

UNDERSTANDING PATRIARCHY AND MALE CHAUVINISM IN GENDER INEQUALITIES:A QUALITATIVE META- ANALYTICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Patriarchal society instills the theme of ‘masculinity’ within boys from the very start and disregards any feminine behavior marking it to be weak. A woman is expected to be protected by a man, raised and sustained by males. That’s how the idea of male chauvinism is born. Oppression of women’s personal, social and economic well-being is the crude result of patriarchal and male chauvinistic practices – these are the findings of the present work which was done using Qualitative Meta-analysis/Meta-synthesis of 2 books and 20 published papers. The purpose of this research was to determine the relationship between patriarchy, male chauvinism and gender inequalities and understand the nature of patriarchy and male chauvinism and its role in encouraging discrimination against women. Four core themes were derived from the data wherein a comparative and collaborative assessment was done which established a significant role of patriarchal roots in the society giving birth to male chauvinism. The existing social practices governed by patriarchy leads to discrimination against women, considering men as the supreme gender to inherit and practice dominance over women.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Male Chauvinism, Women Discrimination, Women Oppression, Gender Inequalities

INTRODUCTION

Gender Equality has been prevailing in the society since a very long time and has prevalent roots in Indian scenario as well. The discrimination is higher against women as they still are less exposed to education, formal work sector and are bound to household sector only. Social inequality has made women victims of domestic violence and sexual assault (Jacobson 2011). The reasons behind such inequalities are numerous; patriarchy and male chauvinism being a part of it.

Gender inequalities

It was in the late 1960s that the term male chauvinist emerged, tracked in the New York Times from 1851-1999 along with the term feminist, sexism and sexual harassment (Mansbridge Et.al. 2005). Women were considered as the inferior gender and hence treated as per it, resulting in the practice of Male Chauvinism. It is common to observe that males are majorly and proudly considered to be the superior gender as it is passed across many generations and openly accepted by the society; thus leading to the birth of Patriarchy. The superior right and position has always been gifted and gladly received by the men in the world. Women being always considered the 'weaker section' of the society have always been considered subordinate to men. (Sultana, 2012).

Patriarchy

The etymology of the word Patriarchy comes from the word 'Patriarch' which means the rule of the father. It instils the dominance of the male on household, inclusive of women, children and servants. Currently, it has become more significant in terms of male dominion over women and keeping them subordinates (Bhasin 2006). The term patriarchy is used as a concept by feminists to showcase the realities of women in the societies. Walby defines "patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby 1990:20)

Male chauvinism

Chauvinism is a strong, unreasonable belief that your own country is more important and morally better than other people's (Palgrave, 2015) Whereas, male chauvinism is the belief held or alleged to be held by certain men, that men are inherently superior to women. It was first recorded in Clifford Oddets play till the day I die in 1935 (Mansbridge, Jane; Katherine Flaster (2005).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

22 journal papers and 2 books were reviewed for the research. The existing researches have established a significant relationship between the patriarchy, male chauvinism and discrimination against women in the society. The results are based on diverse population of various countries. The causal factors of gender inequalities, discrimination and atrocities against women are strongly linked with patriarchy and male chauvinism. Patriarchal society is the umbrella under which male chauvinism and other gender inequalities survive, resulting discrimination against women in the form of unequal opportunities, rigid and conventional expectations, sexism, violence and harassment.

The present study is conducted with the purpose to understand the nature of male chauvinism and patriarchy. To the best knowledge of the researcher, there exist very less researches done on male chauvinism and patriarchy together. Hence the present research is attempted with an aim to conduct a qualitative meta-analysis to understand the relationship between patriarchy, male chauvinism and gender inequalities.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives

- To investigate the relationship between patriarchy, male chauvinism and gender inequality.
- To investigate the role of patriarchy in sustaining male chauvinism in the society.

Research design

The present study is a qualitative Meta-analysis based on existing research papers and books on patriarchy and male chauvinism. Secondary data consisting of 20 journal papers, articles and essays along with 2 books were assessed using qualitative meta-analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Patriarchy has created a society that is governed by the supremacy of men. The discrimination against women has revolved around the themes mentioned below. The researcher has found the four themes (Male chauvinism in physical strength and health, Patriarchal society and its expectations from both the genders, Existing Male Chauvinism in relationships and Patriarchy against working women) that connect the roles of patriarchy and male chauvinism which in turn lead to gender inequalities.

