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## **GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER -BASED VIOLENCE: AN ISSUE IN UNIVERSAL EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Mustafa Ahmed**

Assistant Professor, Juria College

### **Abstract**

The National Development can be desired if girls have been equally promoted with boys in educational institutions. Therefore, it is important to study and formulate measures and programmers that are focused upon making provisions of equal rights to girls in education. It is apparent from the study that there is a remarkable gender disparity in universal education. Gender plays a significant role in determining how individuals experience and enjoy their rights, with cultural legal and institutional factors often leading to the exclusion of certain groups, especially women, girls and gender diverse individuals. Gender and human rights are deeply interconnected. Human rights as protected in international law proclaim the dignity, equality and freedom of all individuals. However, these rights have not always been applied equally across genders. Gender based discrimination and violence continue to affect millions worldwide, limiting access to education, healthcare, political participation and economic resources. Concerted effort should be made for expansion of universal education and rights for girls and removal of obstacles in disparity and it will promote equal opportunity for girls.

**Key Words:** Disparity, Education, Equality, Gender, Human Rights

### **Introduction**

The overall progress of a nation is largely depend upon the quality and quantity of education received by the people. Women have an important role to play in the advancement of a country. It is only through education of girls that the level of a nation to be raised. Educational thinkers are of the view that gender disparity and gender based violence is closely associated with universal education and human rights. The gap between boys and girls participation in education is the biggest single gap that needs to be filled for education and human resource development. The gender discrimination and violence continue to affect millions worldwide, limiting access to education, economic resources and human rights. The gender disparity reflects the discriminatory social attitudes towards girls.

Universal education means making education available for the all children between the age group 6-14 without fail. India is a democratic country and education is consider as constitutional rights to be provided equally instead of sex. Gender disparity between boys and girls will be disappear soon if compulsion is enforced for all boys and girl at all the stage of education. Otherwise, inequality remains and our economic and educational development will become slow and our real democratic concept will fail to reach in its goal.

In simple word gender disparity may be define as discrimination against girls based on their sex . Girls are exploited, degraded , violated and discriminated specially in rural backward areas . Gender based violence includes a range of physical, sexual , psychological and economic abuses . Recognising gender based violence as a human right issue means acknowledging acts such as domestic violence, sexual assault , female genital mutilation , trafficking , forced marriage and online harassment . This issues are not merely personal and cultural matters but serious violations of fundamental rights , including the right of life , dignity , freedom and security .

The challenges of the day are to make gender equality as major steps to universal education and human rights. It requires addressing the root causes of discrimination and violence- such as harmful gender norms, unequal power relations, and discriminatory laws and practices. This includes ensuring access through education, advocacy and structural reforms.



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## **Significance of the study of gender discrimination and gender based impairments:**

It is of great important that gender disparity and gender based out breaks is not just a consequence of individual's tradition but it is a systematic human rights issue that demands a co-ordinate and comprehensive response . Addressing gender based violence requires government , institution and societies to take action in preventing violence , protecting survivors , prosecuting offenders and promoting gender equality . It is also important that because of spreading mass literacy which basic requirement for economic development , modernization of social structure and the effective functioning of democratic institutions . It also represent and indispensable step toward the provision of equality and opportunity to all its citizen . Moreover , the constitution of India in the Article – 15 (1) provides that the state shall not discriminates any citizen on ground only of sex . Instead of sex every individuals has to be equipped with necessary knowledge , skills and attitudes to discharge his duties as a responsible and co operative citizen .

In India , a significant literacy gap persists between males and females . While overall literacy rate is improving, a considerable disparity is exists in the literacy rates of male and female across different regions and rural backward areas . It is therefore , equality is necessary to assure in the progress of education and in the developmental plans is a prime focus. In the education gender equality in practice involves ensuring that girls and boys have equal access to quality education at all levels . Rights in action means not only enrolling girls in school but also creating an environment where girls can complete their education.

### **Objectives**

- To study the gender disparity in view of spread of literacy .
- To know the existing disparity position and short falls in girls education
- To understand the concept of gender in relation to human rights .
- To analyse gender based violence as a human rights issue.
- To asses the goal of states and institutions as well as non government organizations in this field with full support.
- To find reasons for which the lag between boys and girls have been continued .

### **Methodology**

The study is based on secondary data collection methods and sources of data collected from different reference books, educational journals , Magazines , Newspaper, Periodicals , records and various website s etc . In this study also used and adopted historical , descriptive and experimental methods of research .

### **Review of related literatures**

Several clauses of laws , Acts , Educational policies , National surveys and reports have analysed regarding gender discrimination and gender based violence from various approaches , however , yet to practice and consider importance and need of the study of gender disparity in education and human rights . Gender inequality remains a complex an evolving issue comes up a vital focus , this paper attempts to reduce the inequality and violence related to education and rights .

### **GENDER DISCRIMINATION- AS AN ISSUE IN UNIVERSAL EDUCATION:**

Education plays a vital role in the entire progress of the country and deserves the highest priority not only grounds of social justice and democracy but also for rising the competence of the average people and for increasing the national productivity. The total population of India is 146.39 billions according to April/ 2025 UN report. On the other hand, of total population males constitutes about 51.56% and females make up 48.44%. It is there for necessary to ensure the progress of girl education in the developmental plans as a prime basis. Gender disparity is closely associated with universal education and it is of great importance because of its effect in the process of universalization. Universalization implies three processes- universal enrolment, universal retention, and universal attainment. The gap between boys and girls participation in



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education is remarkable that needs to be filled for universalization. The gender inequality reflects the discriminatory social attitudes towards the girls. Not all the areas of the of the country show the same progress in universal education .Enrolment is the best in the urban areas both for boys and girls but in rural backward areas is generally much less and this is true specially in case of girls. Not in frequently, the progress of universal education varies considerably in different Districts of the same State.

