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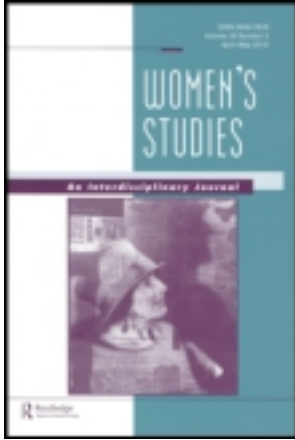
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GENDER DISCRIMINATION: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTAN

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Introduction

Gender inequality refers to the obvious or hidden disparity between individuals due to gender. Gender is constructed both socially through social interactions as well as biologically through chromosomes, brain structure, and hormonal differences. The dichotomous nature of gender lends to the creation of inequality that manifests in numerous dimensions of daily life. Also when distinctions are made between males and females and differential treatment is meted out to boys and girls then there is a gender inequality.

Gender discrimination is worldwide phenomena. There is no country in the world where men are equal to women or do not have a gender gap. Gender disparities exist in almost all the countries of the world. The Global Gender Report 2008 indicated that some advanced countries such as Norway, Finland, Sweden and Iceland have less gender gap with an average 20%. While in Yemen and Pakistan, the situation is much worse with a 47% and 44.5% gender gap respectively. Pakistan is ranked at 127 among 130 countries (World Economic Forum 8–9).

Although the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan gives equal rights and status to both women and men, there is a clear gender inequality in Pakistan. Society is patriarchal; it is part of the culture. Working on gender issues is a part of development

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work and discrimination against women is a major Human Rights issue.

Due to prevailing economic and socio-cultural issues Pakistan is considered as a high gender discriminatory country. Gender disparities are pervasive: women are less educated than men; their health and nutritional status is lower; their mobility is strongly restricted; and their access to employment and income-generating activities is limited. To address the issue of gender discrimination and to empower women politically, legally, economically, and socially; various policies, strategies, and programs have been designed and implemented by various government agencies in Pakistan. However, the discrimination situation is still alarming. A lot of studies have been carried out on the various aspects, issues, and obstacles of gender discrimination. Various social, cultural, political, legal, and economic constraints are identified and then various policies and programs are framed in this context for women's empowerment.

However, the most important factor which is missing and not identified in literature, is the behavior and attitude of women toward other women. Man is always accused for dominancy and violence against women. But it is a common observation in rural areas particularly and urban areas generally, that women's attitude and behavior towards other women itself aids and even sometimes leads to gender discrimination. This surprising aspect of discrimination is very common but not visible or observed in rural areas due to unknown reasons. The same issue is the central theme of this article and is explained and analyzed with the support of primary data collected through interview and observation methods from 30 villages of the Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa Province of Pakistan. The primary objective of this article is to show and explain how women create gender discrimination. The secondary objective is to provide various stages of discrimination as this has not been pointed out in the existing literature.

This article has been organized into eight sections with the literature review as the second section, followed by profile of the research area in the third section. Research methodology and result and discussion are presented in the fourth and fifth sections, respectively. Stages/life cycle of gender discrimination are explained in the sixth section. Strategies for reducing discrimination are provided in section seven. The article concludes in last section.

Literature Review

In gender studies the term “gender” is used to refer to the social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities, not to the state of being male or female in its entirety. The philosopher Simone de Beauvoir said: “One is not born a woman, one becomes one” (Beauvoir 301).

Gender studies are a field of interdisciplinary study which analyzes the phenomenon of gender. Gender studies are sometimes related to studies of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and location (Healey 17).

There is a growing body of literature in which efforts have been made to clearly define the concepts of women’s empowerment, women’s discrimination, women’s disparity, women’s inequality, women’s rights, gender bias, and gender gap. However, very less is available in the existing literature regarding the basic causes of women’s disparities and the gender gap. One of the most common causes is considered to be man and the onus has been on males. Man is considered the most powerful/dominant and his behavior entailing discrimination towards women is highlighted in many studies and articles. Men’s violence against women is a reality and established fact. In a Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) carried out in KPK province of Pakistan, a man from district Kohistan clearly stated that “all the rights are for men, women have to follow their husbands and be content with what they have” (Planning and Development Department 109). This is illustrative and brings out the fact about the common attitude of men towards women in rural areas of KPK. Thus, “gender relations in Pakistan and many other Muslim communities rest on two basic perceptions: that women are subordinate to men, and that a man’s honor resides in the actions of the women of his family. Thus, in orthodox Muslim communities, women are responsible for maintaining the family honor. To ensure that they do not dishonor their families, women’s mobility is restricted, limits are sets on their behavior and activities . . .” (Joseph 95).

