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A study of gender-based resource allocation and women development

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Abstract

The study provides evidence of how girls are deprived of households' resources within the family. For this purpose, a descriptive study was planned based on sample survey. For the study, 120 unmarried girls were selected randomly from Dholi & Abdulpur Raini villages of Muzaffarpur District of Bihar. Resource allocation for girls in respondent households was studied in the areas of general facilities/community based facilities, health care services, education and food and nutrition. The results showed that out of 120 respondents, 42.5% were getting preferences in fulfilling their basic needs in the family. Again, 55% respondents were getting access to community based facilities followed by only 24.16% who were getting health care related services. Only 45.84% girls were getting nutritious and wholesome diet. The study indicated that gender-based resource allocation exists in the study area. The study also indicated that girls were being provided fewer resources than boys.

Keywords: Gender, gender-based resource allocation, household resource allocation, women development

Introduction

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of men and women. To elaborate, gender is "socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men" (Council of Europe). This gender based inequality has deep roots in our society pervading almost all issues of social development. Women and girls are the greatest sufferers of this inequality which is exhibited through unequal distribution of resources and access to various developmental forums for girls and women, be it familial, social, cultural, religious, educational and others. This phenomenon is so closely interwoven and deeply rooted with the culture of a society at micro and macro levels that it is quite difficult to eradicate it. Therefore, a deep analysis of the issue was planned in form of a M.Sc. research entitled "A study on gender-based resource allocation in rural households in Muzaffarpur District of Bihar and its implications on women development" with the objective of "studying the gender-based resource allocation in the respondents' families and its relationship with women development."

Materials and Methods

Muzaffarpur District of Bihar was selected as locale of the study. Muraul block of Muzaffarpur was selected for the study having two villages, namely, Dholi and Abdulpur Raini. From these two villages, one hundred twenty households having children of both the sexes were selected as sample for the study. A Personal Interview Schedule was used to gather information from the selected respondents. Frequency, percentages, mean and correlation were used to have meaningful inferences.

Results and Discussion

Gender-Based Resource Allocation in Families

Gender based resource allocation was classified into four dimensions for the purpose of study which is elaborated below:

Table 1 reveals that only 51 out of 120 girls were being given preference in fulfilling their basic needs in the families.

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Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of allocation of general facilities (n=120)

Sl. No.	Statement	Number (f)	Percentage (%)
1	More preference in fulfilling basic needs in family	51	42.5%
2	More community based facilities	66	55%
3	Right to land/property	6	5%

A majority of 66 or 55% respondents had access to community based facilities. As is usual in society, only 6 out of 120 girls had right to land and property in sample households.

Table 2 reveals that only 29 or 24.16% respondents had access to health care and related services whereas only 40 or 33.33% girls out of 120 had access to medical facility.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the basis of allocation of health care services (n=120)

Sl. No.	Statement	Number (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Access to health care and related services	29	24.16%
2	Access to medical facility	40	33.3%

Table 3 shows that only 32 or 26.7% girls out of 120 had access to education. A majority of 49 or 40.9% respondents had access to higher studies.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of allocation of educational facility (n=120)

Sl. No.	Statement	Number (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Access to Education	32	26.7%
2	Access to pursue higher studies	49	40.9%
3	Access to electronic gadgets for education	23	19.2%

A meagre number of 23 girls out of 120 had access to electronic gadgets for educational purpose.

Table 4 reveals that only 55 out of 120 girls had access to wholesome diet.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents on the basis of allocation of nutritious food (n=120)

Sl. No.	Statement	Number (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Access to wholesome diet	55	45.84%
2	Access to nutritious food	56	46.7%

A majority of 56 or 46.7% respondents had access to nutritious food.

Table 5 shows that correlation between women development and education was positive and significant at 1% level which infers that when education increases it has a positive impact on women development and vice-versa. Women development and availability of nutritious food was positive and significant at 5% level which shows that when access to nutritious food increases it has positive impact on women development and vice-versa. General facilities and health care services were insignificant with women development in the study.

Table 5: Correlation analysis between gender-based resource allocation and women development

Sl. No.	Variables	Pearson correlation (r)
1	Education	.538**
2	General facilities	.060
3	Nutritious food	.203*
4	Health care services	.058

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, women development and education was positive which infers that when education increases it has a positive impact on women development and vice-versa, followed by availability of nutritious food when increases it has positive impact on women development and vice-versa. General facilities and health care services were insignificant with women development in the study and the result also indicated that gender biasness exists against girls in families while allocating the resources in the study area.

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