

CENTRE FOR GENDER STUDIES



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Research around gender and associated issues of inequality, discrimination, violence and of women's empowerment have a long history, and these issues have found renewed emphasis in recent times with adoption of the Sustainable Development Goal no. 5 of the UN. Despite growing awareness of gender inequality and expanding initiatives for action for redressal, gender related issues continue to remain relevant and indeed, the changing structure of society and economy now brings new forms of challenges in this area.

Research on women and associated issues of inequality, discrimination, violence and empowerment have been on the Indian agenda since the 1974 ground breaking report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India "Towards Equality". Since then there has been a growing awareness of gender inequality and initiatives for redressal, but the goal of equality remains elusive. Furthermore, with economic growth, society undergoes change and brings new challenges with it. In 2015, the United Nations set up 17 interdependent Sustainable Development Goals that aim to transform the world by 2030. Goal number 5 sets targets to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

The Centre for Gender Studies (CGS) at the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, facilitates interdisciplinary and comparative study of gender in India with an emphasis on public policy and interventions. Exploration of the cross-cutting nature of gender issues including its intersections with caste, class, religion, ethnicity and ability/disability in specific cultural and regional settings in India forms one of the main agendas for the CGS. By acting as a forum for collaborative research, both within IHD and in association with other institutions, the Centre aims to promote the process of evidence-based policy formulation. It aims to contribute to theoretical, methodological, pedagogical and policy debates surrounding gender and women issues in India. The dissemination of lessons learnt will be undertaken by way of publications, conferences, workshops and training sessions.

Research on Women and Gender at IHD

The Institute for Human Development has undertaken a considerable body of critical scholarly research on the contributions of and constraints faced by women in South Asia, especially in India. The work has covered labour market institutions and women's employment focusing on informality, migration and time use. IHD has also worked consistently on field-based studies around the themes of violence against women and children. It has contributed much towards measurement of gender inequality and women's empowerment. Late Professor Preet Rustagi's work was instrumental in placing IHD at the forefront of research on gender and human development.

The substantial body of work on women and gender was closely aligned with IHD's work on other themes such as labour, migration and urban development. Its research has explored links between development and gender issues in South Asia. Apart from studying national trends and patterns in women's work and gender indicators, it has also demonstrated its ability to produce research with regional focus – most importantly on Delhi, Bihar and Jharkhand. The research includes diverse issues such as impact evaluation of MGNREGA with focus on women empowerment, and evaluation of Stree Shakti Programme, gender and poverty in rural Bihar, gender budgeting, and female work participation and job creation for women. The studies were carried out with support from various national and international institutions including the Government of India, UN Women, ILO, Population Council, World Bank, IDRC, UNICEF and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

While retaining the research focus on women, work and political economy, the new Centre for Gender Studies aims to consolidate and expand research on gendered implications of public policy and governance. It also pursues new directions and themes in gender research and generates fresh scholarship to influence development and policy making.

THEMES OF RESEARCH

1. Gender, Work and Welfare:

The CGS carries forward IHD's rich legacy of working on women and labour. It tracks and analyses employment patterns, and labour market institutions in a disaggregated manner. Urban and migrant lives are explored through the lens of gender and the Centre also evaluates the efficacy of government programmes in addressing gender gaps in employment and wages.

2. Gender in Human Development and Public Policy

Our research engages with issues of design, implementation and evaluation of public policy that has implications for addressing gender inequality. We examine health and educational policy to understand their implications on women, men, transgender people and children. Issues of interest in health policy are: reproductive and sexual rights; health care systems, aging and care. In educational policy, scholars at the Centre work on questions of access, attainment, exclusion and mobility. The centre has special interest in regional variations in education and health.

3. Violence, Discrimination and Gender Rights

How are different inequalities – caste, class, religious and regional-related to gender-based violence? The Centre for Gender Studies

responds to the current wave of scholarship and activism on gender inequality, discrimination and violence with a focus on these intersectional identities. It extends IHD's work on access to education, health and public space; labour market discriminations; violence against women in different social contexts; and fear and surveillance. It also will explore newer areas such as men and masculinities, minority sexualities and so on.

4. Technology, Entrepreneurship and Leadership

The CGS would like to broach areas such as technology and gender, media, women's political engagement, and data science and gender. It will also try to build upon our existing work on patterns and practices of entrepreneurship among women.

Activities

Scholarly Research and Policy Evaluation

The CGS conducts research projects that are both in-house and in collaboration with other institutions. We conduct seminars, lectures and conferences. Our faculty members share their research through working papers, policy briefs and blogs/opinion pieces. Impact evaluation of policies is another major strand of the activities at the CGS.

Data Bank and Public Archive

The Centre is currently building a data bank on women, work and the labour market. It will draw on its already existing data sources and collections to be developed as a resource centre for gender research. It will also conduct occasional surveys to collect data on particular aspects of gender and employment. Besides this, it will develop an archive of articles and news items, reading sources and activist materials.

Social Outreach and Training

The Centre for Gender Studies will network and partner with other organizations, especially public institutes, NGOs and universities, in organizing programmes to provide information on issues of gender. It will focus on generating critical perspectives on gender and society that are contemporary, cutting edge and transformative. Training programmes will be organized for government functionaries for the purpose of sensitization towards gender issues and for research scholars for highlighting research methodologies based on the body of the work produced by IHD and the Centre for Gender Studies.