BRIDGING THE GAP OF GENDER EQUALITY IN INDIAN COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

Equality has always been a utopian notion. Why is it antagonistic about every other simplest yet supposedly complex factor such as treating an individual just as deserving as the other, irrespective of their gender in a society like India? A nation’s progress is directly proportional to its social index. Considering this as yardstick, it is unfortunate to observe one of the most indicative of all social indices like gender equality being turned a blind eye to. Social infrastructure is just as vital as economic infrastructure for inclusive growth which gender equality can become a stepping stone of unless it is acted upon to improve it, all efforts to be a progressive society will always be short of the mark. Hence the researcher argues that an all-inclusive approach at the grassroots level is mandatory for the gap of equality to be bridged.

Keywords: Utopian, Antagonistic, Gender, Social index, Social infrastructure, Grassroots

INTRODUCTION

Human beings differentiated each other from their characteristics. Some of them were intrinsic, some extrinsic. When a country touts itself as being a developing country then one of the notions that could be taken for granted is that it is scoring satisfactorily enough on not just economic front but also the social one. Gender equality is an extricable part of it. It technically means “Treating a man and a woman at par in every aspect of life.” As simple as it sounds, it is just so made complicated by various stakeholders associated with it. One may argue that the physiological and psychological factors preclude anything even remotely close to equality between a male and a female in certain fields. The same argument might be used to assert the fact that those are the same factors which make it all the more compelling for the notion of equality to be furthered. As has been stated earlier it doesn’t have to be antagonistic about the simplest yet supposedly complex issues like gender equality. True, one can’t escape the realities like social psyche, patriarchal society, and inherent superiority complex among a certain section. But that shouldn’t deter us from asserting that each individual must be treated at par with the other irrespective of gender, in particular to which it belongs.

MERITS OF GENDER EQUALITY

1. Access to education has not only resulted in realization of true potential but also trickling down of the same is an inextricable part of. If a woman is educated, then so is everyone associated with her.

2. Access to education in the initial phase would result in direct enhancement of the employability which in other words would contribute in improving the economic infrastructure.

3. As is evident if the condition of the fairer sex as an individual keeps on improving then invariably the social index will be constantly on the positive side of the axis.

4. It has been proven time and again that women can become better at management in geometric rate of progression. This would no doubt impact the corporate sector as a whole.
5. Better representation of women at the national and international level is the need of the age. Effects of access to education are manifesting in that regard though there is a lot of room for improvement.

6. The gist of the merits is that both social infrastructure and economic infrastructure need to be worked upon simultaneously for the overall objective of inclusive growth to be achieved.

TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH GENDER EQUALITY

1. Gender Equity: It can be defined as the process by which the decision making is shaped up according to the just needs of every individual taking into account every condition it belongs to including gender and making sure that all the benefits ranging from social, economic and psychological are accrued in a just manner across all spheres of life. What this process helps in is the fact that setting a benchmark for development in social as well as economic context in reasonably qualitative terms.

2. Social Infrastructure: Every social index of nation could collectively represent the social infrastructure it possesses. A skilled, educated and well represented workforce is an inextricable part of it. Considering this, gender equity becomes all the more important. Harnessing the social indices for the overall progress of a nation forms the initial step of social infrastructure.

3. Economic Infrastructure: Access to employability, be it entrepreneurship or otherwise in a just manner could be termed as the cornerstone of the economic infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

Access to equal opportunities should be made a priority in very sphere of life, especially when it comes to bridging the gender gap. Making an effort to sensitize masses about the same would only help in enhancing the social index a country has. Constant appraisal of the government policies and the implementation of the same, along with reflection of views of organizations concerned as well as intelligentsia would be of yeoman’s service in furthering the cause. Roping in media as well as non-profit organization would be of substantial use. For the goal to be realized, a realistic approach needs to be adopted. Treating gender equality as a human right will ennoble the cause furthermore. Sensitization about the various aspects of this crucial issue be made a mandatory part of academic curriculum, workplace code of conduct, induction programs etc. Gender stratification should be discouraged in all forms. Realization of the goal of bridging the gap will only be possible with concerted efforts and sincere intent for there is no cause difficult to strive for if motive supersedes the hurdles.

Annexure:
UNDP human development report (India specific)

Gender inequality index : 0.563
Maternal mortality ratio (Deaths per 100,000 live births) : 200
Adolescent birth rate (Births per 1000 women aged (15 to 19) : 32.79
Share of seats in parliament : 10.88
Population with at least some secondary education, female (% 25 and above):26.6
Labour force participation rate female ( % aged 15 and older) : 28.8
Labour force participation rate: Male (% aged 15 and older) : 80.9
Gender related development index female to male ratio HDI : 0.828
Human Development Index male : 0.519

Human Development Index female : 0.627

Ratio of labor force female to male participation:

Labour force participation for the people aged 15+

Observations: 1. The labour force participation of females has always been steadily lower than that of males in successive years.

Gross enrollment ratio

Observations: The gross enrollment ratio of females has been successively lower than males till the year 2009 wherefrom it is catching up.

Under 5 mortality rate by sex
Observation: The under 5 mortality rate has been on a steady decline since 1990 and the difference of decline has remained almost the same.

Proportion of seats held by women in Parliament:

Observation: The proportion of seats held by women has been rise since 1990 to till date except a slight decline in 2005.

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