

## A STUDY ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION OF GIRL CHILD

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in the village Bhojraj of District Hisar of State Haryana in 2006 on gender discrimination among girl child in four areas such as socialization, education, nutrition, health and recreation. The discrimination at level of society it was found that majority of the respondents, prefer son as their first child and they give more freedom and encouragement to the son as compared to daughter. As regard discrimination in education majority of the mother had exhibited discriminating attitude of the education of girl that girls are not the bread earner and household work can be learnt at home without schooling. As regard health components respondents exhibited discriminating behavior in approaching the doctor at the time of daughter's sickness and general health problems.

**Key words :** Socialization, Education, Nutrition, Health, Recreation

India is a country of social customs of varying degree. It holds strong cases against female's discrimination, which start from birth and continue throughout life of women. Nearly half of the India population constituted female. Approximately 130 million girls are below the age of 20 years but still girl child is considered to be lesser child in our society in India where discrimination towards girl child begins from the mother's womb where he unborn innocents became victims of the stigma of being a girl and countless of these for her as struck off even before they become daughters. The existing profile of girl child indicates adverse female-male ratio, low nutritional status and high female mortality rate.

The girl child at home shares the responsibility of household i.e. looking after the siblings, taking cattle for grazing, sweeping, cleaning, cooking, and collecting fodder and fuel. She contributes substantially to the household economy but she contributes neither being acknowledged nor being compensated. Kulshretha (1990) revealed that life for the girl's child is a never-ending hurdle race even today. They become victims of orthodox beliefs and treated as an inferior human being governed by social norms prescribed by the male dominated society-to is treated as a burden on parents, to be deprived of opportunities in life.

### METHODOLOGY

The sample for present study consists of 125 parents from the rural area Bhojraj of Hisar district of Haryana state. Purposive sampling technique was used for the

selection of the sample. Home visits were done to study the attitude of the mothers with help of structured interview schedule, consisting of both open and close ending questions, used to know the general records, socialization, educational, nutritional, health and recreational factors for gender discrimination and finally percentages were calculated.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

About concept of socialization almost all (98%) of parents said that the first child in the family should be a boy. Very few parents (20%) were in favor of the fact that religious ceremony should be performed at the birth of girl equal to that of boy. Also the same percentage of people as above were in favor that number of people invited at the function of daughter's birth is equal to that of boy. Most of people were in favor that the same degree of affection of encouragement should be given to girl and boy both and similarly same punishment should be given if the quarrel. Mane (1991) commented that girl child holds a poor status in the society with her life in extricable bound to the home and family by various norms and rituals. Traditional norms forbid them from indulging in activities visualized as masculine. She is expected to show submissive and docile behavior.

About education 52% of people were in favor of that girl should be educated equally as that of boys. But if taken into account for higher studies related to daughter then very few people were in favor of it. Very few people were in favor that girl should miss their classes and work in farms. Educational provisions like purchase of books, providing tuitions to the daughter was found to only 30 per cent i.e. few people were interested in this. Only 10

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to the extent of gender discrimination

Discrimination aspects	Percentage
<b>Socialization</b>	
First child son	98
Ceremony performed at the birth of boy as well as girls	20
<b>Education</b>	
Girl's Education	52
Educational Provisions	30
Further education in city	10
<b>Nutrition</b>	
Breast Feeding	95
Better food	36
Food distribution	20
<b>Health</b>	
Medical Treatment	42
Nutritious diet	20
<b>Recreation</b>	
Providing Toys	38
T.V.Program and Magazines	40

per cent of people were in favor of sending the daughters to city and availing hostels for further education. In spite of these girls are more obedient to the parents than boys. Kumar (1990) reported that without proper education, girl child couldn't enjoy a beautiful childhood. In India 60 per cent girls never step inside a classroom.

In the nutritional aspect about 95 per cent people were in favor of providing equal nutrition facility to girls and boys in relation to breast-feeding. Where as a few percentage (36) of people were in favor of that girl should get better food in family so that they can be as strong as that of boy. A less number of parents (20) were in favor that there should be equal distribution of food between son and daughter. Karkal (1991) revealed that girl do not get proper attention in the family results in lower allocation of food within the family and the time and money spent on their recreation, health and education.

In health about 42 per cent of people were in favor that girl should be given medical aid against diseases as that of boy and should be taken to doctor at once and

they should be provided complete medical treatment for any disease. But still some people were their, who were not in favor providing nutritious diet to their daughter even they when ill. Damodaran (1993) concluded that one quarter of India's population of 800 million comprised girls' upto the age of 19 years but despite being biologically stronger than boys, almost three lakh new born girls die annually due to gender discrimination and combating female feticide was a greater challenge than female infanticide.

In the concept of recreation about 38 per cent were in favor that girl should be allowed play with male toys like gun, pistol, car etc. and also very few were in favor of providing freedom to girls. About 40 per cent were in favor that girl should watch T.V. program according to her choice and should be allowed to magazines. In addition of this, most of people were in favor of purchasing clothes for daughter according to their choice. Karkal (1991) reported that girl child have fewer opportunities of recreation, healthy physical exercise and socialized into docility, blind obedience and total dependence.

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