

Socio-Economic and Cultural Disparity: A Study on Gender Gap in Mirzapur Village of Aligarh District in Uttar Pradesh, India

Md Faiyaz Afzal¹ Sahar Fatma² Md Areful Hoque³

^{1,2,3}Research Scholar

^{1,2,3}Department of Geography

^{1,2,3}Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh-202002

Abstract— Gender inequality is most striking issue of developing India, where gender gap and disparity is visible in almost every aspect of life including social, economic and cultural. The present paper is an attempt by the author to understand and analyse the root causes of gender disparity in Mirzapur village of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh, India. The author have done an empirical observation of the village by conducting household survey and found some striking results which have been represented through tables and diagrams in the paper. It has been found that girls are more illiterate than boys in the village and the gap is almost 30 per cent. The Study also highlights that girls are more regular in primary schools than boys and the share considerably increases as the levels of education increases to high secondary and graduation classes. In terms of occupational structure and social life women's are marginalized but health condition of females are better than males in the village.

Key words: Socio-economic, gender gap, occupational structure

I. INTRODUCTION

No nation, no society, no community can hold its head high and claim to be part of the civilized world if it condones the practice of discriminating against one half of humanity represented by women (Singh, M. 2008). In recent years, there has been growing realization that development goals cannot be realized unless gender inequalities are removed and women are empowered to choose and decide about their own welfare, the welfare of their families, and the communities in which they live (Gupta & Yesudian, 2006). Women may be gaining on men in some domains and falling further behind in other domains. In a few domains, such as life expectancy, women have the advantage, so "declining gender inequality" in this instance refers to men gaining on women (Dorius & Firebaugh). Pattern of gender inequalities in developing societies are quite different from those in the most industrialized societies (Buchmann & Hannum, 2001).

In almost every sphere of human functioning in India, the role defined for males, the rights for women are fewer or less emancipating than those of men, and women's obligations are more limiting than those of men, resulting in gender disparity at every level, cutting across all types of class and caste powerlessness (Malhotra et. al., 2002). In 2000., at the United Nations Millennium Declaration General Assembly, the UN identified eight, Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to be achieved by the year 2015. Promoting gender equality, one of the eight MDG goals, is the key to achieving the other seven goals (UNFPA, 2015). Gender disparity between individuals, due to gender gap has been defined by Sen (2001) as "not one homogeneous phenomenon, but a collection of disparate and interlinked problems." According to him, these could be mortality

inequality; natality inequality; basic facility inequality for instance, unequal access to schooling to girls; special opportunity inequality such as, unequal access to higher education, professional trainings etc.; professional inequality in certain occupations; inequality in ownership of assets; and inequality within household in the division of labour.

II. STUDY AREA

Mirzapur is a middle sized village located in the district of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh state of India. It is located in the north of Aligarh district and lies in the Jawan Block of Koil Tehsil, with total area of 120 Sq. Km. It is situated around 5 kilometres away from the Aligarh city. The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of the village is 27°57'36"N & 78°04'03"E (Fig.1). It has a population of about 1059 persons living in around 130 households. With total 223 families residing, the Mirzapur village has a population of 1457 of which 763 are males and 694 are females as per Population Census 2011.

In Mirzapur village population of children with age 0-6 is 305 which makes up 20.93 per cent of total population of village. Average Sex Ratio of Mirzapur Siya village is 910 which is lower than Uttar Pradesh state average of 912. Child Sex Ratio for the Mirzapur village as per census is 1033, higher than Uttar Pradesh average of 902. Mirzapur village has higher literacy rate as compared to Uttar Pradesh. In 2011 the literacy rate of the village was 71.35 per cent compared to 67.68 per cent of Uttar Pradesh. In Mirzapur Male literacy stands at 81.24 per cent while female literacy rate was 60.11 per cent. As per constitution of India and Panchyati Raaj Act, Mirzapur village is administrated by Sarpanch (Head of Village) who is elected representative of the village. Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 0.21 per cent of total population in Mirzapur village. The village currently doesn't have any Schedule Tribe (ST) population. In Mirzapur total working population is 356 persons. About 91.29 per cent of workers describe their work as Main Work (Employment or earning more than 6 Months) while 8.71 per cent were involved in Marginal activity providing livelihood for less than 6 months. Out of 356 total workers 35 per cent were cultivators (owner or co-owner) and 16 per cent were Agricultural labourers.

