

WOMEN'S PERCEPTION ON GENDER INEQUALITY AND THEIR VARIATION WITH TO ECOLOGICAL ZONES OF KUMAON HILLS

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Abstract:

Present study is an attempt to explore and access gender description among rural women through the women's view point. The study area is the Eastern division of Himalayan state of Uttarakhand (India). Keeping in view the vast ecological variation the study area is divided into four ecological zones named as Shiwaliks, Lesser Himalaya, Great Himalaya and Trance Himalaya. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 25 villages from study area giving due representation to each ecological zones. Descriptive statistical techniques were used for the analysis of the data. The general status of women was reported low to very low by 95.46 percent of respondents. Social environment, less productive subsistence agriculture resulted in drudger were the main causes. The discrimination against women was reported by 47.47 percent respondents. Lack of education and lack of employment and Independent economic status was reported the main cause for it. 63.13 percent respondents had the opinion that there is no equal opportunity in education, employment and economic activities for women. The causes for this discrimination

were the prevailing tradition and lack of social freedom and independence in decision making. Interestingly 95.45 percent women differentiated between their male and female children; with major cause that male child is the heir of the family and the future bread earner. A big intra zonal variation was found; especially between the women of Trans Himalayan Bhotiya tribe and the rest Kumaonies. Because of their less conservative society, trade & handicraft oriented economy and lesser importance to agriculture and animal husbandry, women of Trans Himalayan zone suffered lesser discrimination and avail more opportunity.

Key Words: *Women, Gender Discrimination, rural women, Kumaon hills, Bhotiya, Himalaya*

1. Introduction

Nobel Laureate Professor Amartya Sen (2001) perceived and proposed the concept of “missing women”, while studying the discrimination against women in the development process. He strongly asserted that “The affiliated world in which we live is characterized by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men”. Vandana Shiva (1998) try to find out the roots of this approach of society in the ancient Hindu texts which says women is the creator and nurture while male is the power and so destroyer; this philosophy gives him the strength to control the resource, and no doubt women is also a valuable human resource, must be inherited and controlled by male. Support of male dominated social order makes him chauvinist. Gender based disparities within a family and society is a common Phenomenon of the present world but its pronounced best in the developing world, specially an area which is suffering badly from environment deterioration. Kumaon hills found itself in this particular situation and unnoticed women drudgery is the best example of the ‘missing women’ concept of Professor Sen. Though this

problem was observed by scholars but not taken it seriously. Agriculture (mainly rain fed sustainable crop cultivation) and Environment (mainly forest) were considered the main thrust node for the development of rural Kumaon; but now it is accepted that without including the third thrust node –the women, the development is impossible (Pandey,1988; Dhani,1994; Pandey,1996).

Kumaon is the eastern division of the newly born Uttarakhand State of India. Keeping in view the internal socio-economic uniformity and external heterogeneity the present study is confined up to hilly area of Kumaon which covers five hilly districts (Almora, Bhageshwar, Pithoragarh, Champawat and Nainital) leaving the piedmonts and plains (*Bhabar & Tarai* area). Mountains are the important physical barriers, which impose restrictions on social interaction and support isolation of the societies. Higher the mountains bigger is the isolation and when we talk about the highest mountain of the globe the level of isolation also reaches to it's apex and the spatial variations becomes quite important. Following Sing's ecological classification the entire study area was divided into four parallel transverse ecological zones ranging from South to North i.e. Shiwalik, Lesser Himalaya, Great Himalaya and Trans Himalaya. Shwalik is the southern most transverse belt of the study area, covers the foot hills, largely forested and sparsely populated with scattered type settlement. Lesser Himalaya, is the second transverse belt, parallel to Shiwalik and located to it's north. It occupies the largest area and is the largely populated with nucleated settlements, which comprise more than three fourth populations of Kumaon hills. It's the most degraded area where human pressure on natural resources is very high. North to Lesser Himalaya till the top of snow clad peaks lies the parallel belt of the Great Himalaya. It is the most difficult area dominates by snow clad peaks and glaciers, high mountains with steep slops and cliffs, dense temperate forests & vegetation and Alpine climate. Population is very less and settlements are confined to

the suitable sites which are not frequently; and located mainly to the lower edge of this zone. Trans Himalayan zone lies on the north of Himalayan range till the 'Zanskar Water Divide'. This zone is fairly dominated by the glacier and peri-glacier area. Villages are located on the fluvio-glacial terraces of longitudinal 'U' shaped valleys. Climate is Alpine, people reside here for only six months and transhumances are the common practice (Singh, 1971).

