

Dynamics for Gender Equity and Social Work Interventions

Dr. Minakshi Kar

Assistant Professor
Social Work

Indore School of Social Work, Indore, DAVV, Indore, India.

Abstract: India is a welfare state, with its other goal it needs to work for social inclusion, as degree of inequality is increasing day by day among the genders too. Within the countries there we see demographical discrepancies, social dissimilarities, education differences, economic distinction, and consumption-variation between different genders. There is contrasting situations existing, majorly male domination or in fewer state female domination but equality among genders is nowhere to see in society. Female feticide, infant mortality, maternal mortality, sex ration disparities has directly affected thousands of families in countries.

Keywords: Gender, Equality, Social Justice, Women, Diversity, Social Work.

I. INTRODUCTION

In its bleak reality of gender inequality, we find that inhumanity is increasingly being used as a means of domination and if the present indicators are considered the likelihood of steadily increasing suppression or oppression is high. The gender discrimination, internal conflict, exploitation or violence are on the increase and are no longer periodic or temporary. The day to day occurring events are lead by neglect, insecurity, starvation, looting, burning, rape, stabbing, domestic violence and even social violence and the consequences of these incidents directly affect all income group, families and by and large society. These are not individual oriented but are cumulative crises and need intervention at micro level. Social workers should be by and large shy feeling from such incidents, and can no longer afford to do so in society. Today it is not a subject of mere seminar or academic interest, but it is a matter of challenge for survival in society. It is, therefore essential that junior & senior professionals of social work are sensitized to these issues, and recognized the need to respond to these realities.

This article is looking for generating up the dialogue on gender and social work. It is apprehensive, more on conceptualization and usage of "gender" within social work theoretical education & practice and social work research. In spite of the fact that the key feature of day to day life, the gender and social work, many a times call the "seen-but-unnoticed" feature of reality. It is frequently overlooked and, perhaps more importantly it is considered in a limited ways.

II. DEFINITION

A definition of **gender equality** around the globe cannot be complete without considering the complex and multidimensional roles of women and the contexts in which they exist. Women's lives are inherently shaped by multidimensional domains of their lives, including their roles in the home, social, educational, and workplace settings, economic, labor, political, and health contexts, and so on. Roles in the lives of women and girls around the world are a unifying concept and thus, responses to their needs must be in concert with these roles. Women's participation in different societal domains including economic opportunities, political empowerment, educational attainment, health, and well-being are all impacted by their roles. Evidently, gender equality is not only a women's issue because the status of nations is intimately tied to the roles of women and in turn, the roles of women and women's equality are linked to the total well-being of nations (Blanchfield 2010, World Bank 2012).

III. RATIONALE BEHIND GENDER EQUITY

To achieve social & economical development universally the well being of women & girls are very essential. The United Nations Millennium Development Project (2007) has planned 8 goals amongst, it is emphasizing on gender equality and the empowerment of women as its goal number 3. This goal specifically talks about the elimination of gender inequities at all levels of education, promotes equal participation of women in non-agricultural wage-based employment, with that their equal representation in national parliaments. One of the other important goals is number 5 which focuses on the improvement in maternal health. The goal stresses to prevent maternity deaths among women and disabilities in young children. As a real fact today we see that international aid for these services is either reducing or made restricted in use. But in contrary there is need to work for majority of child- and family-care related work in all societies. The women have to be self-determined in child-bearing and access to all reproductive health care services. Additionally, in large parts of the world gender ratios is decreasing among children under 5 years. Many of the children enrolled in primary and secondary education are underweight. Majority of population is lacking information for HIV prevalence, condom use, and correct HIV knowledge. Women and girls are also suffering variedly by wars and other armed conflicts and the consequences they face such as war rape and forced migration. The impact of globalization is having a severe impact on women and girls worldwide. So Gender equity need to be set in society as soon as possible.

IV. CAUSES FOR GENDER INEQUALITY

Education & Training status

Gender equalities in educational opportunity and achievements are directly related to the long life economic well-being of women and their families. Although gender disparities in adult literacy rates, have been remained a problem in many parts of the world. Across the world we see, in schools fewer, girls are enrolled than boys. The number of girls attending school is by far less among the developing countries or in other words the ratio of girls to boys attending school declines at each higher level of education classes. As we know the world economy is day by day driven by service industries based on technology-related activities and in it the distribution of many forms of social welfare benefits related to wage employment and especially in non-agricultural sectors restricts women directly. So education and training are essential tools for achieving economic well being as well as to enjoy human rights in life.

Health

Gender inequalities in health and not access to health care are seen throughout the world. Inadequate food, physical abuse, female infanticide, lack of medical care, genital mutilation, forced sex and early childbirth take many girls' lives. With that the negative health and mental health result to violence against women. Severe injury that leads to disability and even death from pregnancy- is another most neglected health problem in the country. Thus access to effective and accessible methods of contraception and to the full range of reproductive health care services are essential for progress in health and social development. However, special health risks for women persist over the life course. Life choices and opportunities expand when women are liberated from the burden of frequent childbearing and from the risk of dying in childbirth. All aspects of health and health care, including mental health along with physical, social, and sexual and reproductive health, are vital to human and social well-being.

