

GENDER ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT

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- ***Sex vs Gender***
- ***Nature vs Nurture***
- ***Nature vs Culture***

If the concept of patriarchy is unpackaged and thereby challenged, the same gives rise to the above debate.

- In its simplest form, feminism can be seen as a revolt against patriarchal ideologies.
- Broadly, feminism can be divided into three categories:

1) Liberal Feminism – Equality as a goal.

2) Socialist Feminism – Women's position in a private domain is transferred to the work floor.

3) Radical Feminism – Rejection of all institutions created by men – women should redefine.

- On a pragmatic level, policies and programmes should examine women's position in different sectors.

1) Women and health and nutrition – her specific needs

Amartya Sen, the noble laureate in economics, has conducted empirical studies on gender and nutrition by drawing examples from underprivileged class of women in Bangladesh.

His studies show the contradiction in the actual state of nutrition of a woman vis-à-vis her perception of her happiness.

2) Women and Agriculture

Majority of women in this sector are agricultural labourers as compared to men as farmers.

Women are quite visible in agricultural operations and literally do back bending work.

3) Women in informal sector

Poor and uneducated women gather all their assets, opportunities for survival strategies in economic sector – Though they are front faces in many livelihood areas like the shandy, fish market or small time food selling, their contribution is under valued.

4) Women and Education

Though the scene has improved over the last few decades but there is a big gap between the rural and urban areas in India.

The age old concept of men for technology and women for liberal arts is gradually evaporating.

Adolescent Girls

- Both age and gender are against them – need for special policy intervention.
- A grey area between the girl child and adult woman.
- In Indian context, the most underprivileged woman has class, caste and gender against her.

Social Development vs Economic Development

- Reference can be made to studies in Asia and Africa.
- Export processing zones in many Asian countries have engaged women for cheap labour – women come out to the work floor – all for a lipstick?
- In a particular study from Africa it is seen that the women toil hard in the agricultural season but it is the men who take the produce in their cart to the market in the town and have the sale proceeds. Quite often the amount is not spent by him for the nutritional and other needs of the family.

Research Techniques

- Are they always women friendly?
- Following are some of the methods of survey and analysis:
 - 1) Personal Interview vs Group Interview
 - 2) Questionnaire
 - 3) Case Studies
 - 4) Focus Groups
 - 5) Observation
 - 6) Secondary Data

Policy formulations and its implications will depend very much on the most effective method of ascertaining women's position, women's needs and the same cannot be preconceived.

Fundamentalism

- Fundamentalism can be in any religion and throughout the world women have been exploited, harassed , killed in the name of religion.
- Superstition as a part of religion - women have been burnt as witches in some villages even today – Even in medieval England, Joan of Arc has been burnt as a witch.

- Women and war
- Honour killings
- Dichotomy in Indian thought – Women worshipped as goddesses but at the same time there is a conscious tendency to subordinate her.

- In Indian context finally there is no homogenous woman though the issues discussed before are cross-cutting concerns, but any policy formulation has to take into account region, class, caste, age etc.

THANK YOU