Discrimination against women starts when they are just children. Female child discrimination is the most prevalent form of harassment seen from the early age of a child. Parental sex selection, female feticide, female infanticide, child marriage, child

abuse including sexual and psychological abuse, and child prostitution are the many kinds of violence and discrimination against the girl child that is seen within the home as well as the society (Kali Web).

Families and societies prioritize to invest in boy child from food to education to luxury than in girl child because traditionally they are to move out by getting married, are to perform domestic work, reproduce and not contribute to economic income of the family. Consequently, women tend to have lower levels of education, professional and vocational skills than men. The low level of investment in women's human capital compounded by cultural norms, make women subordinate to men. Thus the social and economic dependence of women on men becomes a basis for male power over women in all-social relations. (Yazdani 4)

Women, like men, do not constitute a homogeneous group. In all societies, both women and men belong to a variety of groups and networks and have different religious, social, and ethnic backgrounds. To ensure broad, inclusive participation it is crucial to identify the different needs of these groups, and to give them all an opportunity to be heard.

The diversity of women does not alter this: gender equality is a key to human development and human security. A number of studies have been conducted to look into the empowerment of married women. Bali and Yang pointed out that economic factors, managerial control, and behavioral changes are the most significant factors in empowering women (1).

Profile of Research Area

The Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa (KPK) is the smallest province (in term of area) spreading over an area of 74,521 square kilometers which is 9.4% of total area of Pakistan. The population of KPK is 17.744 million which is 13.4% of the total population of Pakistan. Population density of the province is 238 per square kilometer compared to 166 at national level. 16.8% of its population lives in urban areas, whereas 83.1% lives in rural areas.

In the East and South of KPK is Punjab (another province of Pakistan). In the West of KPK is Afghanistan and Balochistan

(another province of Pakistan) and in the North are Afghanistan and China. The capital of KPK is Peshawar.

The KPK is closely identified with Pakhtuns (Pathans or Pashtoon). Pakhtuns predominate in Balochistan (another province of Pakistan) and are also the major group in southern Afghanistan. Their language is Pukhto or Pushto written in Arabic script. The tribe is also famous for their hospitality, brevity, strong religious belief, and following of the local culture, which is called Pukhtunwali.

The status of women in KPK and the development of their potential remain a paradox. The society in KPK is tradition-bound and is male dominated. All socio-economic indicators provide a very bleak picture of the status of women in KPK. The literacy rate is quite low. Traditional indicators of women are uniformly lower than those of men and KPK has among the largest gender gaps in the country. Less than 30% of women in KPK are literate (can read or write their names) compared of 58% of men, while 41% of eligible girls enroll in primary schools compared to 62% of eligible boys. The gender gap is worse in rural areas, many of which are remote and physically challenging. Traditional barriers to women's mobility and their participation in broader economic and social life are the key cultural concerns (ADEA Web).

Research Methodology

The KPK was selected for this research as there is more gender discrimination than in other parts of the country. A total of 30 villages were selected randomly for data collection. Data were collected from 210 married female (7 female from each village) using interview methods. Moreover, the general trend of male-female and female-female relationship with reference to gender discrimination is also observed. The profile of 210 respondents (in percentage) is given in Table 1.

Most of the questions were asked from females to get their insight and feeling regarding how they feel as a woman while passing through different stages of the life cycle. Respondents were asked to what extent they are empowered and participated in the decisions taken at the house level and whether they felt more comfortable before or after marriage. Attempts were made to find

TABLE 1 Respondent Profile

Responded Groups	No of Respondent (in %)
Group 1 (Family System)	
Nuclear Family ¹	30%
Joint Family	70%
Group 2 (Employment)	
Working Female	15%
House Wife	85%
Group 3 (Education)	
A. Both male and female were educated	10%
B. Both male and female were uneducated	30%
C. Male educated and female uneducated	52%
D. Male uneducated and female educated and/or female are more educated than male.	8%

¹Nuclear family is that in which husband and wife live together in separate house from husband's parents or living with husband's parents but having separate kitchen.

out their attitude toward other women (as a daughter, mother, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, etc.) in the various stages of the life cycle. The study was limited to female respondents to find out their perception about women's attitude towards other women (homogeneous group). Family system, employment, and education of women were taken as impact factors on their relationships. A simple percentage method is used for data analysis.

