

Child Rights: A Gender Perspective

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1 Introduction

Children are an important asset for any nation. In the human life span, the childhood period is considered most significant, since it is the foundation period for life. At this time many behavior patterns, many attitudes and many patterns of emotional expression are being established. Erikson contented that “childhood is the scene of man’s beginning as man, the place where our particular virtues and vices slowly but clearly develop and make they felt”. According to Erikson how children are treated with “basic trust” or “basic distrust” – viewing the world a safe, reliable and nurturing or as full of threat, unpredictability and treachery children expect care and support from family and the outside world which is not conducive for their holistic growth and development.

India is home to 414 million children and 26 million more are born every year – more than in any other country. 19 per cent of the world’s children live in India. Within India, Tamil Nadu stands high in providing education to the children in comparison with other States. Education in the modernised world has become a business and children are forced to pursue courses of their disinclination. At the tender age of 3 years, the children are violated in the name of providing education but in reality these children are forcibly sent to school where a rigid education system intimidates them. If the inherent rights of the children are being protected and restored, is the prime quest of this study. Moreover, in traditional Indian society, the girls being born are deemed to satisfy the male counterparts. Centuries, they have been discriminated on various events, and many researches pointed out that violation against girl children starts at her mother’s womb. Hence, this study compares girls and boys as far as preferential treatment is concerned.

2 Research Problem

In Indian childhood, there are several disadvantages to be dealt with, such as poverty, unhappy family situations, trauma, insecure life, abuse and personal issues like stress, frustration, and conflicts. With all these disadvantages vulnerable children try to maintain their normal life. The child has to develop a mental and social competence. The male dominating practices were fed among people for many generations, resulting in denial of human rights for women from mother’s womb to tomb. Girl children were not able to enjoy their rights fully due to discrimination in forms of survival and needs. This inequality shatters the dreams and future of the girl children. Various policies are made for their future development but children still become victim and are exploited. Especially the rights of female children are denied. Gender discrimination against girl children basically starts from the family and extended to the outside environment. Female feticide, female infanticide, girl children marriage, child abuse, etc. so to study the preferential treatment¹ in accessing rights among male and female children is the need of the hour to abolish the patriarchy system and to find ways for ensuring the right to live, right to protection, right to participation and right to development as per Convention on the Rights of the Children 1989.

¹Preferential treatment means treating male and female child in the same family by the parents regarding provision of food, acceptance, participation, decision making, expression of thoughts and ideas and deciding about future development.

3 Background of the Study

A lot of research has been carried out in the field of child development as well about child rights. This specific study on accessing preferential treatment among male and female children based on rights is a seldom study, and in relation to academic fields, it is very few. This study attempts to measure the four basic child rights, viz., right to life, right to protection, right to participation and right to development corresponding to gender of the children attending school. Most Indian families prefer the boys to be educated to their sibling sisters, whether younger or elder.

Gender discrimination is practiced from generations to generations without any changes from the mother's womb to till last breath. God created man and women equally, only the physical appearance and sexual characters are different from each other. Women give birth to baby, which a man cannot do. Like the same the chromosome within men alone has got the power to determine the gender of the child birth. Thus the God given natural sexual characters cannot be tainted. But gender is identified with the social responsibilities and roles played by both men and women. For example men should not cry and it is not socially acceptable. Research findings say that women contribute two thirds of the world wide tasks. They work 16 to 18 hours a day. They spend 73,000 hours for cooking alone, i.e. 3041 days in their life time approximately. But they possess and enjoy only one per cent of the property. Their sacrificial efforts, commitment in family welfare and other valuable contributions are not recognized. In India, though majority of the women are illiterate, their contributions towards the family and the society are uncountable.

Women are discriminated in the ways of foeticide, female infanticide parental care and support, domestic assistances, denial to education, restriction of dress, movement, child abuse, child marriage, forcible marriages, devadhasi system, panchali system, sati, dowry, etc. In our country the hills, rivers, etc are having feminine names and the country is called mother India and the language is known as mother tongue, but women are exploited and put down by the patriarchy system. So from childhood to old age women face numerable challenges in family and, society, laws amended for preventing them from such disparities are not effective. It is the myth that women are against their own development since they practice the patriarchy in child rearing as it has been fed and unconsciously internalized and do not know it' real cause. These should be curbed from childhood.