Rationalization of the Study

The justification of the present work is based on two points. First is gender based perception and second is variation of perception with reference to space. It is a general trend that in rural gender studies of Kumaon Himalaya, the primary information is usually gathered from the educated people or head of the household. In both the cases mostly the respondents are male, and so the studies are looking into the problem through a male's eye. Present study is based on the information collected from the rural females. So the study is looking into the problem through females' eye and focused on woman's perception on woman issues.

It was also observed that the earlier studies have not given any consideration to the immense geographical variation of this mountain area which is the part of the youngest, highest and most unstable mountain of the world- the Himalaya. This work has given due importance to each ecological zone and also observed the variation in perception under each zone.

Statement of the Problem

The problem, as title depicts, is primarily concerned with the gender based inequality among rural society of Kumaon Himalaya. Besides this the two dimensions are important, first the women's perception about their own problem and second is the impact of ecological zones on their perception.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study based on womens' perception and their inter zonal variation-

- To study the status of a woman in family and society of rural Kumaon hills.
- To study the gender inequality prevails and level of discrimination faced by woman.
- To find out the opportunities available for female in education, employment and economic activities.
- To identify the factors that motivates and obstruct them form getting equal opportunities.
- To identify the discrimination among their male and female children and it's causes.

Delimitations of the study

The study is delimited within the following frame-

- The study is confined to the Kumaon Division of Uttarakhand State of India.
- The study was focused on the hilly area of Kumaon, excluding the narrow belt of piedmont and plain to avid the contrast socio-economical and ecological conditions.
- The field survey was conducted on the rural women age ranging from 19 to 65 years.
- The study area was divided into four ecological zones, to give proper representation to each zone and to study their inter-zonal variation.

Research Method

To undertake this study, descriptive survey research method was

used. because it helps to explain educational phenomena in terms of the conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Villages were selected based on Stratified random sampling and households within a village were selected randomly. In total 396 households were surveyed from 25 villages, throughout the study area. Twenty households were randomly selected from each village of Lesser Himalaya but in case of other ecological zones the number of house holds were determined by the size of the village and scattering of households (Shiwaliks) and house clusters within a village (Great Himalaya). In case of Trans Himalayan, due to excessive out migration villages are having lesser number of households. To get a better representation the study decided to go for four villages (in place of two) with 10 households from each village. The selected samples are shown in Table-01.

Data collection Instrument

Both open and closed-ended questions were developed and used to gather data for the study. Questionnaire was used to gather data from Three hundred and ninety six households from twenty five villages, on the extent to which the women's perception about their own problem and is the impact of ecological zones on their perception. The instruments covers different dimensions such as general status and condition of women, Discrimination against women, Equal opportunities and Women, Female's discrimination towards their male and female children.

Data Collection and Statistical Treatment

Being an empirical study the major thrust was to collect the primary data. The waste area with difficult climate and extremely inaccessible terrain of Great

and Trans Himalayan zones were the major challenge in the field study. Villages of Trans Himalaya are scattered, having smaller population and need 5 to 7 days trekking. With the help of well developed questionnaire an extensive survey was conducted. Data was tabulated and simple statistical techniques like percentage, mean, were used to do the data analysis.

Analysis and Discussion

The data were tabulated and calculated with different statistical techniques and presented in four tables. The analysis and interpretation of each table are as follows:

Table -02 is concern with the general status and condition of women. The rural women respondents were asked for their status in family and society as compared to their male counterparts. Data presented in Table -02 reveals that none respondent says it's better than male. More than 95.46 percent respondents perceived that their status is low to very low in comparison to their male counterparts. Except Trans Himalaya, it is 100 per cent. 31.31 percent respondents said that the status and condition of females is very low. It is worst in Lesser Himalaya with 42.31 per cent. However the women of Trans Himalaya give a different picture. Here 45 percent women responded that their status is equal to male counterparts. On an average the villages of Kumaon Hills have a male dominated society which gives less importance to women. This is also concerned with the Social and economic liberty given to the women in their respective societies. In this regard the Kumaoni society of Shivaliks, Lesser and Great Himalaya is more conservative and more male dominated while the Bhotiyas of Trans Himalayan traditionally has an open society which gives more opportunity to women in economic affair and they avail more liberty.