Result and Discussion

The data was collected from female respondents (which is divided into 3 groups as mentioned in Table 1) to show their behavior and attitude towards other women in various stages of gender discrimination. The results in Tables 2, 3, and 4 were established.

Table 2 shows the views of those females who belong to nuclear family and the joint family system (Group 1). In this group 76.1% female (25.5% of nuclear and 50.6% of joint family) comment that women are discriminated at various stage of life. This also indicates that perceptions of the joint family system towards gender discrimination is more (50.6% of respondents) as

TABLE 2 Gender Discrimination at Various Stages (Group 1) (in %)

Stages/Forms of Gender Discrimination	Group 1 Response			Who is Responsible—Response of Nuclear and Joint Family					
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family		Male	Female	Other Family Members	Local Culture	No Facility	Other
Low preference to have female child	39	51%		30	27	21	12	—	—
Low preference to celebrate female child birth	28	65		34	31	24	4	—	—
Low preference to female child in food	23	47		12	40	18	—	—	—
Low preference to female child in education	25	51		21	19	11	11	14	—
Low preference to involve female in decisions of her marriage	29	41		26	18	17	9	—	—
Low preference to involve female in decisions after marriage	20	61		35	—	38	8	—	—
Low preference for female job	21	66		36	9	22	9	11	—
Gender discrimination at work place	19	23		17	25	—	—	—	—
Total	25.5%	50.6%		26.3%	24.1%	21.5%	8.8%	12.5%	—

TABLE 3 Gender Discrimination at Various Stages (Group 2) (in %)

Stages/Forms of Gender Discrimination	Group 2 Response		Who is Responsible—Response of Working Female and House Wife					
	Working Female	House Wife	Male	Female	Other Family Members	Local Culture	No Facility	Other
Low preference to have female child	38	58	34	25	27	10	—	—
Low preference to celebrate female child birth	40	53	35	26	24	8	—	—
Low preference to female child in food	23	47	14	46	10	—	—	—
Low preference to female child in education	40	52	42	25	7	5	13	—
Low preference to involve female in decisions of her marriage	42	46	29	31	25	3	—	—
Low preference to involve female in decisions after marriage	41	53	51	—	39	4	—	—
Low preference for female job	39	52	43	7	28	13	0	—
Gender discrimination at work place	63	11	39	35	—	—	—	—
Total	40.7%	46.5%	35.8%	27.8%	22.8%	7.1%	13%	—

TABLE 4 Gender Discrimination at Various Stages (Group 3) (in %)

Stages/Forms of Gender Discrimination	Group 3 Response				Who is Responsible—Response of All Education Groups				
	A	B	C	D	Male	Female	Other Family Members	Local Culture	No Facility
Low preference to have female child	13	39	21	17	33	24	21	12	—
Low preference to celebrate female child birth	18	32	20	19	29	23	24	13	—
Low preference to female child in food	11	37	21	16	19	48	18	—	—
Low preference to female child in education	8	43	20	17	38	24	15	5	6
Low preference to involve female in decisions of her marriage	20	38	18	14	33	27	25	5	—
Low preference to involve female in decisions after marriage	16	23	34	10	45	—	35	3	—
Low preference for female job	21	27	24	20	39	16	24	13	0
Gender discrimination at work place	29	13	15	23	48	32	—	—	—
Total	17.0%	31.5%	21.6%	17.0%	35.5%	27.7%	23.1%	8.5%	3.0%

A. Both male and female were educated.

B. Both male and female were uneducated.

C. Male educated and female uneducated.

D. Male uneducated and female educated or less education than male.

compared to the nuclear family system (25.5% of respondents). This group of respondents fixed the responsibility of gender discrimination on males more (26.3% of respondents) than females (24.1% of respondents). However, other factors such as the other family members including mother-in-law and father-in-law, and so on (21.5% of respondents), local culture (8.8% of respondents) and non availability of facilities by governments (12.5% of respondents), are also responsible for gender discrimination.