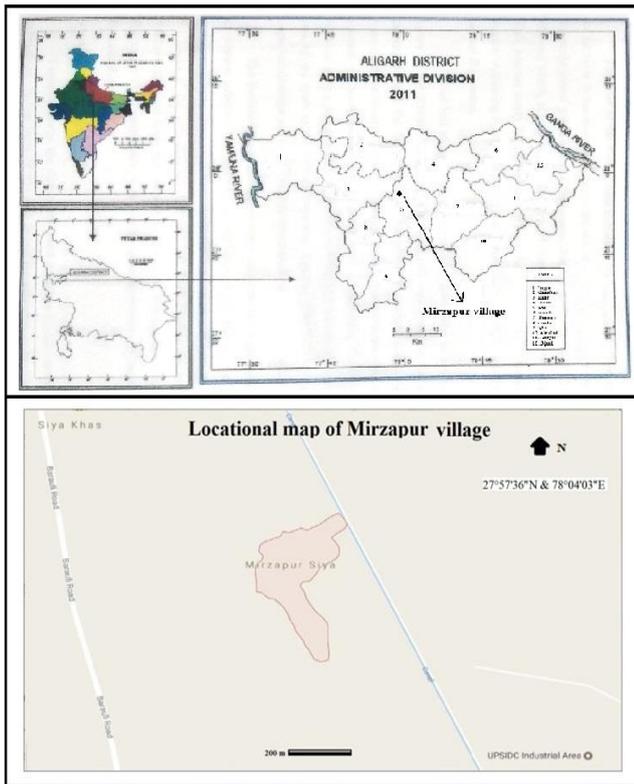


Fig. 1:

III. OBJECTIVES

The following are the main objectives of the study:

- 1) To assess and analyse the gender gap prevailing in the study area.
- 2) To highlight the possible causes of gender disparity in the village and give some suitable measures to them.

IV. DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The present study is entirely based on household survey of Mirzapur village, carried out by the author in February 2015. The sample comprises 13 per cent of the total households of the selected village. The households had been selected on the basis of simple random sampling. In all 30 out of the total 223 households had been taken into consideration. A detailed household questionnaire was designed to collect information on income, employment, consumption, education, health, daily wages, schools, infrastructures assets, savings, contraceptive use, and fertility behaviour for individuals. Tabulation and analysis of the data have been done by simple percentage method.

V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In constraining individual and family decisions and behaviour the role of social context had been stressed by the Sociologists. The importance of social context can be illuminated by studying the settings that differ greatly on a theoretically important aspect of context. Thus, relying on this philosophy and by going through the literature on gender inequality and women's autonomy the following disparities have been found in Mirzapur village, as discussed under the given headings:

A. Educational inequalities:

In Mirzapur village girls continue to be less educated than the boys. The table-1 shows the percentage of male and female who are enrolled in primary, high school, senior secondary, graduation, post graduation as well as the uneducated male and female in the village. According to the statistical report the chief barrier to female education are inadequate school facilities (such as sanitary facilities), shortage of female teachers and gender bias in curriculum (majority of the female characters being depicted as weak and helpless vs. strong, adventurous, and intelligent men with high prestige jobs).

Though the literacy rate is gradually rising, the female literacy rate in the village is lower than the male literacy rate. According to data collected in 2015, literacy rate of females is 35.30 per cent compared to males, which is 64.14 per cent. As compared to boys, far fewer girls are enrolled in the schools, and many of them drop out. The percentage of females who completed at least a secondary education was almost half that of men, which is 26.6 per cent as compared to 60.4 per cent. In the current generation of youth, the gap seems to be closing at the primary level and increasing in the secondary level. (Fig.1)

Level	Male	Female
Primary	32.33	31.70
High school	21.89	19.51
Senior secondary school	13.93	2.43
Graduation	0.04	Nil
Post-graduate	Nil	Nil
Uneducated	31.84	46.34

Table 1: Percentage of males and females enrolled in educational institutions at different levels in 2015.(Value in percentage)

Source: Field survey by author

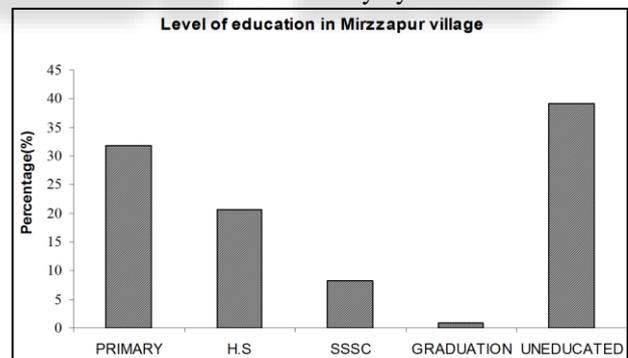


Fig. 2:

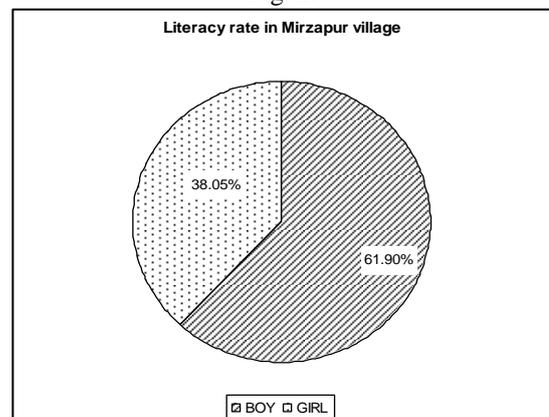


Fig. 3:

The gap between girls and boys in school enrolment increases dramatically. The girl's gap is 10 per cent more likely than boys to drop out the school. Problems still remain in the quality of education for girls where boys in the same family will be sent to higher quality private schools and girls are sent to the government school in the village.

S.No.	Status	Percentage
1.	Literate	56.41
2.	Illiterate	43.5

Table 2: Status of education in Mirzapur village in 2015
Source: Field survey 2015

S. No.	Children Literate/Illiterate	Percentage
1.	Total Students going to school	87.87
2.	Total Girls going to school	34.84
3.	Total Boys going to school	53.03
4.	Total children not going to school	12.13
	total illiterate boys	6.25
	total illiterate girls	37.5

Table 3: Percentage of literates and illiterates children's in Mirzapur village.

Source: Field survey 2015

Classes	Gender Parity Index
Class-1	1.04
Class-2	0.89
Class-3	0.95
Class-4	1.02
Class-5	1.00
Total	0.89

Table 4: Gender parity index in primary education
Source: Field survey 2015

B. Economic inequalities:

1) Occupational inequalities:

In 2009 a report wrote that female labour participation is lower than men, but has been rapidly increasing since the 1990s. Out of India's 397 million workers in 2001, 124 million were women. This situation is also visual in the rural outfit of India and the similar with the case with the village of Mirzapur. Over 65 per cent of the people in Mirzapur village are engaged in agricultural activities. A majority of rural men work as cultivators, while a majority of women work in livestock maintenance and milk production. Only 6.5 per cent of women are cultivators, but they are more active in the irrigation, weeding, winnowing, transplanting, and harvesting stages of agriculture. Women's labour participation rate is about 1.6 per cent only, while the male participation is 3.2 per cent. About 26 per cent males are engaged in secondary sectors, running their own shops or served as rented workers. There is wage inequality between men and women in the village. The largest wage gap was in manual labour operations, where men were paid ₹103 per day, while women were paid ₹55.

2) Property Rights:

Women have equal rights under the law to own property and receive equal inheritance rights, but in practice, women are at a disadvantage. This is evidenced from the fact that 70 per cent of the land is owned by men in Mirzapur village. Laws, such as the Married Women Property Rights Act of 1974 protect women, but few seek legal redress. About 78 per cent of the bank accounts are of male rather than females. The share of House and property among the males and females are 89.9 per cent & 11.5 per cent respectively.

Sectors of work	Male	Female
Primary Sector	62.2	6.5
Secondary Sector	26.2	Nil
Tertiary Sector	3.2	1.6
Total	91.9	8.1

Table 5: Work participation in Mirzapur village in 2015
(Value in percentage)

Source: Field survey 2015

Assets	Male	Female
Bank	85.71	14.39
Land	91.30	8.70
House	89.35	10.65
LPG gas	80.00	10.00

Table 6: Share of assets belonging in the village.(Value in percentage)

Source: Field survey, 2015

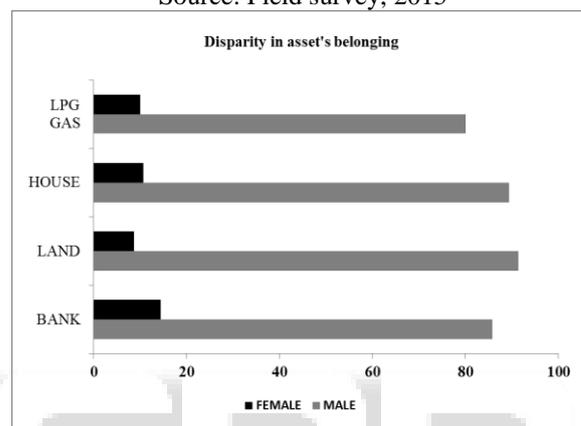


Fig. 4:

C. Health and survival inequalities:

On health and survival measures, the birth sex ratio implied sex-selective abortion, and gender inequality between women's and men's life expectancy and relative number of years that women live compared to men in good health by taking into account the years lost to violence, disease, malnutrition or other relevant factors.

