

A STUDY OF PATRIARCHY AND ITS ENFORCEMENT ON MASCULINITY IN THE MODERN INDIAN SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

In this study, Patriarchy and Masculinity and its impact has been focused upon on a major scale. The study concentrates on the basic concepts of Patriarchy and Masculinity and the areas that surround them. The basic concepts were studied in the academic curriculum and also through minor research. The study is based upon the research conducted through site surfing and article references. The main motive of the research is to get an exposure to the real world scenario and to apply the learnt theories in real life situations. The objectives of this study were to learn the concept of patriarchy and masculinity, understand whether patriarchy affects the executives personal and professional life, to explore the effects of masculinity on organizational/work relationship, to learn the laws that exist against the gender discriminations at workplace and to explore whether organizations are taking any steps eliminate patriarchy or gender preferences. Through in-depth research and article references, using previous research studies information was received and recorded. This also gave an idea as to how queries or situations are dealt with. Besides the organization and the personal lives of employees and executives revolve around the norms set by the society. The rules and regulations set in organizations are also somewhat influenced by the societal norms.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Masculinity, Modern Indian society, Organization.

Introduction

A dominating male society, where men hold primary political roles, moral authority, social authority and control of property. Some of these societies are patrilineal, that means property and title are inherited by the male lineage.

Idea of inherent natural difference between men and women is the basic ideology behind this belief of Patriarchy. Sociologists believe patriarchy is a social product and not as an outcome of innate differences between the sexes hence they focus on the way that gender roles in a society affect power differentials between men and women.

These ideologies arise from the idea of Masculinity. Generally believed to be socially constructed, some research believe that certain behaviors considered masculine are biologically influenced. The extent of the biologically or socially influenced is generally a topic of debate. Certain traits like leadership, decision making ability, strength, courage, independence were traditionally considered masculine. But such beliefs differ across culture.

Need for the Study

It is important that the inequality against men and women is dealt with in an effective manner. Though we have laws in our country to deal with such situations, the results do not show any progress. The study focuses on the discriminations that take place in the corporate world for reasons that may not be so subtle. The main debating factor here would be the measures taken by the higher authorities of the organizations to curb or decrease the number of cases of discrimination. Hence, the need of the study is to understand how the individuals and the organizations deal with such situations.

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Scope of the Study

- The scope of the study is restricted to only working executives in Mumbai
- The study does not include all age categories.
- The study focuses on youth aged from 16 to 55.
- The study has no gender boundaries and focuses on opinions of everyone irrespective of their gender.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- To learn the concept of patriarchy and masculinity.
- To understand whether patriarchy affects the executive's personal and professional life.
- To explore the effects of masculinity on organizational/work relationships.
- To learn the laws that exist against the gender discriminations at workplace.
- To explore whether organizations are taking any steps to eliminate patriarchy or gender preferences.

Research Methodology

Problem Identification

This study is about patriarchy and masculinity and all the concepts that surround this topic. Patriarchy as we know is a platform that gives men or the head of the family an upper hand in taking all the decisions of the family whereas masculinity is the trait that men are expected to possess in order to be considered normal. The area under consideration is the effects these concepts have on the personal and professional lives of men and women.

- The concept of men suffering due to patriarchy and masculinity enforcement is yet a new subject for the society since the notion of men being unhappy with having power in hand is abnormal. Hence, finding cases where men have complained about following the societal norms are very few. Finding a solution to an issue that is yet not recognized can be a challenge.

Methodology Adopted

This study is made taking into consideration that the issue is prevalent in the society and the basic recognition of patriarchy and toxic masculinity has been initiated. The research explains in brief the entire concept of patriarchy and masculinity and how it affects daily lives of executives and professionals in all aspects. Data for this study is collected through in-depth online research and usage of previous research data available on the sites.

Sample Unit – 31 participants Sampling place – Mumbai

The secondary source includes all the articles, books, online references that include the information regarding patriarchy and the trait of masculinity. It focuses on the briefing of these concepts and in depth details of patriarchy and its roots in all aspects of individual's personal life and professional life.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

In this survey the numbers of responders are in total 31. The men sum up to 16, the women sum up to 15 and we have no responders that belong to transgender and any other sexual identity. The responders to this survey belong to different age categories. Majority of the responders are in between 16-25 which probably means they have either started working early or have less qualification. 6 of the responders belong to age category of 26-35 which gives us responders who have spent enough time in corporate world or any other organization. 3 responders are of age in between 36-45 which can probably mean that they are both working and have a settled family or are independently living by themselves. 1 responder belongs in 46-55 age category which gives us an idea that the responder must have spent more than 30% of life time in an organization working among others. The analysis of the education level of the respondents concludes that 3% responder is an under graduate who has started working right after their higher education. 29% responders have completed their graduation course and thereafter started working. 68% responders have completed their post-graduation and started working in corporates.

