To examine the caste – wise gender inequality and bias against female children

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Abstract:

Gender inequality, strongly rooted in social hierarchies and caste systems, is a complicated issue in many civilizations. This research examines caste-based gender inequity and female children's unfair treatment and opportunity. This study uses a multidisciplinary approach to examine gender and caste relationships using historical, sociological, and anthropological materials. This research illuminates the structural biases that perpetuate uneven treatment and restricted chances for female children across caste groups by investigating socio-economic dynamics, cultural norms, and historical legacies. This study examines gender and caste intersections using qualitative and quantitative methods to reveal discriminating tendencies beyond statistics. How gendered expectations and conventional norms impact female children's upbringing leads to discrepancies in school, healthcare, nutrition, and well-being is examined in the research. It also examines how these prejudices affect female offspring's life paths, perpetuating disadvantage. This study examines change drivers by closely assessing community narratives and attitudes. New voices question conventional standards, highlighting the need to empower and respect female children regardless of caste. The research also examines legislative interventions and grassroots efforts that have helped dismantle deeply rooted prejudices. This research illuminates caste systems' intricate gender-based disparities. This study urges policymakers, campaigners, and stakeholders to address these gaps holistically, taking gender and caste dynamics into account. Dismantling caste-based gender inequality is not only an issue of social justice but also a crucial step toward a more fair and just future for everyone as nations seek for more inclusion and justice.

keywords : Gender inequality, Caste-based disparities, Female children, Gender bias, Caste hierarchy, Socio-economic dynamics

introduction

Gender inequality and caste-based inequities exist in complex communities. Gender and caste create a complicated web of prejudices that disproportionately affect female offspring, perpetuating inequality and restricted chances. This research explores these inequities and the deep-rooted biases that affect female children in various caste groups. The intersection of caste systems and gender standards has created a sociocultural environment of inequity. Caste hierarchies control power, resources, and privileges, worsening gender inequality. This study exposes these prejudices and examines their causes, including socioeconomic considerations and deeply rooted cultural norms. These prejudices deny female children education, healthcare, and other basic rights. Disparities affect their whole lives, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage. This debate on gender equality must investigate the nuances of how these prejudices overlap and the narratives that challenge or sustain them. This study uses qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate how gendered expectations and traditional norms affect caste society's treatment of female children. The research will also examine new voices and activities fighting these prejudices, representing reform efforts.

This study seeks to raise awareness of caste-wise gender inequity and prejudice against female offspring by revealing their complex causes. This research will enrich scholarly debate and inspire politicians, campaigners, and people to eliminate these prejudices and create a more equal and just society. Social

systems have constructed a generational narrative of inequity from gender and caste. Caste-based systems' historical legacies impact cultural standards and frequently marginalise female offspring. This research delves into these prejudices to understand the complex mechanisms that sustain gender inequality in caste systems. Power and privilege are unequally allocated due to caste hierarchies, which are typically linked to economic strata. This power disparity affects how female children are treated from birth, laying the groundwork for different life pathways. The layers of this phenomena need an understanding of historical antecedents, cultural mores, and their continuing effect on modern views. This study seeks to unravel gendered preconceptions that limit education, healthcare, and opportunity by looking at socioeconomic factors. Female children's experiences mirror society standards and underprivileged groups' struggles. Examining these issues requires facing the cycle of adversity these youngsters face, sometimes without their own fault. This research seeks to elevate change agents—individuals and organisations that challenge the status quo—beyond facts and numbers. In a world of inequity, grassroots movements, legislative measures, and advocacy campaigns provide hope. These resilience and transformation tales show how agency can change narratives and eliminate prejudices. This study seeks to highlight the need for systemic change by examining the intricate linkages between caste systems and gender inequality. The findings of this study might change policy, education, and society. By examining caste-wise gender prejudice against female offspring, this research emphasises the need for a communal commitment to an egalitarian future beyond caste and gender. Gender and caste weave an intriguing and tragic storey in human civilization. The chances of female children throughout cultures are hampered by caste-based structures and gender conventions. This research is an intellectual quest to explore the prejudice and inequity that surround their young lives, perpetuating adversity.