According to Veena AS and Prabha S Chandra (2003, 4) in many parts of the developed world child abuse can be reported irrespective of the context in which it is unearthed or disclosed. The State subsequently takes the responsibility to safeguard the interests of the child and offer protection. The study has furnished ample evidence and rationale for enforcing child protection system in India. But does India have the resources of countries like the UK or Australia, where children are the State's responsibility and child protection agencies are active and ready for such eventualities? When sex education in the country is facing so much opposition, what can be the role of parents and schools in at least discussing some of these issues? Patriarchy and power imbalances in relation to children, particularly female children, are so high in some parts of India that we wonder how far rules and laws will penetrate families where emotional and physical abuse is the norm.

Lakshmi Rani, D. and Manabendra Nath Roy (2005) studied the dynamics of poverty which forces poor children to accept the jobs of child domestic workers (CDWs) and abandon their childhood. They have pointed out that 20 per cent of all children working outside the family home in India are in child domestic labour. They observed the socio-economic and cultural factors responsible for leading children into domestic work and to understand the situation / condition of children engaged in domestic work in the selected areas. In their study they have shown that only 30.98 per cent of the children had studied till secondary level, 21 per cent were illiterates and the rest were just literate. Many child labourers were found in the agriculture followed by service sectors. Most of the family's income was in the ranges of Rs.1001-1500 per month. Majority of CDWs (87.5%) worked in urban areas. Majority of CDWs (85.15%) had to work for more than 8 hours per day. Nearly 92 per cent CDWs had no access to education as per the reports gathered from their parents. CDWs visited their houses once in 3 months or 6 months. Majority of CDWs (87%) had studied till Class IV-VI. The study suggests that there is a need to make community people aware about the importance of education.

Vijaya Kumar (2003) in his study on economic implications on elimination of child labour from selected industries, projects that many children from poor families in rural and urban areas do not go to school because

their labour is essential to supplement as well as to substitute their family income. The study attempted to investigate the possible economic and social consequences that may affect (positively and negatively) the industries where child labour has to be replaced by adult workers. Through this study the child labourers were observed in leather, agriculture, beedi manufacturing, etc and the children in the agricultural sector was more pronounced.

Arun C. Mehta has conducted a focused study on Education for all in India and explains about free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen years. At the time of adoption of the Constitution in 1950, the aim was to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) within the next ten years i.e. by 1960. Keeping in view the educational facilities available in the country at that time, the goal was far too ambitious to achieve within a short span of ten years.

A. Vaidyanathan and P R. Gopinathan Nair researched elementary education in rural India: These eminent scholars provide an in-depth and systematic analysis of the present educational scenario in rural India. Based on data drawn from eight states, it focuses on the vast and persistent disparities in educational progress across and within regions, the nature and extent of these disparities, their underlying causes, and possible remedies. Inversen and Vegard (2002) have not perceived children as potential economic agents. This neglect may distort analyses of child labour supply, educational attendance, and intra household allocations in developing countries. Among child labour migrants from rural Karnataka, boys outnumber girls and exhibit more autonomy in their economic behaviour. Inversen and Vegard identify the determinants of autonomous migration behaviour, and tests theories proposing autonomy to be associated with characteristics of individuals, households, and social environments. The empirical results are used to evaluate behavioural presumptions underpinning analysis of child labour supply. The conventional assumption of no child agency is innocuous for younger children of both sexes and girls in all age groups; it is hard to defend for boys aged 13-14.

Radha and Usha (1997) have studied child labour from an economic perspective. Based on a field survey in the Mukkudal village in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, an attempt is made in this paper to (a) portray the socio-economic and demographic background of the child labour and (b) present the findings about the children's earnings and their share in total family income.