The Economic condition

Discrimination against women in employment and not access to capital and technology, in reference to developing economic opportunities for women in private sectors in agriculture, and all sectors of formal employment are biggest challenge and because of that the women, their families, and their communities enable to reach their full potential. However, discrimination often takes more narrow forms, for example, when a labour market restricts a woman's job opportunities because of gender bias in a "traditionally" male domain or creates a "glass ceiling" that makes it difficult for women to advance in their careers and put her in the state of under development. In reality women do the majority of the world's work but in contrast women do not get share equally in income, earnings, and wealth. The discrimination practices against women in regards to employment, earnings, accumulation process, access to credit, capital and employment-related public and private social benefit systems also impacts badly on the economic well-being of their children and other members in the house.

Poverty Condition

Worldwide we see majority of women are living in poverty. Women's poverty is because of the structural factors of country. This is because, government is inadequately spending on programs which are for women, many times there is national debt burdens. Women in paid employments are often found in limited number. They are lowest-paid. Women are mostly in temporary jobs that result for least employment-related benefits. Women & girls are considered as burdens, because they are majorly unpaid as they need to look for family care activities so access to education and training are limited and thus misses the opportunity to participate in paid employment. Many are involved with informal employment that increases risk and made them poor. So, most women and girls are having food insecurity problems. Women & girls in poverty urgently need greater economic opportunity and adequate system of economic and social support. They need resources that do not require them to depend on their husband's assets and that enable them to care adequately for those family members who may depend on them.

Violence

Throughout the world one in every three women has been beaten, forced into sex, or abused by a domestic partner or some other person known to her, and it is assumed that one in four women is abused during pregnancy. Not only this limits but they are also often victims of elder abuse. So females from all social, cultural, caste, racial and income groups are subjected to specific forms of physical, sexual, and psychological violence because of their gender. This gender-specific violence includes many forms of assault that leads to rape/ mass rape; sexual harassment/ sexual exploitation, even slavery, forced pregnancy, forced/ selective abortion and forced sterilization. The female suffers for survival, have high maternal mortality during childbirth, with that the sale of girls and women into industrial, sex and domestic work and other forms of gender-based violence against women and girls are very common to see.

V. SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

Social workers must work to provide well being of women and girls as an important aspect of the profession's ethical and practice commitment.. This important commitment to women of all ages is necessary, because in all social, economic and cultural contexts women and girls do not have same reach out to benefits of being members of human society.

Institutions of social work must admit structural barriers inhibiting women's advancement and teach students skills in understanding these barriers and intervening to eliminate them.

Social work practitioners and educators must engage in friendly discussions about sexism, develop leadership skills, and advocate for the elimination of gender discrimination and should promote equal opportunity in social service institutions.

Social Work profession is committed to equality between the genders, social work needs to take the lead on impacting the role of women in leadership. Social work educators need to make conscious efforts to discuss and promote leadership for women students too.

Social workers should promote health and mental health care services, public health programs; prevention and early intervention addressing both domestic and community-based violence; education, employment, and training programs; programs assisting migrants, refugees, those seeking asylum, and victims of human trafficking; and activities to increase the participation of all genders traditionally excluded from political, economic, and community decision making.

Social work should be dedicated to the promotion of economic and social justice and gender-based salary equality.

Work must be done for equality in life chances for women and girls in their life. Addressing gender disparities during births and childhood health and survival, access to education at all levels, access to and control over earnings and economic assets; access to the full range of health and behavioral health care services, including reproductive health care; and access to resources and care in old age or in impaired health is essential to work for Social workers..

VI. CONCLUSION

Professional Social Workers are ethically committed to social and economic justice and are accounted to actively advocate for wage equality and the development of women within and beyond the profession. A focus on national and organizational climate and culture is essential to positioning women for mobility. However lack of appropriate legislation continues to leave women vulnerable. All the professional social work associations, must initiate and sustain frank discussions about these issues and advocate for equality on a national level.

REFERENCES

- Gill, A., & Mitra-Kahn, T. (2008). From preference to prejudice: Daughter devaluation and the missing women phenomenon in South Asia and the UK. *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies*, 15(1), 1024-46.
- INSTRAW (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women). (2004). Women and poverty. Available at: www.uninstraw.org/en/images/stories/Beijing/womenandpoverty.pdf
- UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women). 2005. Progress of the world's women, 2005: Women, work & poverty. New York: United Nations. Available at www.unifem.org
- United Nations. (2007). Millennium development goals report, 2007. New York, NY: United Nations. www.un.org/millenniumgoals.
- United Nations Population Fund. (2000). Lives together, worlds apart: Men and women in a time of change. State of the World Population Report 2000. Available at: www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/index.html
- United Nations Population Fund. (2006). Passage to hope: Women and international migration. State of the World Population Report, 2006. Available at www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch02.html
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2007). Unequal, unfair, ineffective and inefficient: Gender inequity in health: Why it exists and how we can change it. Final report to the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health, September, 2007.