students regarding gender equality.
4. High safety measures for girls in the premises of school.
5. Promoting gender equity by increasing the women's access to justice.
6. Emphasize of financial empowerment of women.

There is no doubt that in our country the conditions for females had improved in comparison with the past times. As the Indian society is patriarchal dominated, it is very difficult to change and develop the mindset of the people. For example despite the various efforts of the society the women still have fear and doubt for their safety and well-being in outer world specially at educational institutes and workplaces till this time it is very difficult to expect to have complete safety for women and girls.

Conclusion

Thus on the bases of the above discussed information it can be concluded that both the male and female gender are required equally for the development of any society. Any sort of inequality or disturbance in the matter of individual count, safety, literacy, survival count will damage the authentication of human existence. So a continual effort should be made to create a progressive, strong, more

sensitive and rational society. Education has a very significant role to play in the process of gender sensitization and equality. By achieving gender-equal society we would have better society and environment to live.

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