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Comparative Analysis of Gender Based Discrimination in Rural Versus Urban Bihar

Dr. Babita Kumari¹ & Dr. Nagesh Kumar²

Guest Faculty, Dept. of Geography, B N College, Patna University¹

Assistant Professor (HOD), Dept. of Geography, B N College, Patna University²

Abstract

Gender Inequality is deeply rooted in Indian society. Discrimination against women is a global phenomenon, but it is deeply penetrated in the patriarchal Indian society. Even before the birth, girl child face discrimination in the form of female foeticide and after birth female infanticide has been found in practice. In spite of economic progress gender parity has not been achieved and in the present modern world girls are considered as liability. So this study focus upon comparative analysis of gender based discrimination in rural and urban India with special reference to Bihar. Data used for the study are collected from different secondary sources like National Family Health Survey(NFHS), Census of India and Bihar, Sample registration system, Census handbook, Periodic Labour Force survey (PFLS). In this study seven type of inequality has been studied using seven indicators. These are Mortality Inequality, Natality Inequality, Employment Inequality, Ownership Inequality, Special Opportunity Inequality, Basic-Facility Inequality, Household inequality. It is found that despite of various efforts gender based inequality prevails in both rural and urban India and Bihar. So there is a need for changes in perception towards women. The human society would be most advantaged only if women are treated equally and are not deprived of their rights.

Keywords: *Gender inequality, discrimination, Patriarchy*

Introduction

Gender based discrimination is an inherent characteristic of a patriarchal society. Discrimination against women begins even before the birth. Gender discrimination is a state of denial of equality on the basis of gender. As we know India is male dominant society where discrimination is deeply rooted and looks very normal. Due to which, most of the women did not understand their own rights and freedom. According to World Bank study India ranks 124th out of 190 countries in 2022. As a whole the country ranked low at 135th place in terms of gender parity according to World Economic Forum (WEF). Gender economists call this phenomenon, disempowerment of women. According to 2011 census, the female literacy rate was 65.46% compared to 82.14% for males. The underlying thought that is that educating women is of no value as they will only serve their husbands and family in future. It makes the parents unwilling to spend on girl's education.

According to Prof. Amartya Sen (2001), there are seven types of gender inequalities in India. These are as follows: First is “**Mortality Inequality**”, in this there is Inequality between women and men in terms of matters of life and death and there are unusually high mortality rates for women. Second is “**Natality Inequality**”, in this type of inequality society is inclined towards boys over girls. It is evident in many of the male dominated societies and where parents want their newborn to be a boy rather than a girl. Third is “**Employment Inequality**”, where employment as well as promotion at work women often face greater hurdles than men. This is clearly revealed as men getting priorities in receiving better work opportunities and pay scale than their female colleagues. Fourth is “**Ownership Inequality**”, in many societies possession of property can also be very unequal. Since centuries the traditional property rights have preferred men in the most parts of India. The absence of claims to property can not only reduce the voice of women, but also make it harder for women to enter and flourish in commercial, economic and even some social activities. Fifth is “**Special Opportunity Inequality**”, even when there is little difference in basic facilities including schooling, the opportunities of higher education may be far fewer for young women than young men. Indeed, gender biasness in higher education and professional training can be observed in India. Sixth is “**Basic-Facility Inequality**”, even when demographic characteristics do not show much or any anti-female bias, there are other ways in which women can have less than a square deal. Seventh is “**Household inequality**”, the family engagements are quite unequal in terms of involvement in the housework and child care. The cultural construct of Indian society which reinforces gender bias against men and women, with varying degrees and variable contexts against the opposite sex, has led to the continuation of India's strong preference for male children. Female infanticide and sex-selective abortion is adopted and strongly reflects the low status of Indian women.

According to Census of India (2011) sex ratio was 940 females per 1000 of male population. This shows an upward trend from 933 females per 1000 males in 2001 Census. But now according to National Family Health Survey Report (NFHS 2019-2021), India is now at a level seen in developed countries. Where for every 1000 males there are 1020 females. NFHS report shows continuous improvement in the sex ratio in 2015-16 report it was just 991. However, 13 states and union territories still have more males than females. In a rural versus urban data analysis in 22 states sex ratio showing more male than female in urban area. But decline in sex ratio at birth needs immediate attention. The sex ratio at birth (SRB) is as low as 929 boys per 1000 girl population because of continuing preference for boys in society. Literacy rate at national level is 84.4% for male and 71.5% for female (NFHS 2019-2021). Data related to female in urban area is better than rural area. Like in rural area only 65.9% female is literate whereas in urban area literacy rate for female is 83.0%. Female population age 6 years and above who ever attended school is 82.5% in urban area but only 66.8% in rural area. So this study aims to analyze the status of gender based disparities in Bihar where special attention is given to Patna urban agglomeration.