Katherine E. Cox (2000) examines development issues that are raised in a legal analysis of international human rights law relating to child labour. In so doing, she highlights some of the weaknesses of the present legal approach to the problem. In order to demonstrate the weaknesses of the system, India is used as an example of a developing country where some of the development issues raised in the legal analysis arise. The second part of Cox's paper defines the concept of child labour. It undertakes a comprehensive analysis of international legal instruments that deal with the topic of child labour and touches on the relationship between child labour and the right to education. The third Part examines some of the development issues that arise out of that legal analysis and critiques the current legal approach. In particular it focuses on the causes of child labour that cannot be directly attributed to poor economic development and thus warrant a different approach. The final part of the paper uses India as an example of a country, which, despite progressive legislation and policy as well as improved economic development, has not been able to make significant inroads into eradicating the practice of child labour.

A study jointly conducted by UNESCO and UNICEF examines the problem of child labour and education in India and other Asian countries. It offers novel insights into the extent of child labour and the shortcomings and inertia of educational systems in adapting to the needs of working children. Also, the digest describes a series of promising educational innovations meant to bring education within the reach of working children and youth. Particular attention is given to the condition of the female working child. Innovative strategies that are discussed include India's Institute of Psychological and Educational Research, Self-Employed Women's Association, Chetna Vikas, the Indian Institute of Education, a crafts project in Madhya Pradesh, and the Indian Institute of Rural Workers. Thailand's mobile school, Malaysia's on-the-job training, and Bangladesh's educational program for under-privileged children are also discussed. It is concluded that the record of achievement in the field of education in South Asia is not impressive, except in the cases of Thailand and Sri Lanka. Powerful vested interests, whether in semi-feudal agriculture or unorganized industry, continue their severe exploitation by actively recruiting child labour in a perpetual

quest for profit. State intervention is needed to achieve the goal of universal primary education.

Padma M Sarangapani (2003) explains that attitude and belief are reconstructed via a vivid and evocative description of classroom atmosphere and the petty tyranny in which the control of knowledge becomes an assertion of power. "The teachers were not interested in simply identifying those who did not know but in exposing them. The technique emphasised the students' lack of knowledge and their lower epistemic status. It also served to show them that they could not hide this ignorance from the teachers who used these occasions to remind the students of their need for strict pedagogic authority and an authoritarian teacher."

Shantha Sinha (2005) explicates that the general feeling among the poor towards education is that it is a waste of money and does not help to create resources in the future. Hence, it is very important to develop a system which provides some hope of employment opportunities for the children who have been sent to school. This will happen only when proper economic development aimed at employment generation takes place. Only economic empowerment can restore dignity and self-respect among the poor of our society.

4 Methodology

This paper is based on primary and secondary data. It tries to study the preferential treatment of children and children's rights, such as the right to live, protection, participation and development among male and female children. Primary data were collected in Vaniyambadi and Ambur taluks of Vellore district in Tamil Nadu. The schools were located in municipalities and semi-urban towns, which were situated at a distance of 67 km from Vellore. Vaniyambadi and Ambur are well known for the commercial activities, in particular, for its predominance leather and tannery industrial growth. The main agriculture crops of the domain are paddy, sugarcane, millet, groundnuts etc. A considerable proportion of the population are Muslims.

The study is descriptive in nature, which ascribes the extent of school going children having the right to life, right to protection, right to participation and right to development at home and school and compares these rights in relation to gender of the schooling children. Further, it describes the socioeconomic background of the schooling children, and the education standards of their parents and its relevance to non-violation of child rights.

Concordia Hr Sec School, Ambur, St Paul's Matriculation Hr. Sec. School – Vaniyambadi and Municipal Hr. Sec School, Vaniyambadi, were the three purposely selected schools for the study. The students of these schools were selected based on they having siblings, with the help of the School Administration i.e., male child having a sister and female child having a brother. The total sibling population of these three schools was the universe population of the study, which was 1428 at the time of data collection. From this universe population 150 samples were picked. These children were the respondents for the primary data collection. Children were gathered in a separate place and all those who accepted to give information were selected as samples as purposive random sampling. All those children were selected as sample from the sampling frame. Purposive sampling was used in picking up the respondents. From sampling frame a quota of 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female samples were identified, totally 150 samples were collected.