Caste systems shape society and views, typically due to history. These structures affect socioeconomic prospects and gender norms and expectations. The power imbalance means female children are born into a world of constraints and inequities. The causes of these prejudices must be examined from economic inequities to cultural myths. This study seeks to illuminate caste-based gender bias's complex and subtle manifestations by exploring the histories that have created modern society. The experiences of female children in this framework reflect social difficulties and their sensitivity to structural inequities. These children face obstacles due to unequal access to education, healthcare, and other essential rights. This study shows the cyclical nature of disadvantage, which underprivileged populations find difficult to break. Although these prejudices are prevalent, this research highlights resilience and change. Empowered people, grassroots efforts, and creative policies are advancing fairness and justice. This study amplifies these tales to reshape social standards and ambitions. This research explores caste-wise gender prejudice against female children to spark useful and transformational dialogues. This study might influence policies that address deep-rooted disparities and motivate efforts that foster a society where every kid, regardless of caste or gender, can thrive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

a) To examine the caste – wise gender inequality and bias against female children.

FIELD OF THE STUDY:

The hamlet of Khanpur Khurd served as the setting for this investigation. Located in the Matanhail tehsil of the Jhajjar district of Haryana lies the hamlet of Khanpur. There are fifty-two settlements in the Matanhail tehsil. When compared to other towns, Khanpur Khurd's sex ratio is the lowest (400). That's according to the 2011 Census. Jhajjar is one of the 22 districts that make up the state of Haryana in northern India. Jhajjar is the first of four subdistricts that make up the Jhajjar district; the others are Bahadurgarh, Beri, and Matanhail. The sex ratio in Jhajjar increased to 862 per 1000 males from 847 in the 2001 census, while it remained unchanged at 782 for children.

Table 1.1 : Profile of Matanhail Tehsil

Tehsil	Matanhail
Population	8644
Males	4632
Females	4012
Sex Ratio	**866**
Child Sex Ratio	**748**
Proportion and Child Population	(11.95 percent), 1033
Literacy rate	78.47 percent
Male Literacy rate	88.59 percent
Female Literacy rate	67.00 percent

Source: As per 2011 census.

Table 1.2 : Village profile of Khanpur Khurd

Population	7644
Household	1726
Males	5461
Female	2183
Sex Ratio	**400**
Child Sex Ratio	**704**
Proportion (age 0-6) and Child population	(7.44 percent), 569
Boys population	334
Girls population	235
Literacy rate	81.06 percent
Male literacy rate	86.91 percent
Female literacy rate	65.66 percent

Source: As per 2011 census.

The location code or village code for Khanpur Khurd was 061959 in the 2011 census. The Jhajjar district administration is located 43 kilometres away, while the Matanhail sub-district headquarters are located 16 kilometres away. There are around 1,726 homes here. Located in both the Jhajjar assembly and the Rohtak parliamentary seats, the little town of Khanpur Khurd is a popular place to live.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION:

Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used in the present study. Both primary and secondary sources were used to compile this report. Interviews and direct observation were used to compile the bulk of the main data. The interview process was split into two sections. Respondents' basic particulars were gathered in the first section of the programme. Structured/multiple-choice questions were the focus of the schedule's second half. We gathered qualitative information by asking participants open-ended questions and recording their responses. Secondary information was gathered from a wide range of resources, including as

a) Censuses of the government of India, (1981, 1991, 2001, 2011).

b) Anganwadi official records.

c) Panchayat records.

d) Record of Aasha workers.

Table 1.3 : Caste of the Respondents

Caste	Respondents	percentage
General Caste *	67	56.31
Scheduled Caste **	19	15.96
Other Backward Caste ***	33	27.73
Total	**119**	**100.00**

General Caste *-: Brahman, Baniya and Jat. **Scheduled Caste **-:** Chamar, Dhanak, Balimik and Khatik. **Other Backward Caste ***-:** Kumhar, Lohar, Nai, Khati, Sunar, Chipi, Banjara, Maniyar, Shyami and Lohar (Muslim).

Respondents' racial makeup is shown in table 1.3. 56.31% of respondents are from the general caste, 15.99% are from the scheduled caste, and 27.03% are from another backward group, as shown by the statistics.