Database and Methodology

The whole work is based on descriptive reasoning, comparative study and analytical logic developed through the understandings from various research papers, reports, books, journals, newspapers and online data bases (figure 1). Data for present study is collected from National Family Health Survey(NFHS), Census of India and Bihar, Sample registration system, Census handbook, Periodic Labour Force survey (PFLS).

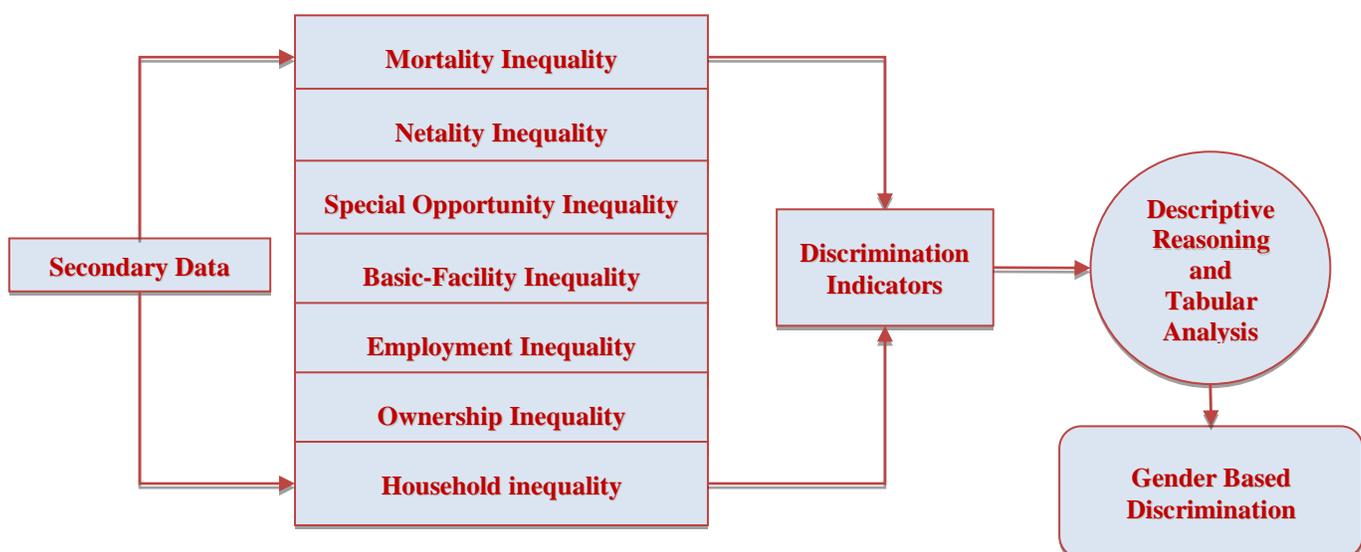


Figure 1: Methodology Flowchart

Table 1: Source of Data

Sl. No	Discrimination Indicators	Data	Data Source	
1	Mortality Inequality	Female Mortality Rate	SES, 2019	
2	Natality Inequality	Infant Mortality rate of girl child	SES, 2019	
3	Special Opportunity Inequality	Female population age 6 years and above who ever attended school (%)	NFHS, 2019-21	
		Sex ratio of the total population (females per 1,000 males)	NFHS, 2019-21	
		Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years (females per 1,000 males)		
		Women who are literate (%)		
		Women with 10 or more years of schooling (%)		
4	Basic-Facility Inequality	Access to maternal health facility	Institutional Births (%)	NFHS, 2019-21
			Caesarean section Deliveries (%)	
			Mothers who had antenatal checkup in the first trimester (%)	
			Mothers who had at least 4 antenatal care visits (%)	
			Births assisted by Skilled Health Personnel (5 years preceding the survey) (%)	
	Access to clean fuel for cooking	Households using only LPG	IRES, 2020	
		Households using only LPG & solid fuels		
		Households using only solid fuels		
	Access to Sanitation	Gender ratio in fetching water (%)	NFHS, 2018	
		percentage distribution of persons of those households having access to latrine by use of latrine		
5	Employment Inequality	Women who worked in the last 12 months and were paid in cash (%)		
		Female work participation rate		
6	Ownership Inequality	Women owning a house and/or land (alone or jointly with others) (%)	NFHS, 2019-21	
		Women having a bank or savings account that they themselves use (%)		
		Women having a mobile phone that they themselves use (%)		
7	Household inequality	Ever-married women age 18-49 years who have ever experienced spousal violence (%)		
		Ever-married women age 18-49 years who have experienced physical violence during any pregnancy (%)		
		Young women age 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 (%)		