It is understood from the analysis that not many know people know the basic definition of patriarchy and masculinity. The awareness of societal norms and its technical terms are low even in educated individuals. To understand the same, it will be important for them to go look out for sites, articles or books that might help them understand these terms.

This study showcases that most of our responders do recognize the existence of patriarchy and masculinity in our Indian society. Though the study covers very little portion of the Indian population, the sample shows that a smaller portion has either never faced any such situations or is unaware of these terms and may take such a hierarchy as normal in all families and in the organization as well.

The analysis of the basic understanding of patriarchy and masculinity gave following responses from the sample.

- Patriarchy is the family system where in the male is the head of the household. Masculinity is when patriarchy becomes toxic, when male power is considered and exhibited to be supreme and made to feel that other genders are useless and not worthy for any form of activity,
- Patriarchy where in man is dominating. Masculinity is the features which highlights man. The society views of being man.
- male being higher than women and how this mentality affects men and women in society and career
- Patriarchal society is still considered as a way of life in India. It is deep rooted in our culture where even today sons are preferred over daughters.
- Male holds the power and women are excluded
- Where men hold the control and take decisions for the women and kids of the house.
- That men are superior or in some or the other way decision making is in their hands and also they are found more eligible for certain tasks
- Patriarchal masculinities is a term that can be used to describe those ideas about and practices of masculinity that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity
- Patriarchal masculinities is a term that can be used to describe those ideas about and practices of masculinity that emphasize the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority of men over women. Ideas about and practices of patriarchal masculinities maintain gender inequalities.
- Patriarchy: A system or a hierarchy male members are considered to be the head of the family
Masculinity: All the characteristics that define a male like being rigid or strong.

The definitions provided by the responders vary on different scales. Some responders define it as a daily way of life whereas few define it as a hierarchy that excludes women from the decision making power. The men are considered as the head of the family, hence, making them the highest authority who will then have the others follow them and their rules. Few of the respondents are not really aware of the concepts.

Patriarchy and masculinity play an important role in deciding the employees behaviour at home and at workplace.

From the study, we understand that majority of the responders have neutral opinion about the influence that patriarchy and masculinity may have on the behavior of the employees when at home and when at work. Apart from the ones who have neutral opinion, we have responders who agree to having being influenced by patriarchy or masculinity and that affects their behavior at work and at home irrespective of it being positive or negative. It can be understood that majority of the sample population has faced pressure in their social or professional life to do an activity regardless of their willingness to do it. The pressure was built for a simple and plain reason that is their gender. Hence, we understand that gender biasness does exist in the society and it is prevalent in organizations as well.

From the responses that we have gathered through the survey, we can understand that the biasness was not only against women but also men. One of the responder has claimed to be treated unequally compared to his female colleagues. But we have responders who claim that their men colleagues were treated much better than them. Also women employees have very less options and opportunities to travel at faraway places due to safety reasons.

Majority of the sample population has witnessed pressure in their personal lives to do something that they were not willing to do initially. Few of the responders have faced these situations very so often but also we have responders who have not faced any pressure of any nature due to their gender. We understand through the responses that responders have witnessed some sort of discrimination against their male employees in the organizations. While majority of the responders have never come across any situation that might have been against the men employees of the organization.

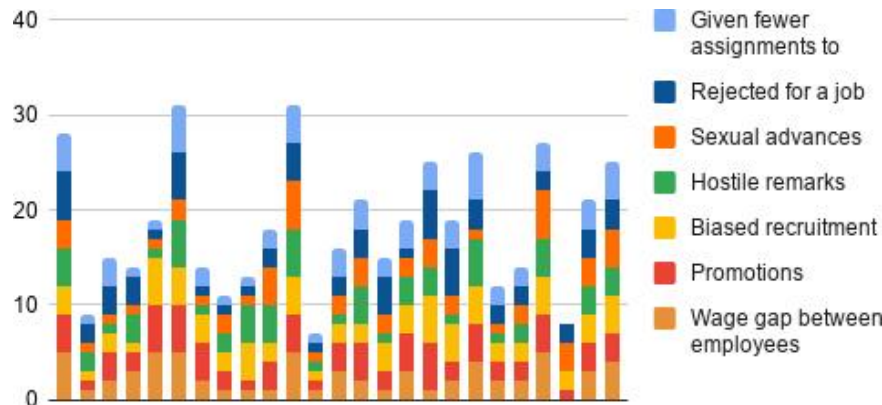


Figure 1: Types of discrimination seen (Source: Research data)

Through the graphical representation, we understand that the responders have rated all the kind of discriminations with neutral ratings.

It is safe to conclude that the discriminations against the employees (male) is very much prevalent and they are also targeted by the management or the colleagues for other advances in exchange of another profitable proposal for the employee.

The responses clearly indicate that biasness exists and it has its influence on not just a few men but maybe on the entire men population. It could also be interpreted as favoritism in few cases.

