

## **NEGLIGENCE OF GIRL CHILD IN INDIA**

**Singh Navjyot, M.Sc.(N), RN**

Asst. Professor,. Rama Nursing College, Hapur, U.P.

### **ABSTRACT**

The status of the girl child is the key to achieve women's equality and dignity which is a litmus test of the maturity of a society. Our constitution guarantees equality and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex but in India discrimination and negligence to girl child starts before her birth. In Indian society girl child is considered to as burden to the family, hence the girl child is always neglected in several aspects i.e. educational and health. Girl child gets maltreatment when compared to male child. In this article various issues regarding negligence and discrimination against girl child have been discussed.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **'A HAPPY GIRL CHILD IS THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY'**

The girl child always remains largely neglected over a male child and blaming for being a girl. Discrimination for girl child starts very early even before she is born. A simple sex determination method and a minor surgical procedure is required to stop the girl child coming into the world, in the hoping for a boy male child.

India has a heterogeneous society with male dominated cultural traditions. It is therefore possible without much of a strain to imagine the plight of female folks in such a society. This dominance of male person in the family and society make certain the inferior status of females. This predominance gives rise to so much of discriminatory practices against women such as female foeticide, malnutrition, dowry deaths, neglect of education, sexual harassment, molestation and teasing etc.

Girls are widely regarded as a burden to Indian families who fear the high costs of their weddings and resent spending money on their education only for them, later to leave the home to marry. Many women abort pregnancies when they believe they will deliver a girl, often under pressure from their husbands or in-laws who favour boys. This discrimination has driven India's girl child sex ratio progressively lower. According to Census statistics it fell from 927 girl child per 1000 boys in 2001 to 914 in 2011.<sup>1</sup>

Indian mothers breast feed girls for a far shorter period than they do their sons and feed them less well because they fear good nourishment will speed the advent of puberty and the need for a costly wedding. They think they need to feed the boy but there is less desire for the girl to survive. It is common in rural India. Boys are immediately taken to the doctor, but not the girl.

### **Discrimination against girl child in India**

Gender based, mostly discrimination against female kids is pervasive across the world. It is seen altogether the strata of society and manifests in varied forms. As per the literature, girl child has been treated inferior to boy child and this can be deeply carved within the mind of the girl child.

Census 2011 shows decline of female population beneath the age of seven, with an estimation that eight million feminine foetuses are aborted within the past decade. The family welfare statistics 2009, shows that fatality rate figures for females and males are fifty-two and forty-nine, respectively, out of a thousand live births with females additional seemingly to be aborted than males owing to biased attitudes. A decline within the child sex quantitative relation (0–6 years) was discovered lowest since India's independence. In 2011 Indian census report it stands at 914 females against thousand males.<sup>1</sup> Sex choice before birth and neglect of the girl child after birth, in childhood and throughout during the adolescents years has outnumbered males to females. These statistical numbers tell us quite a harsh story regarding neglect and maltreatment of the girl child in India.

Mainly there are two kinds of inequalities, one is academic difference and second is health inequality. The overall standing of female in India is inferior to men and thus a male child is most popular over a baby girl. Therefore, education and health care of the girl child in India is a crucial social indicator to live equality between male and female.

Because of negligence, girl children are deemed of resources within the areas of health and education. Several proofs shows that in India female children are given less food and health care than boys, particularly in Northern India. Girl children are breastfed for shorter periods, given less medical attention, fewer visits for consultations and are usually in an emergency taken terribly late to the health care facility. Because of this social stereotypes several of baby girl miss out on the prospect to boost their overall health. This can be sort of an extended infanticide, since life sustaining requirements like food, nutrition and health care are denied to the girl child. This trend leads in too many health problems. Girl children in India face relatively higher risk like malnutrition, disease, disability, and retardation of growth & development milestone. Girl child has no access to or management over the resources as a result of their work towards raising a family and within the home chores is undervalued. In India there's a well-liked expression that "Bringing up a female offspring is like watering a plant in another's courtyard." As a result of this kind of social understanding, she is taken into account a liability and outdoors commodity and is deprived of good food and nutrition. In line with a recent international study, India is the fourth most dangerous country for a female offspring within the world.

The girl child in India is usually disadvantaged from her right to education. So the drop out range of girls from school way

exceeds the boys as results of girls are expected to assist at home, either with family work like laundry cloths and cooking or with taking care of younger siblings. In India nearly forty two girls reach class V out of hundred girls that enrol in the 1st year of school, among several of these who live below poverty line solely nineteen of the a hundred girls reach class V.<sup>2</sup> Since female children spend longer time performing domestic duties and this will increase the gap between female and male equality. In most parts of India, this perpetuates the parable that education is of no help to the girl child and first job for the girls are to look after the family work, marry early, have children and raise them. Typically in Indian communities girl children are thought-about an inferior sex and are raised to just accept this belief.