		Currently married women who usually participate in three household decisions (%)	
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Table 2: Discrimination Indicators

Sl. No	Discrimination Indicators	India (2019-21)			Bihar (2019-21)		
		Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
1	Mortality Inequality	4.9	6.4	5.9	5.5	6	5.9
2	Natality Inequality	25	37	34	33	38	37
3	Special Opportunity Inequality	82.5	66.8	71.8	74.2	58.7	61.1
		985	1,037	1,020	982	1,111	1,090
		924	931	929	940	903	908
		83	65.9	71.5	74.9	55	58
		56.3	33.7	41	48	25	29
4	Basic-Facility Inequality	88.7	75.1	78.9	74.3	63	64
		28.2	12.8	17.2	13.9	5	6
		69.1	54.2	58.6	50.4	33	35
		66.4	44.8	51.2	26	13	14
		90	78	81.4	79	69	70
		91	28	47	92	22	31
		7	52	39	4	45	40
		2	20	15	4	33	29
		-	-	84.42	-	-	86
		96.2	63.8	67.2	95	63	67
5	Employment Inequality	25	25.6	25.4	11.7	13	13
		18.6	27.7	25.1	2.5	4	3
6	Ownership Inequality	38.3	45.7	43.3	53.4	56	55
		80.9	77.4	78.6	79.1	76	77
		69.4	46.6	54	61.8	49	51
7	Household inequality	24.2	31.6	29.3	40.6	40	40
		2.5	3.4	3.1	1.9	3	3
		1.1	1.6	1.5	7.1	9	8
		91	87.7	88.7	84	87	87

Result

According to Census 2011, Bihar is the third most populous state of India with a total population of 104,099,452 out of that about 89% are residents of rural Bihar and just 11.3 % resides in urban area which is the second-lowest urbanization rate in India. Sex ratio of Bihar is 918 females per 1000 males. Almost 58% of Bihar's population is below 25 years of age, which is highest in India. The state lags behind on a number of gender equality indicators. Access to resources and services remain limited for these women. So in present research inequality has been measured using following indicators.

- a) **Mortality Inequality:** As name suggests mortality inequality is a type of discrimination in terms of death rate among male and female, which is measured using female mortality rate (FMR). Death rate is one of the simplest measures of mortality and is defined as the number of deaths per thousand populations in a given region and time period. At country level death rate for male is 6.7 and female is 5.9 (SES Bulletin, 2019). Means at national level female lives longer than male. Whereas in Bihar male death rate (MDR) is 5.7 and FMR is 5.9 in total and same scenario occurs when we see it separately in rural and urban area. In rural Bihar MDR is 5.8 and FMR is 5.6 and in urban Bihar

MDR is 5.2 and FMR is 5.5. Study shows that death rate both for male and female is better in urban Bihar.

- b) **Natality Inequality:** Natalty is the inequality in terms of preference of boy child over girl. It is measured using infant mortality rate (IMR) of girl child. IMR is defined as infant deaths (less than one year) per 1000 live births in a given time period and for a given region. It is widely accepted as a crude indicator of the overall health scenario of a country or a region. Sample registration system of 2019 shows that at national level IMR of girl child (34 per 1000 live birth) is more than boy (32 per 1000 live birth). In Bihar also situation is same. In totality at state level IMR is 35, IMR of boy is 34 and IMR of girl is 37. But when we look in rural urban difference the situation in urban area is better than rural counterpart. In rural Bihar IMR is 36, IMR of boy is 34 and of girl is 38. Whereas in urban Bihar IMR is 31, IMR of boy is 29 and of girl is 33.

Overall, female infants in rural Bihar have a higher mortality rate than all other groups, at 38. Newborn girls have a biological advantage in survival over newborn boys, due to lesser vulnerability to perinatal conditions. However, this biological advantage is compromised by neglect and discriminatory care of girls, resulting in higher mortality in girls than boys.