Table 3 shows the views of Group 2 (i.e., working women and housewives). In this group 87.2% female (42.2% of working women and 45.0% of house wife) comment that women are discriminated at various stages of life from her birth up to participation in the work place. It is also notable that more housewives feel gender discrimination (46.5% of respondents) than working women (40.7% of respondents). Group 2 fixed the responsibility of gender discrimination comparatively more on males (35.8% of respondents) than females (27.8% of respondents). However, other factors such as the other family members including mother-in-law and father-in-law, and so on (22.8% of respondents), local culture (7.1% of respondents), and non availability of facilities by governments (13.0% of respondents) are also responsible for gender discrimination.

Table 4 shows the views of Group 3. There are four subgroups (A, B, C, and D) of women respondents formulated on the basis of husband and wife education level. The minimum education level was taken as Matric (High School Education) for both men and women. Although, data from men was not collected, their education level was considered to know the impact on the women comments when their husbands are educated and uneducated.

In this group 87.1% female respondents (17.0% of A, 31.5% of B, 21.6% of C, and 17.0% of D) comment that women are discriminated at various stages of life starting from her birth through participation in the work place. It is also notable that education has great impact on the gender discrimination. The comments of subgroup B (both male and female were uneducated) indicates more discrimination (31.5%) as compared to the comments of subgroup A (both male and female were educated) where discrimination is less (17.0%). Similarly, uneducated females (subgroup C) has more discrimination (21.6%) than educated females (subgroup D) where discrimination is less (17.0%).

TABLE 5 Comparison of Group Respondents

Respondents Comments	Group 1 (76.1% Respondents)	Group 2 (87.2% Respondents)	Group 3 (87.1% Respondents)
Male responsible for discrimination	26.3%	35.8%	35.5%
Female responsible for discrimination	24.1%	27.8%	27.7%
Other family members responsible for discrimination	21.5%	22.5%	23.1%

This group (Group 3) fixed responsibility for gender discrimination comparatively more on males (35.5%) than females (27.7%). However, other factors such as the other family members including mother-in-law and father-in-law, and so on (23.1% of respondents), local culture (8.51% of respondents), and non availability of facilities by governments (3.0% of respondents) are also responsible for gender discrimination.

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents of the three groups are agreed that there is severe gender discrimination in KPK. The table reflects that there is male dominance and this contributes more in discrimination. However, it also confirmed that female itself the second cause of discrimination. It may be noted that other members of the family such as the father, mother, father-in-law, and mother-in-law also have great impact and influence on discrimination.

Stages/Life Cycle of Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

Discrimination at birth: This is a very common phenomenon in Pakistani society that most of the families including women themselves prefer a male child. On the birth of female child, the whole family including father, mother, grandfather and grandmother are not happy. Her birth is often mourned rather than celebrated. Farooq also indicated that the mother greets the birth of a girl with despair or guilt (3). Girls are considered a liability. According to Shahid “the desire for a male child is so strong that it leads to infanticide of female babies and abortions of female foetuses

after an ultrasound reveals their sex. Estimates of the number of 'missing' girls due to such practices vary, but are as high as 100 million" (Web). In most of the cases, the grandmother (although a female) blames the mother of the baby and accuses her of not having the ability and capability to produce a male child. The mother is threatened with divorce if she is unable to give birth to a male child in the next attempt. It has also been observed and many studies even provide evidence that the size of some families increased and reached to 7–10 female babies in the expectation of male child. In some families, the mother-in-law arranges a second marriage for her son with the expectation of a male baby from the second wife. A woman having more sons is considered to be more empowered. For example, during the Participatory Poverty Assessment analysis in Seo (Kohistan District of KPK), a woman said that she fell into the poor category because she had no power to make any decisions. Her husband, however, insisted that she should consider herself better off because she had many sons. The woman did not agree and asked, "I do not have any control over them, and how can I be better-off?" (Planning and Development Department 27).

Discrimination in female birth celebration: The women's discrimination started just after her birth. It is a very common custom and tradition in rural areas that the birth of a male baby is celebrated with music and the firing of guns. His birth is celebrated by his mother distributing sweets in the whole village. On the other hand, on the birth of a female child, there is complete silence. There is no distribution of sweets. In some families they distribute inferior quality of pulse called "Black Channa." It is a common observation that the distribution of this means the birth of a female baby in the house.

