

Gender Discrimination Among Children in Urban Slums

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ABSTRACT Gender bias continues to manifest itself in Indian society in spite of the right to equality enshrined in the constitution and the various laws. The girl child does not always enjoy the rights of childhood for reasons extraneous to her. It is the gender and culture that determines the position of girl child in the Indian social structure. This study analyzes the gender bias prevalent in the slum areas of Allahabad city of Uttar Pradesh. The sample consisted of 120 children aged five to ten years (60 of higher caste, 60 lower caste; with 30 boys and 30 girls in each category). The data was collected through interview schedules administered on the mothers. To study the gender gap a Gender Disparity Index (GDI) was calculated. Results indicate the existence of strong gender bias in both the higher caste and the lower caste slum dwellers regarding the fulfillment of the demands of the children, the type of work assigned to them, the mode of punishment, etc. The GDI values revealed slightly better position of girls in lower caste in comparison to the higher caste girls.