5 Data Analysis

The following tables render general information on the respondents and some results of the field study. In a final section, the main results are summarized and assessed.

Age measures the physical growth of an individual. In this study the children in the ages of 17 years and below were categorised to observe distribution. Gender is the deciding factor of a family in the conservative and patriarchal society of India. Most families prefer a male child because their conditioned mindset is that he is the one who runs the family in the future, who generates income and who could preserve the inherited property (applies for families with wealth). Contrarily, the girls are prejudiced as burden for the families by the society because in this cultural context girls would go to their in-laws house after marriage with a dowry. Hence, the gender is a crucial yardstick in measuring preferential treatment of the study. Table 1

shows number of respondents by age group and gender to find out the respondents age cohort pertaining to respondents' gender (boys or girls).

<i>Age of the Respondents</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
12-13 years	22 (47.8) (29.3)	24 (52.2) (32)	46 (100) (30.7)
14-15 years	30 (54.5) (40)	25 (45.5) (33.33)	55 (100) (36.7)
16-17 years	23 (46.9) (30.7)	26 (53.1) (34.7)	49 (100) (36.7)
<i>Total</i>	75 (50) (100)	75 (50) (100)	150 (100)

Table 1: Age by Gender of the Respondents

A majority of the respondents (73.4%) were in the high and higher secondary school ages of 14 to 17 years. 30.7 per cent of the respondents were in the middle school ages of 12 to 13 years. Amongst male respondents most of them (40%) were in the high school ages of 14 to 15 years, followed by 30.7 per cent of the respondents in the higher secondary school ages of 16 to 17 years and 47.8 per cent of the respondents were in the middle school ages of 12 to 13 years. Among female respondents many of them (34.7%) were in the higher secondary school age group of 16 to 17 years, followed by a substantial proportion of the respondents (33.33%) in the high school ages of 14 to 15 years and the remaining 32 per cent of the respondents were in the middle school ages of 12 to 13 years. In comparison between male and female respondents in education standards, the latter (32%) were observed to be higher than the former (29.3%) in the middle school age range of 12 to 13 years and it was conformed in the case of respondents in the higher secondary school ages of 16 to 17 years with the females (34.7%) higher than the males (30.7%). But the respondents in the high school ages were males (40%) who were observed to be higher than the females (33.33%).

5.1 Respondents by Community and Gender

Caste is a birth tag of an individual born in India, he can change its religious faith to another religious faith, but the caste neither changed nor purged. Based on caste discrimination prevailing in various parts of India some were highlighted and many were not brought to the forefront. If this is the case for adults then the worst affected are children. In this study the respondents' of the community would disclose the violation of child rights based on caste discrimination. Table 2 shows the number of respondents by community and gender that tries to observe the community distribution proportionate to gender. Many of the respondents (37.3%) were from backward caste communities. A considerable proportion of the respondents (30.7%) were from most backward caste communities, followed by 29.3 per cent of the respondents who belong to schedule caste communities and a meagre 2.6 percent of the respondents were from other communities preferably from forward castes and schedule tribes. Except backward castes and other communities all other communities had higher number of female respondents enrolled in school education than the male respondents. The difference between male to female ratio in most backward caste communities was 35:65. While the difference between male to female ratio in backward caste communities was 66:34. The communities stratified in the lowest social order is observed to more in sending their female children to school than the communities in the highest social order who had inhibitions in sending the girl children to school. Hence it could be deduced that the most backward and schedule caste communities have began to recognise the need to provide education to their girl children.