It is also concerned with the productivity of the work they do. In Trans

Himalaya the Bhotiya (tribe) women are primarily engaged in much productive handy crafts (woolen work and carpet weaving etc.) and trade since generations, and their society gives right on the money they earn. On the other hand in the rest three zones of Kumaon Hills women are primarily engage in agriculture, which is largely rain fed, subsistence type cultivation which produce is not sufficient enough for the family for even half of the year (Pandey,1988; Gulati,1991). Here their hard labour become unnoticed and existence become insignificant (Pandey, 1988).

Discrimination against women:

Discrimination against women is a common phenomenon in almost all walks of life. Besides decision making and division of works, it is observed that most of the women are livening in inferior rooms of the house while males enjoy the better ones. There is a good deal of evidence that even food is often distributed very unequally with in the family with a distinct gender bias (against the females). Women in rural Kumaon eat at 'last and the least'; though it could be their willingness and affection to the family yet they are recipient of comparatively lesser meal in terms of both quantity and nutrition (Pandey, 1996). Women's view about this perception was documented during field survey and presented in Table -03. This table shows that 47.47 percent women reported that there is discrimination between male and female, as males are given advantages in comparison to female. In Great Himalayan zone discrimination reported highest (60%) while in Trans Himalayan zone it is lowest (10%). Lesser Himalaya reported comparatively lower percent of 49.23.

From the above it could be concluded that 47.47 percent respondents accepted that they are discriminated by their male counterparts. This average is more or less followed by Lesser Himalaya and Siwalik zones but sharp variation was observed between Great and Trans Himalayan villages. Great Himalaya it is because of the conservative attitude of the society with lower rate of female education,

supported by the remoteness and inaccessibility due to the difficult physical terrain and harsh climatic conditions.

Trans Himalaya do have extremely difficult terrain and tough climate which lead them to follow the transhumance every year, yet due to their exposure to outer world because of trade they realized the importance of education and have a higher female education (Dube, 2003). Liberal society and woman's role in economic activity and control of their money gave them more right and less discrimination within family.

In case of Lesser Himalaya, the network of transport, communication and education is better than other zones and so the women education (Pandey, 1996; Dube, 2003). Because of these factors; women's economically less significant occupation as agriculture could not brought discrimination for them. Society also gives significant say to women in familial, cultural and social matters.

Respondents also viewed biggest cause for discrimination as '*lack of education*'. In Trans Himalaya it was supported by 100 percent and in Lesser Himalaya and Great Himalaya by a significantly high percent. During survey it was observed that education is considered to be the key to get job and economic liberty.

'*Lack of employment and independent economic status*' was considered as the second major cause which is supplementary to education. Trans Himalayan women do not give any importance as they don't face the problem of economic liberty.

Traditional answers like '*female is physically weaker than male*' and it is a '*prevailing tradition*' got last importance. Here it is important to note that these arguments were out rightly rejected by the women of Trans Himalaya. Even at Grate Himalayan zone this argument gets very less support (7.65%). The lower response for this argument indicates the stronger physical capacity of women as well as their busy and hard work routine is largely being accepted by this malecounterpart.

Equal opportunities and Women:

The term ‘opportunity’ implies equal access to education, employment and other economic activities without any gender biases. A set of four arguments were given for the positive view on this issue. They are (a) *Both male and female children are equal by birth*, (b) *It must for the better future of female* (c) *It could bring them out from the hard rural life* and (d) *Helpful for good marriage alliance*. A set of three arguments were given for ‘No’. They are the Table -04; put forth the following major points-

- 63.13 percent respondent reported that women are not given equal opportunities. Except Trans Himalayan zone (10%) the rest zone up to some extent follows the average trend.
- The most favored cause for Yes is that ‘*it is helpful for good marriage*’ (42.50%) followed by ‘*better future life*’ (26.25%), ‘*bring them out from hard rural life*’ (21.25) and ‘*equal by birth*’ got the least support.

The reason for equal opportunity was given overall 10.00 percent respondent, shows that not much difference in people’s thinking throughout the Kumaon Hills.

At first instance it gives a surprise that in comparatively most liberal society, the Trans Himalaya, respondents voted for only lowest of 5.55 percent. It is not because they are too conservative on this point but in fact they have a more professional answer for it. 55.56 percent of them believe that its must for the better future of the female children. This is more than the double to the overall average.