- 1) Sex-selective abortion- It is a very positive fact about the village that about 90 per cent of the women said no in the context of abortion related queries, while only 10 per cent said yes. It means there is negligible sex selective abortion in the village.
- 2) Desire for having child- In most of the cases the women desire is not asked before having a child. They don't even know the concept and are mentally prepared for giving birth to so many babies. The women's are supposed to marry for only having sex and babies.
- 3) Health- Malnutrition rates in Mirzapur village are nearly equal in boys and girls. Studies in the village have found that gender disadvantages, such as negative attitudes towards women's empowerment are risk factors for suicidal behaviour and common mental disorders like anxiety and depression.

Index	Percentage
Over weight	23.33
Normal weight	55.00
Under weight	21.66

Table 7: Body Mass Index (BMI) of total population in Mirzapur, 2015

Source: Calculated by author

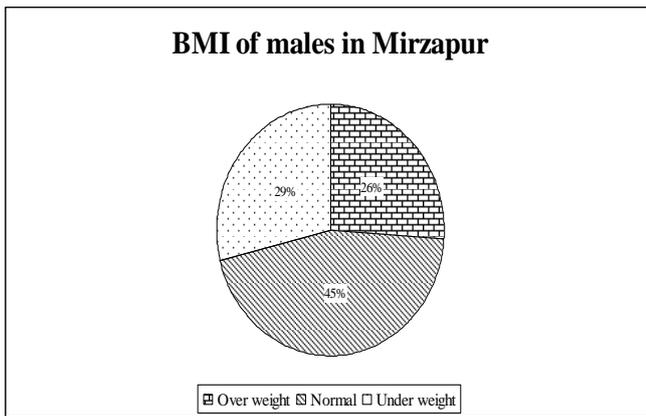


Fig. 5:

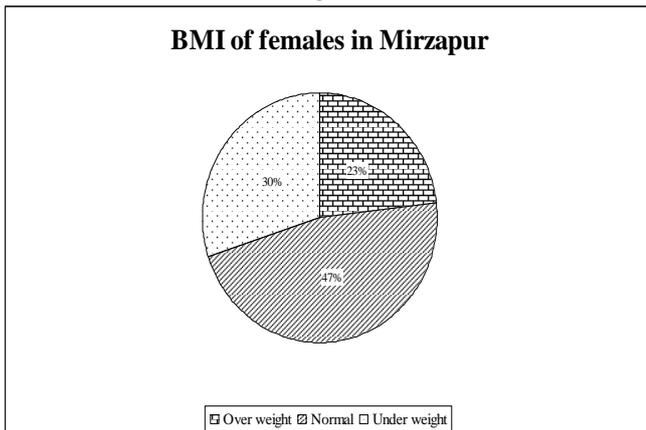


Fig. 6:

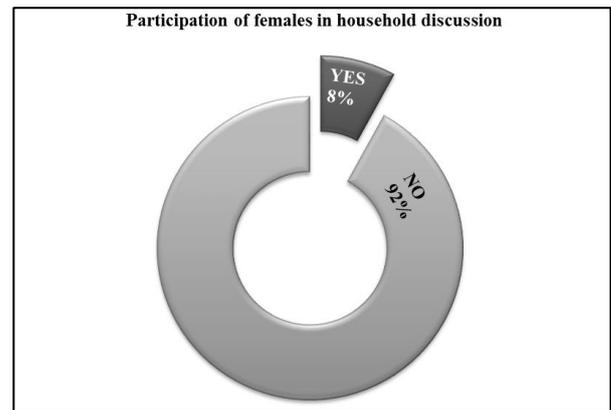


Fig. 7:

VI. CONCLUSION

This entire research paper has been able to identify the gender inequality as a problem confronting in Mirzapur village. The authors have suggested some strategies that can enable Mirzapur to achieve the Millennium Development Goal's (MDG) number 3, which is on empowering the women for better development of the country. The problems of gender inequality facing by the village Mirzapur can be tackled by the adoption of the educational strategies towards achieving the MDGs. Such educational strategies must provide opportunities for the under-privileged and vulnerable women who are unable to enroll into the formal school system Seya (2005). Further more, India's human capitals and literacy can be developed so as to prepare mature men and women to face the challenges of an increasing unequal world system and contribute to the emergence of what is now referred to as an enlightened globalization. Girl's secondary schools should be established in the rural communities where the majority of the people reside, in view of cost effectiveness, interest and participation. Women NGOs should rise up to the challenges of the millennium and set-up activities to empower their less privileged/fortunate women. Government should provide a political will, encouragement and support to address the problem. Women should come out and be bold to take up challenges, etc.