The study helps us understand that the responders have mostly given more preference to female dominant industries, competition between men and social position of men as the main reasons for the discriminations that happen against men. Female dominant industries prefer having women as their employees rather than having men as their employees. The competition in between men themselves could be considered as a reason for their morale to be affected. Social position of men can also be a major reason for them to be pressurized into doing some activity that they not willing to do.

From the responses that we have collected, it's very evident that the relationship between male employees and female employees does get affected and continues for a long period of time. The inequality against either of the gender can cause a huge rift and eventually affect the productivity of the organization.

Through the responses of the participants, we understand that most of them believe it's the male ego that is hurt when they face a situation where they are considered subordinate. Their masculinity is questioned. Their morale goes down and then they revert this negative energy in their domestic life. The expectations from both the genders have been ingrained in their minds since the very beginning and when that seems to be changing suddenly, they feel weak and out of control.

Majority of the participants have never complained a file against discrimination that they themselves have faced or have witnessed happening around them. 2 of the participants have filed a case against whatever discrimination that they have come across.

Most of the participants are not aware of any laws that could help them against any discrimination. Other half of the participants are not sure about the laws. Very few of the participants are aware of the laws and probably use them wisely.

Most of the participants of the survey are aware of Article 14 that mentions equality before the law and equal protection of the laws.

Majority of the participants in the survey recognize Article 15 that includes prohibition of discrimination against any citizen on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. More than 50% of the participants recognize the law that provides equal remuneration to all employees. For the rights of persons with disability act, 48.4% of the participants have agreed to know the law.

From this survey, we understand that not all organizations have the tolerance towards indiscriminate against any employee whereas there are few organizations that realize and accept that discrimination takes place in their own companies and also work towards its eradication. We also understand that few companies do not even recognize any such concepts and maybe take this kind of behavior as natural.

Through the responses we understand that not many organizations provide any different kind of cell that deals with such cases. Apart from a few companies that have their HR management handling such cases and women's cell who deal with harassment cases against women. Majority of the companies do not provide any such relief cells to file any case against any employee or executive.

From the chart and responses of the participants, we can see that the laws implemented for the benefit of the employees are not really used when needed. The participants have given neutral ratings for the enforcement of laws. Hence, we can conclude that the organizations need to focus on the goodwill of their employees and work more on their social and professional growth.

From the responses, we understand that the participants have the understanding of the situation and urge everyone to do their bit in decreasing the biasness among the genders. Its also the responsibility of the management to look out for such a behavior and take action against such individuals. Treating all the individuals equally irrespective of their gender can help in bringing unity and equality with better growth.

Findings and Conclusions

- Ñ The definitions provided on the concepts of patriarchy and masculinity on the sites online and the articles provided more or less match with the definitions that the responders have provided.
- Ñ The discriminations against all the individuals have not decreased but have taken new forms in corporate world.
- Ñ The biasness has not just targeted women but also men and they have been suffering through pressure since their childhood.
- Ñ The inequality is not just restricted in the corporate world but also in our homes and society.
- Ñ The effects on individuals vary by a large scale and their methods to deal with it also vary.
- Ñ Organizations are far away from building an equal environment for their employees since the recognition of gender inequality has not been accepted.

Recommendations from the Study

This study is subjected to the following recommendations:

- **Recognition of Discrimination Against Men**

The discrimination against men has been going on since ages. The only difference is that it was not so evident in the earlier times. Even in their era, it is considered as natural for a man to be strong and not be emotional irrespective of the culture or religion they belong to. We as a society need to accept that men can also have their own right to make decisions by themselves and not follow the stringent rules of the society. Even in corporates, keeping unrealistic expectations from men just based on their gender need to be decreased. Freedom of will belongs to everyone and needs to be respected by everyone.

Through the research, it is pretty much evident that corporate world does not really recognize the depth of the issue and has been ignoring it for their own profit. The laws are meant to protect everyone's dignity in the society and they need to be executed with just as much force. Taking employees mental and physical health is equally important as they have a huge impact on the profit of the organization. Employees play a huge role in the functioning of the organizations and hence keeping them safe and satisfied is the responsibility of the management of the organizations.

Learning outcome

In the entire study of patriarchy and masculinity enforcement, we understood how these ideologies have been ingrained in our minds since our childhood and now since the times have changed, the need to judge individual choices need to be curbed. The effects on the mindset of the employees are quite deep and needs to be dealt with patience.

Strengths and limitations of the Study

Strength: The strength of the study is that it provides us with basic information on the concepts of patriarchy and masculinity and has also given us perspectives of men and what they think of the inequality against them.

Limitation: The secondary data collected for this study was inadequate since the perspective of men has not been studied deeply by researchers. The corporate inequality aspect was never quite studies hence, providing data on it is a major drawback.

Future Scope of the Study

- The study can be carried out in a detailed manner by increasing the time span of the study to over six months or one year.
- This study is very narrow and restricted to executives only in Mumbai.

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