

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH CARE DELIVERIES

P.B.SHANKAR NARAYAN

LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK,

PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY,

PUDUCHERRY

carlshanan@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT

Gender refers to the ways in which women's and men's identities, roles and resource access are structured by the societies they live in. This commonly creates economic and social inequalities between the sexes which need to be understood when policies are devised. There are some important links between gender and health inequalities like the unequal social relations between women and men may produce inequalities in health outcomes and access to or utilization of health services, women and girls have some specific health needs which are often neglected and women carry a disproportionate burden of informal health care provision in households and communities. The distinct roles and behaviours of men and women in a given culture, dictated by that culture's gender norms and values, give rise to gender differences, most of which are in fact gender discrimination, that is, differences between men and women which systematically empower one group to the detriment of the other. In many societies, women have fewer educational opportunities than men and receive unequal access to resources such as food and income, all of which are strong predictors of health status. Finally, even in settings where women have access to the resources they need to improve their health, power relations in the household as well as social norms often prevent them to make good use of what is available to them. This paper attempts to bring out the discrimination faced by the women with regard to their provision of health care, their expectation towards the providers and the opinion towards their facilities.