The second argument (b) brings more variation in percentage range between 12.5 percent in Great Himalaya to 55.56 percent in Trans Himalya. This low percent is mainly because even today girls are prepared for domestic affair rather than to do for a job and married women are preferred to confine to the domestic jobs. This

view was also supported by the higher percent in argument (d) were almost 41 and 56 percent respondent says that it is because of to get a better marriage alliance.

Argument (c) was supported by 21.25 percent in total. This data is quite significant as it shows that a small section of respondent not only accepts the drudgery of hill women but they want to bring their girls out of it. The second significant point is that this percent is higher in the three lower zones. It scores highest in Lesser Himalaya where drudgery of rural women was calculated highest by several research works (Pandey, 1996; Dube, 2003). On other hand only 5.55 percent respondents cited this reason, which some how shows that drudgery is not a big issue in Trans Himalaya area.

The largest percent of respondents viewed the equal opportunity is helpful for a better marriage. No doubt it's a sign of good social change that educational and economic opportunity is suppose to be helpful for a better marriage alliance.

The negative opinion on this point has three arguments. (a) *Due to social customs and tradition prevailing in the society*, (b) *lack of freedom and independent status to females* and (c) *they don't have much time* for it, as they are too busy with her domestic work. As an obvious opinion, 53.39 percent respondents reported '*social custom and tradition were prevailing in the society*' as the root cause for it. Siwalik and Lesser Himalaya follow almost the same trend as the overall average while in case of Great and Trans Himalaya, the percentage is higher. In Great Himalaya, the conservative tradition of society is responsible. In Trans Himalaya through its all of the respondent giving negative opinion but its worth to note that only 10.00 percent have given negative response which is less than the 1/6th of the overall average, and respondents are mostly aged women with old thoughts. According to 26.27 percent respondent, '*the lack of freedom and independent status*' is responsible for unequal opportunity for women. At Great Himalaya more

respondents have zone for the third set of argument i.e. *female don't have enough time for it*, while for Trans Himlayan liberal society the question of freed and independent status does not hold any stand. 20.34 percent respondent says that females don't have enough time for it. Except Trans Himalaya all other zones follow the same trend as the overall average. The above analysis highlights the fact that women folk are still strongly wedded to the social customs and traditions. Though it has its own merits but up to large extent its gender biased and does not advocate the women's cause strongly. The Trans Himalaya is the only zone where females have enough opportunity and socio-economic liberty. The awareness response and positive outlook were mostly found among the educated respondents as revealed by this study.

Female's discrimination towards their male and female children:

After knowing discrimination against female with in family and society, we try to find out how much they themselves are concerned with gender biases among their own children. To know, their out look and perception, the women were asked, weather they made any differentiation between male and female child in heir own families (Here 'differentiation' refers to food, education, clothing, pocket money, medicine, work, visits and entertainment); and if so, than what response they attribute for such differential? The reasons were discussed in a set of three answers-(a). *Male children are the heir (Varis) of the family while Girl after marriage will go to other family, some thing like 'others property' (Paraya Dhan)*. (b). *Male children will become bread earners and will run the family* (c). *Male children are superior to female children*. The striking points found in Table-05, are as follows-

The majority (95.45 %) of respondents accepted that yes the discriminate among their male and female children. Except Trans Himalaya (54.54%), rest of Kumaon hills it was accepted by one and all. The first reason was supported by maximum (65.61%) respondents; with an inter-zonal variation of 13 percent only.

The second reason was supported by 27.51 percent in general with big variation of 24 percent. Superiority of male child is supported by only 6.88 percent respondents in general. In Great and Trans Himalayan zone it is fully discarded.

Table-05 makes it clear that making discrimination between the male and female child within the family by women is a common in rural Kumaon hills. Second largest percent of respondents (27.51%) argued for the argument (b) that male children will become bread earners and will run the family. It is an argument more oriented towards economic aspect and seems to be more practical. Both Great and Trans Himalayan respondents responded for a higher percent giving much importance to this practical argument. A very few (6.88%) respondents supported the third argument saying male children are superior than female ones. These arguments somehow reflect the traditional opinionated mindset of the people.

The above analysis could be summarized as women are having a lower status in family, are discriminated and having less opportunity than their male counterpart and interestingly they do the same for their children. Though it is the general opinion yet not uniform for the entire Kumaon hills. Zone wise variation in opinion was also observed. Except Trans Himalaya all three zones follow the same trend with a little fluctuation. Shivaliks have an impact of the plural, urban or semi urban society of the adjoining plains. On the other hand the Great Himalaya is largely in tacked with their traditional system because of the remote location and social isolation supported by the difficult terrain and poor transportation and communication network.