Table 1.4 : Education Level of Respondents

Education level	Respondents	percentage
Only Read & write	2	1.68
Primary	22	18.45
Secondary	27	24.39
Senior-secondary	36	30.28
Graduate and Post graduate	27	21.00
Any other	5	4.20
Total	**119**	**100.00**

Education levels are shown in Table 1.4. 30.28% of respondents have completed at least one year of college, 21% have completed graduate or postgraduate study, and 4.20% have earned teaching credentials such as a J.B.T or B.ed., as shown by the statistics. Evidence from the field suggests that rural residents are beginning to value education more highly than in the past. According to the findings, no one who participated in the survey was illiterate.

Table 1.5 : Caste and Perception about gender equality

	Perception				
Caste	Boys are more goodthan girls	Girls are moregood than boys	Boys and Girls are equal	Neutral	Total
General caste**	7 (5.89)	13 (10.92)	45 (37.81)	2 (1.68)	67 (56.30)
Scheduled Caste**	3 (2.52)	5 (4.20)	11 (9.28)	_	19 (15.97)
Other Backward Caste***	2 (1.68)	9 (7.56)	21 (17.64)	1 (0.84)	33 (27.73)
Total	12 (10.08)	27 (22.68)	77 (64.70)	3 (2.54)	119 (100.00)

Note: Figures in the brackets represent percentage.

General caste *-: Brahman, Baniya and Jat. **Other backward caste***-:** Kumhar,Lohar, Nai, Khati, Sunar, Chipi, Banjara, Maniyar, Shyami and Lohar (Muslim).
Scheduled caste **-: Chamar, Dhanak, Balimik and Khatik.

Table 1.5 shows that people of different castes have different views on whether or not women have equal rights. Caste is a major factor in determining one's status in Indian society. In Haryana and where I work specifically, the Jat caste is the most numerous and influential. 378.1% of the sample agreed that males and females are treated equally in society. The proportion of respondents who firmly think that males are good than girls is only 5.89 percent, while the proportion who feel girls are better than boys is just 10.92 percent. Only 2.5% of those who identify as Scheduled Caste feel that males are superior to girls in today's culture, whereas 9.28% of all respondents hold this view. Seventeen percent of those in the Other Depressed Caste think males and girls are equally capable, while seven and a half percent think girls are superior. Our research demonstrates that in today's progressive society, people of all social classes see gender equality as a need, and they treat boys and girls the same.

conclusion
Caste-wise gender inequity and prejudice against female children are established and multidimensional issues that need immediate attention and complete remedies. Gender and caste relations generate a complicated web of discrimination that hurts underprivileged girls and women. The social, economic, and cultural effects of this prejudice go beyond opportunity inequities and inhibit progress toward a fair and equitable society. Historical hierarchies and discriminatory practises have perpetuated inferior social positions for particular castes, with women frequently suffering the most. These environments' prejudice against female children perpetuates inequality by restricting their education, healthcare, and economic chances. Thus, tackling this problem needs a multi-pronged strategy that recognises

disadvantaged populations' specific issues and challenges and dismantles patriarchal norms. Education and awareness are key to fighting caste-based gender prejudice. Quality education empowers underprivileged girls by giving them skills and information and challenging social norms that limit them to conventional roles. Community sensitization and gender equality awareness campaigns may also change attitudes and break down deep-rooted prejudices. Economic empowerment is another key to caste-wise gender equality. Skill development, vocational training, and microfinance may help disadvantaged caste women become self-sufficient and contribute to their families and communities. Equal remuneration and respectful working conditions also reduce these women's economic vulnerability. Equally important are institutional changes. Enforcing disadvantaged community rights and gender equality legislation is crucial. Safe venues for debate and cooperation between diverse groups promote understanding and togetherness, countering dividing myths and making society more inclusive. Addressing caste-wise gender disparity and prejudice against female children involves collaboration, awareness, and dedication. It's about acknowledging everyone's worth and potential, regardless of caste or gender, not merely statistical disparities. Dismantling discriminatory norms, offering equitable opportunities, and promoting empathy and respect may help society establish a future where all people, regardless of background, can prosper and contribute meaningfully to mankind.

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