Discrimination in food: In this stage of discrimination, the level of discrimination moves up further. If there are male and female children in a family, the male child is treated with good food as compared to the female child by his mother. The mother (although female) keeps good food (e.g., food having beef/chicken) separately for her male child till his return from school/playground. The remaining food is given to the female children. Women and girls face great discrimination in regards to good nutritious food in the house (Kali Web). "In general female children are less valued and cared for than are male children. According to a UN

study, girls receive less nourishment, health care, and education than do boys” (Online Women Web).

Discrimination in education and recreational activities: The fourth level of discrimination against women’s is also very serious. The male child is provided a good opportunity for schooling at the village level. In search of good schools/colleges, they are sent to other cities or even abroad. However, parents do not desire women’s education or education is limited to village-level schooling. They do not allow females to go outside the village for further education if not available at their own village. This means women’s education is limited to the village level. The mother is also silent at this stage to support her daughter for higher education. According to Yazdani “families and societies prioritize to invest in boy child from food to education to luxury than in girl child because traditionally they are to move out by getting married, are to perform domestic work, reproduce and not contribute to economic income of the family. Consequently, women tend to have lower levels of education, professional and vocational skills than men” (4).

Young men usually participate in outdoor games, sports, visiting friends and relatives, and going unaccompanied to shops with the permission of their parents. In contrast females are not allowed to participate in such activities. Females need not only permission from their parents but must be accompanied to go outside her home. Her main activities are to watch TV, knitting, and embroidery at home.

Discrimination in marriage: Women’s discrimination at this stage consists of two types:

Early marriage: Parents usually prefer to marry their daughters as soon as possible. According to Brubaker one-third of girls marry before the legal minimum age of 16 (Web). On the other hand males are married after completion of their education or after getting any job or starting a business.

Parent’s decision: Female marriage is the whole responsibility of the parents and the central role is performed by women (mother and grandmother). The girls have no say even in the decisions about their own marriages. The mother does not bother to ask her daughter if she is agrees or disagrees with the marriage. “The girls are usually not asked whom do they want to marry; parents just fix wedding dates of their daughters to the groom of their choice”

(Mukhar Web). The girl does not know to whom she is going to be married. She is lucky if her marriage is arranged in her family because at least she knows about her future husband. On the other hand, males are involved in decisions regarding marriage.

The Participatory Poverty Assessment, conducted in KPK, observed that older women were generally considered relatively empowered and better off (Planning and Development Department 110). Then the question is why do women such as the grandmother have a discriminatory attitude.

Discrimination after marriage: This stage of discrimination is more critical because women face two shocks when she comes to her new house (husband's house) that is her relationship as a wife with a man for first time and her relationship with her mother-in-law and other family members. It has been observed that in most of the cases the husband-wife relationship in the beginning period of marriage is very good and in the process of developing understanding. They respect and love one another. However, it is a common observation that a good relationship never develops between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law (homogenous group). This means discrimination and violence originates among the women from the women's side.

Discrimination in jobs: The story of discrimination is not completed in the above stage. This stage and onward is more difficult. If a women manages to overcome all the discrimination barriers at the home level then she must get permission from her parents/husband for a job. Even at this stage she is not allowed to decide by herself. If she is allowed to get a job then the next step is to compete with male applicants and usually the private sector shows preference to males. The job opportunities for women are poor when compared to males. Moreover, women are not paid equally to that of their male counterparts. It was observed and pointed out by many working class females during the field survey that most of the women working in private schools are paid much less than the men.

Discrimination in the work place: The stories of women's discrimination at the work place are well known. Inappropriate treatment, attitude, and bad behavior by men toward women are common practices. But it is also observed that women themselves create problems for their women colleagues even at work place rather than cooperating. Instead of having unity at the workplace, they

are against each other and complain to the boss (male or female) against each other for petty things.

Strategies for Reducing Discrimination

Gender study is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study in which race, ethnicity, class, clan, location, attitude, behavior, society, socio-culture, power, religion, politics, economics, and so on are involved. One policy or strategy may not work to reduce gender discrimination. So there is need to develop a multidisciplinary strategy for which some suggestions are provided below:

- Use affirmative action as a tool—affirmative action is the deliberate undertaking of positive steps to design and implement policies on gender development issues right from the grassroot level. It is a sensible and restrained tool to help the society to achieve its goal of equal opportunity and integration. It is good to focus on a worthwhile remedy (affirmative action) instead of addressing the ongoing discrimination which is still the central focus of the gender rights struggle.