The gender gap in education in India is characterised by a persistent literacy gap despite increasing girls enrolment in primary education. For example the 2011 census showed a literacy gap of 16.68 percent. Male was 82.14 percent and female was 65.46 percent. However, enrolment at the higher education level shows slightly higher female Gross Enrolment Ratio(GER) in 2020-21.But a significant variations, with some states having much larger gender gap in education than others. In Assam according to the census of 2011 the total literacy rate is 72.19 percent and Male is 77.85 percent and Female is 66.27 percent.

In India, the female literacy rate remains significantly lower than that of males, averaging 70.03 percent nationally for the year 2023-24 and in 2025 male 88 percent and female 81 percent and in present overall 87 percent(according to PLFS data).As per NSSO data(2022), in India overall literacy rate is 77.76 percent, male 84.7 percent and 70.3 percent. It highlights a remarkable gap in literacy. Particularly States like Rajasthan (75.8%) and Uttar Pradesh(78.26%), where gender disparity continues and girls encounter obstacles such as early marriage. Causes of disparity is to be like as economic backwardness of the rural community, lack of proper social attitudes of the people of the rural areas, prevalence of child labour, girls belonging to weaker section of people, unawareness of provision of law, and also of orthodoxy and conservatism of illiterate peoples of remote backward areas.

**GENDER BASED VIOLENCE -AS AN ISSUE IN HUMAN RIGHTS:**

Understanding gender in human rights involves recognising how gender shapes peoples experiences of rights, freedoms and justice. Gender plays a significant role in determining how individuals experience and enjoy their rights, with cultural, legal and institutional factors often leading to the exclusion of certain groups, specially women, girls, LGBTQ+ individuals and gender diverse individuals. Basic principles of human rights are- Universality, Invisibility, Participation, Accountability, Transparency and Non- discrimination. Human rights belong to everyone, everywhere, regardless of nationality, sexuality, gender, race, religion or age. From a human right perspective, gender inequality is not simply a social issue but a violation of fundamental rights and gender discrimination undermines the right to equality. International human rights documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights(UDHR) the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women(CEDAW), and the International Convent on civil and political Rights(ICCPR).These organizations affirm that every person ,regardless of gender ,has to right to life, liberty, security, education, work and participation in public life.

The Global Gender Gap Report 2024,published by the World Economic Forum, asses gender parity across 146 countries in four key areas- Economic participation and opportunity, Educational attainment, Health and survival and Political Empowerment. As of 2024, the global gender gap has closed by 68.5%, marking a slight 0.1% improvement from the previous year. At the current rate of progress, it is projected to take 134 years to achieve full gender parity worldwide. Among the sub indexes, the Educational Attainment gap is at 94.9%.

The historical development of gender rights is a long and complex journey that reflects a struggle for justice, equality, and social transformation. It has evolved over countries influenced by political movements, cultural shifts and legal reforms. As the movement for gender rights continues to grow, it increasingly adopts an inclusive approach and aiming to ensure that the rights of individuals –regardless a gender identity fully respected and protected. Gender based violence is one of the most pervasive and persistent human rights violation in the world. It refers to harmful directed at individuals based on their gender and is rooted in structural inequalities, power imbalance, and discriminatory norms that legitimize violence against women, girls, and gender diverse people. Gender-based violence includes a` rage of physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuses. Recognising Gender-based violence as a human rights issue means



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acknowledging that these acts are not merely personal or cultural matters but serious violations of fundamental rights, including the right of life, dignity, freedom and security. Gender discrimination in India remains a complex and evolving issue, marked by continual challenges that demand a coordinated and comprehensive response. Only by treating Gender-based violence as a serious violation of human rights can we move toward a world where all individuals, regardless of gender, can live free from fear, violence and discrimination. Finally, achieving gender equality in practice requires strong political will, adequate funding, and active participation from civil society, specially women right organizations and grassroots movements.

## SUGGESTIONS:

It is essential to ensure and make provisions of equal rights and opportunities for girls. In this regard following are the suggestions-

- Quality and Quantity should be related to the total literacy and emphasise should be given on equalising the education of boys and girls.
- Proper implementation and educational facilities should be provided by the governments for improving girls enrolment specially of rural backward areas.
- To raise the status of the family and standard of living of illiterate parents proper education should be given. In this connection continuing and adult education are very needful.
- Programmes like public awareness campaigns, Gender focussed seminars and provide training to officials on gender sensitivity and human rights.
- To stop discrimination and injustice accountability, transparency and a commitment to gender sensitive governance are essential for States and institutions to fulfil the roles in advancing gender issues related to education and rights.

## CONCLUSIONS:

Gender discrimination regarded as a major issue in the progression of the system of education in human rights. The major factors that are social and traditional attitudes, discriminatory treatment among girls, violations of acts, illiteracy of parents, poverty conditions, lack of participation and lack of interest. To overcome all these issues we have to make awareness programmes and schemes to create a society where every individual regardless of gender identity can live with dignity freedom and equal opportunity. When we will provide equal rights to the girls then it would promote the growth and development of the entire Nation.

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