<i>Community</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
SC	20 (45.5) (26.7)	24 (54.5) (32)	44 (100) (29.3)
ST	0	2 (100) (2.7)	2 (100) (1.3)
MBC	16 (34.8) (21.3)	30 (65.2) (40)	46 (100) (30.7)
BC	37 (66.1) (49.3)	19 (33.9) (25.3)	56 (100) (37.3)
Others	2 (100) (2.7)	0	2 (100) 1.3
<i>Total</i>	75 (50)	75 (50)	150 (100)

Table 2: Community wise Gender Distribution of the Children

5.2 Respondents by Present Education Standard and Gender

Education is a tool in moulding a child to gain knowledge and application skills that are essential in making a sustained life with dignity and value. A child out of school is a burden for the society as an adult is thrown out of job. Moreover, school is a place that provides the children a place to enjoy their right to education, right to companionship and right to play, which they have experience at childhood stages. Table 3 projects the number of respondents by present education standard and gender. More than one third of the respondents (36.7%) were studying in high school classes of ninth to tenth standard, nearly one third of the respondents (33.3%) were studying in higher secondary school classes of eleventh to twelfth standard and less than one third of the respondents (30%) were studying in middle school classes of seventh to eighth standard.

Except higher secondary school classes the number of male respondents were lower than the female respondents in middle school (49:51) and high school (38:62) classes. At higher secondary level, the males (64) were more than the females (36). Among male respondents most of them (42.7) were studying in higher secondary classes, whereas, amongst female respondents many of them (45.3) were studying in high school classes. It could be observed from the analysed data that female respondents were less in higher secondary education this might be due to the conservative nature of the society restricting the girls to go to higher education. Hence, massive campaigns have to be initiated to sensitise the community at large to respect the values of the females and the need for higher education.

<i>Education</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
VII - VIII std	22 (48.9) (29.3)	23 (51.1) (30.7)	45 (100) (30)
IX - X std	21 (38.2) (28.0)	34 (61.8) (45.3)	55 (100) (36.7)
XI - XII	32 (64) (42.7)	18 (36) (24)	50 (100) (33.3)
<i>Total</i>	75 (50) (100)	75 (100) (100)	150 (100) (100)

Table 3: Gender wise Distribution of Educational status of the children

5.3 Respondents by Father's Education and Gender

Inheritance might have a significant impact on the succession; this could be tested in the case of father's education in providing their children the right to education as well as to measure the preferential treatment based on their educational level. Table 4 presents the number of respondents by father's occupation and gender. A slightly less than fifty per cent of the respondents' fathers had primary level education (one to fifth standard). 16.7 per cent of the respondents' fathers were illiterates, 13.3 per cent of the respondents' fathers had their education at higher secondary education standards (eleventh to twelfth), 8 per cent were post graduates, 6 per cent were diploma holders, 4.7 per cent were professional degree holders and 4 per cent were graduates. Amongst male respondents, most of their fathers (52%) had education at primary level. Among female respondents, many of their fathers (42.7%) had education at primary level.

<i>Father's Education</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Illiterate	5 (20) (6.7)	20 (80) (26.7)	25 (100) (16.7)
I - X std	39 (54.9) (52)	32 (45.1) (42.7)	71 (100) (47.3)
XI - XII std	8 (40) (10.7)	12 (60) (16)	20 (100) (13.3)
Diploma	5 (55.6) (6.7)	4 (44.4) (5.3)	9 (100) (6)
Under Graduation	4 (66.7) (5.3)	2 (33.3) (2.7)	6 (100) (4)
Post Graduation	9 (75) (12)	3 (25) (4)	12 (100) (8)
Professional Degree	5 (71.4) (12)	2 (28.6) (2.7)	7 (100) (4.7)
Total	75 (50)	75 (50)	150 (100)

Table 4: Number of Respondents by Father's Education and Gender

5.4 Respondents by Mother's Education and Gender

In general it is assumed and accepted that mothers have more care and affection than the fathers and their role in the growth of the children with proper care and protection is essential. Table 5 shows number of respondents by mother's education and gender. Most of the respondents' mothers (16.7%) were studied in the standards of first to high school, 16.7 per cent were illiterates, 13.3 per cent were educated in the standards of higher secondary education levels, 8 per cent of the mothers were post graduates, 6 per cent were diploma holders, 4.7 per cent were professional degree holders and 4 per cent were graduates. In college education of the respondents' mothers, most of the respondents were observed to be males (>50%) than the females (<50%). The inferred data shows that the mothers with high education highly support their education of the children.