A. Suggestions and recommendations:

- 1) Providing financial assistance to the poor family.
- 2) Proper implementation of poverty alleviations programmes.
- 3) By launching adult education programme and gives vocational training.
- 4) Strict laws against early girl marriage.
- 5) Providing general awareness related with education with the help of mass media.
- 6) By connectivity and accessibility with the main town.
- 7) Proper implementation of various educational programmes like mid day meal.
- 8) By providing books and uniform at free of cost.
- 9) The panchayat members and NGO's can play important role in promoting inclusive education.
- 10) All the above measures remain ineffective unless and until we can not stop population growth.
- 11) Government should provide safe and hygienic food to the people.
- 12) Use of pesticides and insecticides should be checked so that the health is not affected.

D. Social status and decision making:

- 1) Gender based violence- Domestic violence, rape and dowry-related violence are sources of gender violence. Other sources of gender violence include those that are honour killings. Our study suggest that there are some problems of domestic violence where males torture physically their female, while the dowry related issues are very few and rape cases are negligible.
- 2) Customs & Practices- Purdah (veil) system is rigidly performed in the village about 83.33 per cent women observe purdah while only 16.66 per cent do not follow it. Most of the women's of the village remains stick with the house hold activities and have nothing to do with the outside world. Women's are treated as "Ghar ki Lakshmi" and have no participation in the community discussions. All the decisions of the family are taken by the male head of the family, in about 90 per cent cases. While in the context of market going and purchasing grocery products there found flexibility both males and females participated in the practice.

Participation of females in household discussion:	YES	No
	8	92
Females desire asked for having child	13.33	86.66
Females observing purdah	83.33	16.66
Female eat before male	73.21	26.79

Table-8: Social disparity in Mirzapur village. (Value in percentage)

Source: Field survey 2015

- 13) There should be proper health facilities as there is only one hospital that too in a bad condition.
- 14) There was bad condition of electricity so it should be improved by the Government.
- 15) Drinking water facilities should be improved so as to control water borne diseases.
- 16) Drainage problems should be checked by the government.
- 17) Awareness should be created among the people by educating them.
- 18) Roads should be built so that water puddles and diseases should be removed.
- 19) Poor peoples and farmers should be given subsidies by the Government.
- 20) Gender disparity should be removed by awareness and sex composition should be checked by checking female foeticide.

REFERENCES

- [1] Buchmann, C. et. al. (2008), 'Gender inequalities in education', *Annual review of sociology*, Vol. 34, pp. 319-337
- [2] Gupta, K. & Yesudian, P. (2006), 'Evidence of women's empowerment in India: a study on socio-spatial disparities', *Geoournal*, Springer, Vol. 65, pp.365-380
- [3] Davis, S. N. & Greenstein, T. N. (2009), 'Gender ideology: Components, predictors and consequences', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 35, pp. 87-105
- [4] Brandt, M. J. (2011), 'Seism and gender inequality across 57 societies' *Psychological Science*, Sage Publications, Vol. 22, No. 11, pp. 1413-1418
- [5] Arora, R. U. (2012), 'Gender inequalities, economic development, and globalization: A state level analysis of India', *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Springer, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 147-164
- [6] Galor, O. & Weil, D. N. (1996), 'The gender Gap, fertility and Growth', *American Economic Review*, Vol. 86, No. 3, pp. 374-387
- [7] Dorius, S. F. & Firebaugh, G. (2010), 'Trends in Global gender inequality', *Social Force*, Oxford University press, Vol. 88, No. 5, pp.1941-1968
- [8] Buchmann, C. & Hannum, E. (2001), 'Education and stratification in developing countries: a review of theories and research', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 27, pp. 77-102
- [9] Malhotra, A. & Mather, M. (1997), 'Do schooling and work empower women in developing countries? Gender and domestic decisions in Sri Lanka', *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 599-630