Male chauvinism in physical strength and health

There exists plenty of women discrimination on the basis of physical strength and researchers have conducted researches to establish the link between patriarchal and male chauvinistic roots which govern gender inequality on these bases. In the research paper '*Division I athletes' attitudes toward and preferences for male and female strength and conditioning coaches*', the researchers established a result that females do not have any gender preference for their coaches but males did as they associated male coaches to be physically stronger and more appropriate for training than female coaches (Magnusson, M. Et.al,2009). Another research titled '*Attitude of Male and Female Athletes towards Male and Female Coaches*' conducted on basketball players also established that males preferred male coaches over females on the basis of sex roles expectations whereas females had no such preferences (Weinberg,R. Et.al 2019). These results showcase the supremacy males hold as they consider females to be the weaker gender in the field where physical strength is demanded. This mindset is based on patriarchy which compares the anatomical structure of women and men and considers the latter stronger scrutinized on the basis of ability, where pregnancy, menstruation and delicate feminine structures have been marked as weak. Apart from discrimination on the basis of physicality, there exists a gap between the health of men and women which is affected by the social forces. In the research paper "*Gender equality in couples and self-rated health - A survey study evaluating measurements of gender equality and its impact on health*", the results showed that men perceived a greater gender equality index in their relationship and considered their health to be good whereas women's perceptions were opposite. Women are conditioned to believe they are physically weaker than men, which often makes them manifest illness. This also concludes that mental health affects physical health (Sorlin. Et.al, 2011). It was also marked that women's health improved with increased gender equality in relationships in terms of actual index and perceived as well.

Patriarchal society and its expectations from both the genders

Both men and women play equal and paramount role in the functioning of society, yet our society is patriarchal in nature. From environmental factors such as discrimination at workplace to harassment, from inequality in education to health being affected due to violence and disease, to the existence of dowry which portray women as burden and bargain her off to another family; women have always been considered a burden and a weaker sex in the society. The society recognizes a society's lineage through the father's side as males are considered supreme gender during inheritance of property and decision-making rights. Even our legal and political systems are biased against women by limiting the opportunities for women (Amutha, 2017).

Researches establish roots of patriarchy that go back before established civilization. '*The Evolutionary Origins of Patriarchy*' stated that male sexual coercion and control over female sexuality leads to male dominance which has increased over the time of human social evolution (Smuts, 1995). This topic was further elaborated in the research '*Virginity and Patriarchy*' where a man's prestige is associated with a woman's virginity and his ownership over her body which further gets developed as control over her life through various ways (Mernissi, 1982). In the paper '*Anti-sexist men: A case of cloak-and-dagger chauvinism*' the author investigates the sexual behavior of anti-sexist males who are affected by chauvinistic and misogynist fantasies they possess. The sexual behavior is dominated by the preferences of men leading to chauvinism based on fear of losing power to women (Hester, 1984). In the research paper '*Insights into Sexism: Male Status and Performance Moderates Female-Directed Hostile and Amicable Behaviour*', male hostility towards females was checked in a video gaming environment. When females tend to be better players as teammates in the game, the poor performing men tend to be more hostile towards them than towards better performing male teammates. Their dominance is linked to their physical fitness, and men often rely on aggression to maintain their social dominance in the society. This is often subjugated on females to suppress her and maintain her lower hierarchy in the societal ranks. (Kasumovic, 2015). Another research conducted at Nigeria Delta titled '*Male Chauvinism and Socio-Religious Equilibrium In The Niger Delta: Implications For The 21st Century Nigeria*' explores how patriarchal society views women. From no mourning rituals after death to handing over wives to brother in laws after her husband's death, women have always been considered as property of men and men have been considered the supreme gender. She has no inheritance rights and is considered the wealth of men which shall be inherited by someone else after him (Otto, 2016). In Hunnicutt's study on '*Varieties of Patriarchy and Violence Against Women: Resurrecting "Patriarchy" as a Theoretical Tool*', the author has stated that the concept of patriarchy conducts violence on women on the basis of control, gender and power. According to the study, this issue has more social constructs than of any individual attributes (Hunnicutt, 2009). Linda Mclain in her paper '*Male Chauvinism' Is Under Attack from All Sides at Present': Roberts v. United States Jaycees, Sex Discrimination, and the First Amendment*' raises the injustice against women from getting full membership and opportunities in public organizations and the government's least interest to curb women discrimination which becomes unconstitutional in nature. The paper states that freedom of association and gender equality is double edged in nature, and how government organizations are basically single sex in nature (Mclain, 2019).