5.5 Gender Comparison of Rights Exercised in the Respondents' Families on Right to Life

A child's survival on earth depends on the parents first then by the immediate society next. Thus the significance factor in a child's life is his/her family. Table 6 shows gender comparison of rights exercised in the respondents' families on right to life. Most of the male respondents (51.7%) felt that their parents were

<i>Mother's Education</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Illiterate	5 (20) (6.7)	20 (80) (26.7)	25 (100) (16.7)
I - X std	39 (54.9) (52)	32 (45.1) (42.7)	71 (100) (47.3)
XI - XII std	8 (40) (10.7)	12 (60) (16)	9 (100) (13.3)
Diploma	5 (55.6) (5.3)	4 (44.6) (2.7)	6 (100) (4)
Under Graduation	4 (66.7) (5.3)	2 (33.3) (2.7)	6 (100) (4)
Post Graduation	9 (75) (12)	3 (25) (4)	12 (100) (8)
Professional Degree	5 (71.4) (6.7)	2 (28.6) (2.7)	7 (100) (4.7)
Total	75 (50) (100)	75 (50) (100)	150 (100) (100)

Table 5: Number of Respondents by Mother's Education and Gender

happy about their birth, 48.3 per cent of the respondents consented in line with this statement. Among denial category of this statement absolutely 100 per cent of the female respondents felt that their parents were not happy about their birth. Most of the female respondents' parents (85.7%) were frequent in saying about their birth where it is comparatively higher than the male respondents (14.3%). A preponderance of the respondents (98.67%) had birth certificate and meagre 1.33 per cent did not have birth certificate. Equal proportionate of respondents were observed in both yes and no category. Preferential level practiced in providing favourite cooking dishes – among the agreed respondents (51.33%) male respondents (53.2%) who had agreed the statement observed to higher than the female respondents (46.8%). Among those who stated no preferences in providing favourite cooking dishes females respondents (53.4%) were more than the male respondents (46.6%). Two per cent of the sampled respondents pointed out that there had been infanticide in their families. Among whom responded was observed to be absolutely 100 female respondents. It could be inferred from the above analysed data that boys are more preferred in a family than girls. A serious consideration is that infanticide had prevailed in the female respondents' families, which could be female infanticide. The government along with non-government organisation had to put forth effort in sensitising the community at large to accept the values of a child at womb as well as to recognise the importance of a girl child in the society.

5.6 Preferential Treatment of the Respondents on Gender Basis on Right to Life

A human offspring once generated in this earth has the right to survival and have a beautiful life with value and dignity. The table 7 shows preferential treatment of the respondents on gender basis on right to life that observe whether high, moderate and low level of exercising right to life. Based on the mean value 15.33 per cent of the agreed responses on various right aspects to life the scoring low, moderate and high was constructed. The agreed responses were valued as 1 and the disagreed are valued as 0. Table 8 displays the chi-square test for independence on preferential treatment in right to life that measures the relationship between the level of treatment and gender.

A majority of the respondents (68%) had been categorised in the families were exercising moderate level of right to life practices, followed by 30 per cent of the families who had adopted high level of practising

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Parents were happy about the Respondent's birth	Yes	75 (51.7)	70 (48.3)	145 (100)
	No	0	5 (100)	5 (100)
Parent's exposition about the Respondents' birth	Yes	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)	7 (100)
	No	74 (51.7)	69 (48.3)	143 (100)
Respondents' Having birth certificate	Yes	74 (50)	74 (50)	148 (100)
	No	1 (50)	1 (50)	2 (100)
Preferential level in favourite cooking dishes	Yes	41 (53.2)	36 (46.8)	77 (100)
	No	34 (46.6)	39 (53.4)	73 (100)
Prevailing of infanticide among the respondents' families	Yes	0	3 (100)	3 (100)
	No	75 (51)	72 (49)	147 (100)

Table 6: Gender Comparison of Rights Exercised in the Respondents' Families on Right to Life

<i>Level of Right to Life</i>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Low	1 (33.3)	2 (66.7)	3 (100)
	1.3	(2.7)	(2)
Moderate	53 (52)	49 (48)	102 (100)
	70.7	(65.3)	(68)
High	21 (46.7)	24 (53.3)	45 (100)
	(28)	(32)	(30)
Total	75 (50)	75 (50)	150 (100)
	(100)	(100)	(100)