Affirmative action focuses primarily on employment and education programs, to ensure women as minorities enjoy benefits like school admission, financial aid, scholarship options, salary advancement, and the opportunity to grow within a society, which in the past has been predominantly reserved for men.

- Select, prepare, promote, retain minorities, and capable women for women mentoring and counseling.
- Educate the masses at large—provide formal information at regular intervals on gender development time to time to sensitize and familiarize all citizens about the strengths and challenges of gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural differences through mass media and publications.
- Strengthen enforcement of anti-discrimination laws—against both men and women.
- Improve data collection—accurate data on minorities and women can show where progress is or is not being made in breaking barriers or retarding the development of human capital.

- Econometric models to assess the cost of discrimination—discrimination is costly. Additional research to quantify the cost of maintaining barriers to individuals, corporations, and society at large due to discriminating approaches should be conducted and econometric models developed.
- Role of technology in breaking barriers—communication and information sharing are key components of breaking barriers and reducing the ill effects of discrimination. E-mail, the World Wide Web, live chats on the Web, video conferencing, and document sharing are only a few examples of the many technologies which allow access to time-efficient and inexpensive methods of exchanging information.
- Recognize the role of the media—The media do not reflect Pakistan as much as shape Pakistan. The media plays a critical role in developing and eliminating stereotypes and biases that affect the way minorities and women are viewed in society at large. Hence, it is recommended that (1) media organizations examine closely their diversity demographics at all levels; (2) the media regularly review their coverage for accurate diversity portrayal and possible distortions; and (3) an award be established and presented annually to the media organization that consistently puts forth an accurate and positive reflection of women and minority groups in their programming or coverage.

Conclusion

The subject is far from unknown in Pakistan, but when raised, it is more than often dealt with in a theoretical way, for instance through workshops and conferences in hotels. The target groups are also limited to highly educated persons, “people from the top” who have the knowledge about the subject. But it is also important to target women who have little or no knowledge about what rights they have, who do not know that what they are exposed to is per definition a crime, something against the law (Julia 111).

From the data collected and analyzed, it is concluded that females also have nearly equal if not more of a role than males in contributing to and continuing gender discrimination right from inception. Three factors i.e., family system (joint vs. neutral),

employment of female (working vs. housewife), education of both male and female (educated vs. illiterate) have a significant role in increasing/reducing discrimination.

Most of the studies claimed that women are discriminated against because they are powerless and are not involved in the decisions. However, in case of KPK Pakistan, it was observed during a field survey that women have at least the influencing power and can change the decisions at household level. Most women get more influential power with the age. Even in some women's discrimination cases, males cannot be blamed as decision makers, because females themselves are responsible. For example, it can be observed that the women themselves prefer male offspring and usually bless other women for the birth of male offspring. Another interesting discrimination case observed that a male baby of the family is usually put in the lap of the bride when she is brought, wishing that she may have a male child first. Similarly, the case of food's discrimination is also from the female side. Poor house maids are always treated badly by women by paying less and behaving cruelly which was observed during field visits.

The mindset, behavior of males and females, and local culture have been developed in such a way that a woman feels that she has no meaning in the society. They are considered as property. The most interesting factor is that there is also a big gap between rural women and those women who got a well reputed position in the government and society.

Though time and again the studies conclude that males are the principal source of and for discrimination yet it is an observed reality that women themselves are responsible for subjugating ill treatment to other women members or indirectly continuing to prevent the gender development as envisaged by the society at large.

Be it the issue of mother-in-law versus daughter-in-law or sister-in-laws even leading to fatal cases of bride burning and forced bigamy. The cycle of gender discrimination is continued because of the approach "what I got—I give back" adopted by women. This discrimination cycle will continue until women are educated and induced to adopt the approach that "it is better to treat fairly" even if I got worse.

Since there is no law or weak law and lack of monitoring system regarding discrimination a fundamental cultural shift

is required to change the people's perceptions, environment, and gender roles. An environment needs to be created where a girl child is as welcomed and valued as a male child. There is need to develop programs to change the attitude of males and females both, otherwise all efforts and investments in women's empowerment will not affect at the desired level.

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