- c) **Employment Inequality:** It is measured using women who worked in the last 12 months and were paid in cash and Female work participation rate. Women who worked in the last 12 months and were paid in cash are national level are 25.4% (total), 25.6% (rural), 25% (urban). Whereas in Bihar condition is very dilapidated. Only 13% female worker worked in the last 12 months and were paid in cash in total and rural area and 11.7% in urban area. This may be a big reason that female work participation rate (FWPR) in Bihar is very low i.e. 3% at state level and 4% and 2.5% in rural and urban Bihar respectively. FWPR is defined as a percentage of the total show the extent to which women are active in the labour force.
- d) **Ownership Inequality:** It is measured using the data related to the elements which women owned alone or jointly. First data used for ownership status is percentage of women owning a house and/or land (alone or jointly with others). In Bihar more women own their house and land alone or jointly in comparison to national average. According to NFHS 5 report at national level only 43.3% in total and 45.7% in rural and 38.3% in urban area own any kind of property. Whereas in Bihar 55% in total and 56% in rural and 53.4% in urban area own any kind of property. Besides every other ownership status of women in Bihar is less than national average. Like at national average (78.6%) more women have their own saving account in bank than in Bihar (77%). But saving account ownership status in Bihar is satisfactory because it is only 1.6% less than national average. But when we see intrastate scenario

in urban area (79.1%) more women have their own saving account than rural area (76%). At national level (54%) more women having a mobile phone that they themselves use as compare to Bihar (51%). But when we see the gap between women having their own phone in rural and urban area condition in Bihar is better than national average. At national level women use phone in urban area is around 23% whereas in Bihar this gap is around 12%. In Bihar women who have ever used the internet is 12% less than national average. Rural urban gap in the utilization of internet in Bihar by women is around 21%.

- e) **Special Opportunity Inequality (SOI):** SOI is measured using female population age 6 years and above who ever attended school, sex ratio of the total population, sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years, women who are literate, women with 10 or more years of schooling. SOI data also looks better at national average than Bihar (1090 female per 1000 male), only sex ration in Bihar is better than national average (1020 female per 1000 male). Condition of SOI in rural and urban Bihar is measured using the difference in the value of SOI indicators. Sex ratio of the total population is better in villages (1111 females per 1000 male) than the town (982 females per 1000 male). Main reason behind this is the large portion of male population migrates from villages towards the city. Because of that there is imbalance sex ratio in rural and urban area. Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years is better in urban area (940) than in rural Bihar (903). Percentage of female population age 6 years and above who ever attended school is high in urban area (74.2%) than in rural area in Bihar (58.7%). Literacy rate is also better in urban area (74.9%) than in rural area (55%). Women with 10 or more years of schooling is also less in rural area (48%) than in urban area (25%) in Bihar
- f) **Basic-Facility Inequality (BFI):** BFI is measured using data related to access to maternal health facility, access to clean fuel and access to sanitation facility. Within Bihar rural and urban comparison is done. The present study shows that there is improvement in the facility related to women like maternal health facility and facility for clean means of cooking.

Gender disparity is prominent in sanitation facility, access to water as commonly women and girls are responsible to fetch water for their families for their various household needs. Women and girls are forced to travel long distance and stand in queues to collect water, which ultimately affect their education, health, childcare and other income generating activities. At national level 84.42% women and girls are forced to collect water and only 15.58% male travel for water. Whereas in Bihar around 86% water fetched by women and girls and only 14% by men.

g) **Household inequality:** It is measured using data related to ever-married women age 18-49 years who have ever experienced spousal violence, ever-married women age 18-49 years who have experienced physical violence during any pregnancy, young women age 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18, currently married women who usually participate in their household decisions. Ever-married women age 18-49 years who have ever experienced spousal violence is almost same in rural and urban area and also at state level in Bihar i.e. 40%. But it is very high in Bihar (40%) than in national average (29.3%). Ever-married women age 18-49 years who have experienced physical violence during any pregnancy is more in rural area (1.9%) than in urban area (3%) in Bihar. Young women age 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 is very high at state level (8%) than at national average (1.5%). At national level currently married women who usually participate in their household decisions are more than in Bihar. Rural urban differential of household inequality in Bihar is not very high.