Table 7: Gender Comparison of Rights Exercised in the Respondents' Families on Right to Life

right to life and just 2 per cent of the families practice low level of right to life to their schooling children. Among moderate category majority of the respondents were found to be males (70.7%) whereas in the low and high category it was observed to be females. A value of 0.708 exceeds the low significance value of 0.05 which could be projected that there was a relationship between the level of treatment and gender. It could be inferred from the above analysed data most of the families do exercise right to life for their children to a moderate extent. The families need to be conscientized in eliminating gender bias in nurturing a male or female child.

	Value	Df	Asym. significance (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-square	0.690	2	0.708

Table 8: Chi-square Test for Preferential Treatment in Right to Life

5.7 Physical and Verbal Abuses

Children are highly vulnerable to physical and verbal abuses committed on them by their immediate society. Instead of considering them a subject to respected and valued they are treated as an object to be played with abuses. Table 9 shows physical and verbal abuses perpetrated respondents corresponding to gender that find out the perpetrator of abuses on them and as well as to know whether it is being based on gender. More than 50 per cent of the respondents had expressed that no person is responsible to make a physical or verbal abuse on them. Most of the respondents (28.6%) opined that parents were the prime persecutor in abusing them verbally. Among the respondents who opined physical abused had been perpetrated, most of them (11.3%) expressed that the teachers had physical abused them. Most of the female respondents (17.3%) opined that they were physically abused by their mothers. Many of the male respondents (14.7%) were abused by their teachers physically. Most of the female respondents (21.3%) expressed that they were verbally abused by their mothers. Many of the male respondents (9.3%) were abused by their teachers physically. From the aforesaid data it could be inferred that most of the respondents were neither physically abused nor verbally abused. But it a significant sampled population had been abused. Mothers of girl children have to be sensitised in treating their girls with love and care and to avoid intimidating.

Type of abuse	Gender	Persecutor						Total
		Father	Mother	Siblings	Teachers	Relatives	None	
Physical abuse	Male	7 (9.3)	5 (6.7)	5 (6.7)	11 (14.7)	3 (4)	44 (58.7)	75 (100)
	Female	3 (4)	13 (17.3)	4 (5.3)	6 (8)	3 (4)	46 (61.3)	75 (100)
Verbal buse	Male	11 (14.7)	10 (13.3)	4 (5.3)	7 (9.3)	4 (5.3)	39 (52)	75 (100)
	Female	6 (8)	16 (21.3)	4 (5.3)	2 (2.7)	4 (5.3)	43 (57.3)	75 (100)

Table 9: Physical and Verbal Abuses Perpetrated Respondents corresponding to Gender

5.8 Sexual Abuses

The worst form abuse is sexual one, in which the children are physical and mentally harassed. As most of the social scientists projected that sexual abuse is perpetrated on the child by his/her immediate society. Table 10 shows the respondents' victimisation to sexual abuse that measures based on gender. More than half of the respondents (54.7%) opined that they had not undergone any sexual abuses. But a substantial proportion of the respondents (45.3%) had expressed that they had been sexually abused. Among whom 30 per cent of the respondents disclosed that their friends and peers are the higher perpetrators of sexual abuses, 12 per cent of the respondents had revealed that their parents had also sexually abused. 2.7 per cent of the respondents were sexually abused by their neighbours and 0.7 per cent of the respondents were by opposite sex (strangers). This data reveal that the schooling children undergo sexual abuses which were unheard. It

is startling that parents who need to protect them had also abused them sexually. The proportion of male respondents being abused is high.