As discussed earlier that for Bhotiya society of Trans Himalayan, much importance was always there for trade and handy crafts. But some historical facts are also important to understand the unique psychology of the natives of these Trans Himalayan valleys. Since ages the Bhotiyas of these valleys were having a barter trade with the Tibetans through the very high and difficult passes. Trade was the main

stay of their economy and root cause for prosperity (Atkinson, 1882; Pant, 1935, Khanka, 1885). Due to Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962, the border was sealed and the age old trade of this society with Tibet was seized. It collapsed their existing economic and shattered their social structure (Dube, 1997). Though they were at the remotest and most difficult part of Kumaon yet were comparatively rich and more exposed to the outer world than the then their counter parts in Kumaon hills (Pangaty, 1992). This catastrophic change which was an outcome of geo-political scenario resulted in large scale outmigration from these valleys (Dube, 1997). They are having education without gender discrimination, as the answer for their circumstances. In 1967, Govt. of India declared Bhotiyas as scheduled tribe and so was entitled to get reservations in Government jobs. This had given boom for education among them, and the mind set of society was changed. All these factors have a combined impact on the people's perception of this area which largely deviates from their Kumaoni counterparts.

High rate of male dominated out migration in the Kumaon hills is also responsible for drudgery of the women who are left behind with children and oldies (Mehta, 1991). Deteriorating environmental conditions, high rate of deforestation demands more labour from the rural, women who are already suffering with drudgery (Pandey, 1996). It leads to lesser production and even some times almost nothing; make the agriculture a worthless business and the women carrying it as insignificant. Besides their rigorous labour, it doesn't bring any significant contribution to the family and largely deteriorate their status in family and society.

Findings of the Study

The summary of the major findings are as follows:

- The status of women in rural Kumaon hills is lower than their male counter parts.

- It was reported lowest in Lesser Himalaya; in contrast almost half of the Trans Himalayan women share equal status with their male counterpart.
- Almost half of the respondents were discriminated in family in decision making, division of work, using family resources etc.
- Highest discrimination was found in Great Himalaya. Their remote isolated location gives boost to the conservative, male chauvinist attitude, which leads to the discrimination with female in society.
- Large chunk of female reported that they are not getting equal opportunity in education, employment and economic activities. This trend was followed by all except Trans Himalayan zone.
- The major reasons for better opportunities for women were given as- to get good marriage alliance, better future life, Bring them out of the hard rural life.
- The hurdles for equal opportunities were given as-social customs and traditions, lack of independent status of women, and lack of time as they are too busy with their domestic affairs.
- Discrimination for their own children was reported by all, except less than half of the Trans Himalayan respondents.
- Major reasons given for giving priority to male child are-i). They are the heir of the family, ii). The bread earner of the family.
- The sharp variation in perception of the Trans Himalayan women with the women of the other zones of Kumaon Hills is largely due to their occupational priority on handy craft and trade than agriculture, and the geopolitical development of that area, which gives more opportunity and economic independence to them.

Research Implications

Discrimination against women is observed in all walks of life in rural Kumaon Hills. Their status in family and society is low and are denied from equal opportunities for education, employment and other economic activities; the magnitude however varies from zone to zone and family to family. Even then, it's interesting to observe that women themselves are biased for their Male children. Under pressure and force of traditional, cultural and historical factors, women have been ignored and denied opportunities for participating in the process of development and sharing its benefits Kumaon Hills.

The responses of women from Trance Himalaya were sharply different from rest of the zones of Kumaon hills which is an out come of the social values and economic setup of Bhotiya society residing there. Here traditionally, the society has given much liberty to the women. Instead of agriculture, they give prominence to handy craft as their main occupation and they took active part in trade. It was also supported by the geo-political development took place in that area.

For improve the condition of women in terms of social status, gender based equality, and opportunities in education, employment and economic activities, it must that women should be educated. Not only the regular schooling of girls but also the adult education for married women and drop outs. Here education should not consider as literacy rather it should be more vocational and tuned up to their socio-economic environment.

Economic liberty is second important factor. In place of non-economic traditional agriculture, rural women have to switch over to cash crops like horticulture, floriculture, cultivation of aromatic Plants etc. which could generate some cash. Scholars like Shah, (1988), Dhuani, (1994), Pandey, (1996) have also strongly supported this point. Another important aspect in this factor is that woman

must have control on the cash she generates.