Negligence is the most typical sort of mistreatment for girl children in India. There are four basic types of neglect: physical neglect, emotional neglect, educational neglect and medical neglect. Neglect will have long-term physical and emotional effects on the child and may be fatal.<sup>3</sup>

#### **TYPES OF NEGLECT**

Child neglect happens when a child's basic needs don't seem to be met. Basic needs include adequate food, clothing, health care, supervision, education, nurturance, and shelter. Neglect is outlined as an act of omission and may or might not be intentional. Adequacy of care exists on a time from glorious to terribly poor. Totally different degrees of inadequacy of care need different

responses. The cultural context during which girl children's needs don't seem to be met additionally should be considered.

#### **Physical neglect**

Physical neglect is the recognized and most typically known variety of neglect. It happens when a toddler suffers or is at substantial risk of suffering harm by the caregiver's failure to provide necessities. Abandonment may be a variety of severe physical neglect. Lack of supervision by parent or supervision by an inappropriate substitute will have irreversible or fatal consequences for children.

#### **Emotional neglect**

This occurs when the child doesn't receive the required nurturing and tenderness for his or her optimum emotional growth. This is often harder to spot due to the absence of physical proof and therefore the proven fact that it goes on within the privacy of the home. Severe emotional neglect could cause nonorganic failure-to-thrive. Failure to provide the required mental health care is also a variety of emotional neglect.

#### **Educational neglect**

This occurs when a child isn't concerned in any educational program or is inveterately truant from school. Children who have important delays and are denied remedial services can also be considered victims of educational neglect.

#### **Medical neglect**

This occurs when a child's basic health care needs don't seem to be met, leading to harm or potential hurt. It happens within the several things i.e. when a parent fails to seek care for

unhealthiest or injury in a timely manner and when a parent fails to provide or consent to treatment for a treatable condition which will be life threatening.

### **EFFECTS OF NEGLECT**

Physical neglect can lead to several nutritional deficiency disorders, malnutrition and retardation of normal growth and development. A recent study of child neglect showed that neglect may also affect brain growth and development. The study shows that more than 50% of children who had been neglected have some functional problems and there were significant behaviour problems described in 26% of children and developmental delays in 11%.<sup>3</sup>

Emotional neglect, especially during the first 2 years of life, has a particularly striking and long-lasting impact on a child's relationship with his or her peers and on his or her ability to function within the school system. The effects of neglect are above and beyond the negative impact of poverty and its correlation with the child's development. Aggressive behaviour and difficulties relating to peers may persist long after correction of the home situation is made.

Educational neglect will deprive a child from the ability to support himself or herself in the future and to participate fully in society. Neglected children may have impaired problem-solving ability, delayed language development and lower academic achievement. Children who have been neglected also show an increase in delinquent behaviour in later life.

### **How to eliminate the negligence for girl child?**

The Government has recently started a campaign "**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**", largely emphasizes on negligence and educational inequality to ensure the elimination of baseless discrimination against girl child.<sup>4</sup> The government of India has taken measure to protect and promote the overall status of girl child, prevent female feticide, infanticide and eliminate gender discrimination and protect the girl child from negligence.

To promote, eliminate, the negative cultural attitude and practices against girl child, educational and community awareness program should be there to change the negative attitude towards female children. Religious leaders should actively promote and endorse the equality of the girl child, develop and implement widespread policies, plans of action and programs for the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl child. Strictly enforce the laws to ensure no discrimination should be there on sex and age to children in the health, education and other sectors.

Address contributory factors for negligence, prioritizing those most important and responsive to being remedied. Parents may need their problems addressed before they can adequately care for their children. Involve the families in developing the plan and inspire positive family functioning to decreasing negative cultural practices against girl child.

Returning to the context in which neglect occurs, advocacy and counselling are needed at different levels: the individual child, parent, family, community and society. Guidance and counselling of the parents to improve over all status of their female children to express or meet their own needs and to get full opportunities as compared to male children to be given importance. Health care professionals are often in a position to recognize the discrimination in children based on gender. Through proper counselling and education to the parents it can be possible to reduce the likelihood of neglect or provide services for girl children who have experienced neglect. There should be specialized paediatrics counsellor in all the levels of health care delivery system to address the issues related to maltreatment and negligence for girl children.

### **Conclusion**

The efforts at gender equality and gender justice must be started before the birth. To eliminate all forms of negligence and discriminations against girl child the need to be addressed the son preference attitude and sex selection before birth. It can be achieved by

creating and increasing general public awareness of the value of the girl child and strengthening the image and status of girl child in society. All types of negligence and discriminations against girls therefore must be eliminated to improve the welfare of the girl children with regard to health, nutrition and education to develop their full potential and skills.

### **References**

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