Type of abuse	Gender	Persecutor						Total
		Parents	Relatives	Neighbours	Friends	Opposite Sex	None	
Sexual abuse	Male	7 (9.3) (70)	2 (2.7) (25)	1 (1.3) (25)	38 (50.7) (84.4)	0	1 (1.3) (36)	75 (100) (50)
	Female	3 (4) (30)	6 (8) (75)	3 (4) (75)	7 (9.3) (15.6)	1 (1.3) (100)	55 (73.3) (67.1)	75 (100) (50)
Total		10 (6.7) (100)	8 (5.3) (100)	4 (2.7) (100)	45 (30) (100)	1 (0.7) (100)	82 (54.7) (100)	150 (100) (100)

Table 10: Respondents' Victimization to Sexual Abuse based on Gender

6 Main Findings and Suggestions

The major findings of the study are:

- A majority of the respondents (73.4%) are in the high and higher secondary school ages of 14 to 17 years. 30.7 per cent of the respondents are in the middle school ages of 12 to 13 years.
- The respondents in the high school ages are males (40%) who observed to be higher than females (33.33%).
- Nearly two-third of the respondents (68.7%) are Hindus and a substantial proportion of the respondents (16%) are Muslims, followed by Christians with 14 per cent and a meagre percentage of respondents (1.3%) belong to other religious sects.
- Among respondents belonging to Muslim, majority of the respondents (79.2%) are males and the remaining 20.8 per cent of the respondents are females.
- Most of the respondents' mothers (16.7%) are studied in the standards of first to high school.
- Majority of the respondents' fathers (40.7%) are daily labourers.
- Most of the respondents' mothers are unemployed.
- Nearly half of the respondents are in the income groups of Rs.500 to Rs.3500.
- Most of the respondents (53.3%) are residing in urban areas and 46.7 per cent of them in rural areas.

Right to Life

- A major chunk of the sampled respondents (99.3%) had reported that they are satisfied with care provided to them at womb by their mothers sufficiently.
- Most of the male respondents (51.7%) felt that their parents are happy about their birth, 48.3 per cent of the respondents consented in line with this statement. Among denial category of this statement absolutely 100 per cent of the female respondents felt that their parents are not happy about their birth.
- Most of the respondents (37.3%) expressed that the siblings or the self are not served with stale food.

- A majority of the respondents (68%) categorised in the families are exercising moderate level of right to life practices, followed by 30 per cent of the families who had adopted high level of practising right to life and just 2 per cent of the families practice low level of right to life to their schooling children.
- Existence of relationship between the levels of treatment on right to life has a relationship with the gender.

Right to Protection

- More than 50 per cent of the respondents had expressed that no person is responsible to make a physical or verbal abuse on them.
- Most of the female respondents (17.3%) opined that they are physically abused by their mothers.
- More than half of the respondents in the low and moderate levels, the females are higher than the males.
- A difference exists between the levels of treatment on protection of child rights from the expected levels of protection.

Right to Participation

- The concentration of female respondents (64.5%) being neglected to make their choices are higher than the male respondents (35.5%) being neglected. In the categories of education and dress and other essentials, female respondents are higher than the male respondents.
- A major chunk of the respondents (81.3%) are experienced moderate level of practising the right to participation.

Right to Development

- Among the freedom of expression to parents about school and teachers category, girls (72.5%) are higher than the boys (27.5%) and related to needs and interests category, girls are prominently higher than the boys (27.3%). Concern to studies, boys (93.5%) are higher in numbers than girls (6.5%).
- Most of the respondents (64%) experienced right to development at moderate level. 20 per cent of had low level of development and 15.3 per cent of the respondents had high level of development. Among the moderate level of category, the male respondents (53.1%) are higher than the female respondents (46.9)

7 Conclusion

There is a deep urge and hunger among the people to participate in Direct Democracy than in the present system of representative and indirect democracy. In the representative democracy the people are active and given opportunity to participate just once in five years. There is a sense of helplessness among the people. People feel cheated, pushed around, led down and they do not know whom to approach and how to effectively get things done. There is a sense of Alienation among the people. There is a sense of depersonalization, growing loss of credibility of political parties. There is loss of control over market forces which leads to poverty and there is terrible loss of faith in Democracy itself. Thus the neighbourhood parliaments are the better alternative approach to find solution to all the above mentioned problems. The research study tries to discover if this approach is truly an appropriate channel to create Direct Participatory Democracy.

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