In the paper '*Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis*', Abeda Sultan traces how differences in men and women have become discriminatory in nature through sexual

hierarchy. She is stripped from her right even on herself, limiting her self-esteem and self-confidence. Practices like rape, wife beating and violence are often viewed as disciplinary culture encouraged by patriarchy. The oppression of women in social, economic and political arenas limits her potential and lead to discrimination against women and establishment of male chauvinism (Sultana,2011).In 1976, Sherlyn Woods conducted a study to find the causal factors of Male Chauvinism. Her famous study, '*Some Dynamics of Male Chauvinism*' was conducted on 11 men with the help of psychoanalytic therapy. The study dwelled deep and found male chauvinism as an act of warding off anxiety and shame which arises due to regressive wishes, being envious of women, unresolved childhood strivings, Oedipus complex and authority, and the need of dependency which conflicts against masculine self-esteem. Male chauvinism is displayed in situations where women take things in their own stride or wish to do things that threaten their idea of 'self'. (Woods, 1976). In the book '*Theorizing Patriarchy*', Sylvia Wallby categorizes six structures of Patriarchy which are experienced by women variedly according to their ethnic backgrounds and class. The structures are 'paid work', which focuses on discrimination in case of women's employment and payment with respect to men; 'household production', which focuses on societal expectations from women; 'culture', which points out at different behavior pattern of women and men in terms of sexuality and attractiveness; 'sexuality', which revolves around double stand behavior of sexuality labeling women as slags post sexual liberation; 'violence', which focuses on male controlling system on women and the 'state', which is patriarchal, racist and capitalist in nature, practicing little attempt on improving women's position in society. (Wallby, 1990).The synthesis of above sources of data concludes that social forces have existed since a long time where men have been dominating women sexually and economically.

Existing Male Chauvinism in relationships

In case of marriages or relationships, there are specific gender role expectations that govern the dynamics of the relationship. In the patriarchal society, it is mandatory for women to take care of the household regardless of her professional duties. In Indian context, violence against women as form of male chauvinism in has existed with social practices like Sati Pratha, Child Marriage and Widow Marriage (Shastri,2014). A research conducted in rural Bangladesh explores the violence against women within home. Domestic violence is a common factor where men exploit the economic and social dependence of women which is deeply rooted by the Patriarchy (Schuler,1996). Another research done in Nigeria establishes that there is no significant change in male dominance in relationships according to changes with urbanization. Women still hold the responsibility of household and men still choose to dominate even if the women are working(Asiyanbola, 2005).

The book 'Everyday Male Chauvinism' strongly explores violence against women in multiple forms.

There are four categories under which male chauvinism affects relationships. The first category is *Coercive male chauvinism* wheremen use moral, psychic or economic force to limit her freedom by weakening her will. The second type is *Male chauvinism used in crisis situation where* a man expresses male chauvinism via hyper control, hypercriticism, passive resistance, fake love, avoiding criticism and discussion. The third form is *Covert male chauvinism* established by creating a dearth of intimacy through silence, staying away, manipulative mood, invading intimate space with the help of other people, defensive communication and misleading.

And the last form is *Utilitarian male chauvinism* implied through patriarchal beliefs. This is done often by missing out on household responsibilities by not providing any cooperation and taking a woman's role for granted. Male chauvinism is entirely based on two principles of patriarchy. One expects women to be entirely responsible for household and relationships whereas the male is excused because of his public duties and the second principle gives men the unlimited right to exploit the energy of females (Bonino Et.al, 2006).

Patriarchy against working women

In this theme, the researcher has found the reasons behind the discrimination against working women who face male chauvinism catered by the patriarchal society. In the paper '*Maintaining Men's dominance: Negotiating identity and power when she earns more*', the researchers have explored the relationship power dynamics when wives earn more. The results of the paper display that there is retention of certain privileges for men even when the women are major earners. Due to certain expectations from each gender role, men and women both work together to reproduce male dominance in certain ways, women being the "good wives" and the link between money and power of wives is erased. Being the higher earner, it becomes a liability for the women. The whole preservation of power and dominance is done to prevent emasculation of men, due to the existing norms of patriarchy. (Tichenor, 2005). Another research establishes women discrimination in professional world. In the paper "*Attitude of Male Employees towards Female Managers in Selected Organizations in Ghana*", the results found that almost half the sample is reluctant to work under female managers, giving reason that women are slow decision makers, are not psyched to handle difficult issues, have family commitments which affect their professional commitments, and also that there exist some roles which only men can play. The men also considered that females are not emotionally stable to face organizational challenges and disagreed that male employees can take serious contributions under female boss. In conclusion majority of males prefer to work under male authority considering professional authoritative roles to be more masculine (Preko, 2012).

CONCLUSION

The study has concluded the strong role of patriarchy in the society which feeds male chauvinism and discrimination against women. The roles played by women are marked as inferior and often exploited by males for their benefit. Multiple movements and plenty of women have stood up to prove that women are capable of anything she 'wishes' to do. Yet, the society still pulls her down because in the end, she can do anything and everything but still never be a Man. In the end patriarchy and male chauvinism desires women to be oppressed and if they rebel against it, they are discriminated till they end up being oppressed. What is direly needed right now is gender education for men, where they are taught to understand and respect female roles and limitations. Areas must be covered by psychologists and social workers who can raise awareness against gender inequalities, educate about gender differences and attend issues faced by women. Our society can slowly fight against patriarchy and male chauvinism by showing men the face of humanity and the consequences of being influenced by such evil social forces.

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