Discussion

To economically empower women, ensuring their equal access and control over economic resources, and guaranteeing that they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives, is imperative (Taylor and Perezniето, 2014). Women's economic empowerment needs intensive efforts and determination that priorities and identify women's requirements and preferences, and recognize their diversity. It is also important to target structural determinants, and understand that single intervention cannot address all of the core elements of women's economic empowerment, like access to education, skills development and training, access to quality, decent paid work, solutions to unpaid work and care burdens, access to property, assets and financial services, collective action and leadership, adequate social protection, agency, and equitable social norms. As per the global gender gap index (GGGI,2020) published by world economic forum, India ranks 112 out of 153 countries with a score of 0.0668. Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) consists of four dimensions, namely, (i) economic participation and opportunity (ii) educational attainment (iii) health and survival, and (iv) political empowerment. As per the computational mechanism of GGGI, highest performance score on each of these four dimensions is 1. According to the GGGI Report 2020 India has scored 0.354 in economic participation and opportunity, 0.962 in educational attainment, 0.944 in health and survival and 0.411 in political empowerment (Ministry of Women and Child development, 2021). In order to improve India's status in this index government has adopted two-pronged strategy

- I) Monitoring the performance by engagement with publishing agency of GGGI
- II) Identification of reform areas and action in consultation with concerned ministries and departments.

In this regards governments started lots of schemes. Some are as follows:

Economic Participation & Opportunity and Health & Survival:

Various programmes/Schemes that are intended towards women development and empowerment are:

1. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) ensures the protection, survival and education of the girl child.
2. Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) aims to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development and employment.
3. Working Women Hostel (WWH) ensures the safety and security for working women.
4. Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims to empower girls in the age group 11-18 and to improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training
5. Mahila Police Volunteers (MPV) envisages engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers in States/UTs who act as a link between police and community and facilitates women in distress.
6. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) is an apex micro-finance organization that provides micro-credit at concessional terms to poor women for various livelihood and income generating activities.
7. The National Crèche Scheme ensures that women take up gainful employment through providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment to the children.
8. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandna Yojna aims to provide maternity benefit to pregnant and lactating mothers.
9. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana aims to provide housing under the name of the woman also.
10. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) aims to enable a large number of Indian youth including women to take up industry-relevant skill training in securing a better livelihood.
11. Deen Dayal Upadhyay National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) focuses on creating opportunities for women in skill development, leading to market-based employment.
12. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana empowers women and protects their health by providing LPG cylinder free of cost.
13. Sukanya Samridhi Yojna(SSY) - Under this scheme girls have been economically empowered by opening their bank accounts.
14. Skill Upgradation & Mahila Coir Yojna is an exclusive training programme of MSME aimed at skill development of women artisans engaged in coir Industry.
15. Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) - a major credit- linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector
16. Female Entrepreneurship: To promote female entrepreneurship, the Government has initiated Programmes like Stand-Up India and Mahila e-Haat (online marketing platform to support women entrepreneurs/ SHGs/NGOs), Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESSDP).

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) provides access to institutional finance to micro/small business.

17. Educational Attainment: Several steps and initiatives have been taken up in school education system such as National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and flagship programme like Samagra Shiksha and the subsequent Right to Education Act (RTE). Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) have been opened in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs). Gender sensitisation is also done which includes gender sensitization Module - part of in-service training, construction of toilets for girls, construction of residential quarters for female teachers and curriculum reforms.

Political Participation: To bring women in the mainstream of political leadership at the grass root level, government has reserved 33% of the seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions for women. Capacity Building of Panchayat Stakeholders including Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Ministry of Panchayati Raj is conducted with a view to empowering women to participate effectively in the governance processes.

Gender Budget has been made a part of Union Budget of India since 2005 that entails fund allocation towards programmes/schemes dedicated to women. Through this effort the Government is continuously promoting gender parity/equality with a focus on alleviating gender gap in all sectors and at all levels of governance. As per the Gender Budget Statement, Government has earmarked Rs.153326.28 Crore for FY 2021-22 to be used by the Ministries towards schemes/programmes aimed at reducing gender gap in all aspects of social, economic and political life.

Conclusion

Rural-urban gender disparity analysis suggests that women face more discrimination in rural part mostly due to very low literacy rate. This study is done by using seven indicators of gender disparity where there are three negative indicators that is mortality inequality, natality inequality and household inequality and other four are positive indicators. Positive indicators are Special Opportunity Inequality, Basic-Facility Inequality, Employment Inequality, Ownership Inequality. Bihar stands at lowest positions in all the positive indicators and at top position in all the negative indicators of gender discrimination. used in present study. We have seen that government have initiated various schemes to minimize the gap and normalize the situation. But as we know India has patriarchy system so situation is not going to be normal till the people give equal position to female as male in their thought and bring female in the mainstream of the society.

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