It is more a problem of society than economy, and so the answer also lies with the society. Son is the heir of family and daughter is others property is a thought deeply rooted in the mind of rural women. Mass scale awareness is required to change the males' perception towards their counterparts as well as the same is required for female to change their perception about their female children. Women education, economic liberty and mass scale social awareness may break down the traditional barriers of gender biasness, and will lead to the overall upliftment of the rural women in Kumaon Hills.

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Table-01. Distribution of Samples

S.N.	Ecological zones	Name of Surveyed Villages	Number of survey villages	Number of samples/ village	Total Samples
1.	Shiwalik	Amrit Pur, Saladi, Do gaon	03	15-16	46
2.	Lesser Himalaya	Chara, Padyula, Gadsiyari, Supi, Dol, Syahi devi, Khan, Bimola, Chan, Khunt, Supakot, Bilona, Girgaon,	13	20	260
3.	Great Himalaya	Supi, Khati, Bhanar, Liti, Lilam	5	10	50
4.	Trans Himalaya	Milam, Bilju, Martoli, Ganghar	4	10	40
	Kumaon Hills	Total-22	25		396

Table-02: Views of Respondents about General Status and Condition of Females as Compared to Male

Name of Zones	General Status and Condition of Females as compared to males(in Per cent)			
	Very Low	Low	Equal	Better
SIWALIK	8.70	91.30	00.00	00.00
LESSER HIMALAYA	42.31	57.69	00.00	00.00
GREAT HIMALAYA	20.00	80.00	00.00	00.00
TRANS HIMALAYA	00.00	55.00	45.00	00.00
OVERALL KUMAON HILLS	31.31	64.14	4.54	00.00

Source: Field survey 2009.

Table-03: Views of the rural women about the discrimination against females

Name of Zones	Percentage of respondents who viewed that discriminations are made against females	Arguments for Yes		Arguments for No	
		Lack of education among females	Lack of employment and independent economic status	Females are physically weak	It is a prevailing social tradition
Siwaliks	56.52	47.06	17.65	16.65	17.65
Lesser Himalaya	49.23	56.25	18.75	14.06	10.94
Great Himalaya	60.00	53.33	20.00	6.67	20.00
Trans Himalaya	10.00	100.00	00.00	00.00	00.00
Kumaon Hills.	47.47	55.10	18.37	13.26	13.26

Source: Field survey 2009.

Table-04: Views of the Respondents about Equal Opportunity in Education Employment and Other Economic Activities

Name of Zones	Views of respondent about equal opportunity for females in education, employment and other activities		Arguments for Yes (female should be given equal opportunities)				Arguments for No		
			Both Males and Female children are equal by birth.	It's must for the better future of female	It could bring them out from the hard rural life	Helpful for good marriage	Due to prevailing social customs in the society	Lack of freedom & independent status to females	They don't have much time for it
	YES	NO							
Sivaliks	30.43	69.57	14.28	28.57	14.28	42.86	50.00	31.25	18.75
Lesser Himalaya	30.00	70.00	10.26	17.95	30.77	41.03	51.65	27.47	20.88
Great Himalaya	36.00	64.00	12.5	12.5	18.75	56.25	66.67	11.11	22.22
Trans Himalaya	90.00	10.00	5.55	55.56	5.55	33.33	100.00	00.00	00.00
Kumaon Hills	36.86	63.13	10.00	26.25	21.25	42.50	53.39	26.27	20.34

Source: Field survey 2009.

Table -05: Perception of women on Differentials between Male and Female Children

Name of Zones	Respondents who make differentials between male and Female children	Reasons for making differentials		
		Male children are the “ <i>varis</i> ”* of the family, while female children are “ <i>Paraya Dhan</i> ”**	Male children will become bread earners and will run the family	Male children are superior than female children
Siwaliks	100.00	65.22	21.74	13.04
Lesser Himalaya	100.00	67.69	24.61	7.69
Great Himalaya	100.00	60.00	40.00	00.00
Trans Himalaya	55.00	54.54	45.45	00.00
Kumaon Hills	95.45	65.61	27.51	6.88

Source: Field survey 2009.

* Varis: a Hindi language term used for the heir of the family.

**Paraya Dhan: a Hindi language term used for daughter to refers as “other’s property”, as after marriage she will go to other family and will contribute and inherit their property.