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Effects of Retrogressive Culture on Women

Do Some Cultures Eliminate Millions of Women Through Neglect and the Inequitable Distribution of Nutrition and Healthcare?

Education and economic rights combined with oppressive cultures are the main causes for high mortality rates among women in parts of North Africa, South and West Asia, and Latin America. In most of the developed world such as North America and Europe and even some of its undeveloped parts such as Sub Saharan Africa, the population of women is always higher than that of men. It is worthwhile to note that although fewer girls than boys are born, the latter have a higher mortality rate. Therefore, whereas women are genetically more resistant to diseases and environmental hazards, retrogressive cultures which make them miss out on various economic and social opportunities are the reasons why some parts of the world have more males than females.

Some countries have retrogressive cultures that undervalue the role of women in the society. In such places, they do not have access to essential services that can increase their survival rate. In particular, they have limited access to medical facilities, education institutions, and some even lack quality food. Sen notes that the main reason for high mortality rate among women in India is the relative neglect of females, especially in the provision of health care. This view is supported by the fact that in Kerala, which is India, women population is higher than that of men mainly because they enjoy equal access to essential services like healthcare and

education. Consequently, the main cause as to why some parts of the world have fewer women than men is inequality and neglect which results in excess mortality of the former.

The deterioration of women's position and their lack of participation in economic developments in some cultures leads to unequal sharing of medical and social facilities. In China, for example, Sen espouses that there was a decline in the ratio of women to men population after the country introduced economic and social reforms. These new policies reduced women's participation in the agriculture sector and led to uneven sharing of medical and social opportunities. Therefore, although these reforms led to economic progress, they also indicated it does not necessarily reduce women's disenfranchisements, in fact, it can aggravate them.

The perception of who is engaged in productive work and who is contributing to the social and economic progress of the family is influential in determining how resources are allocated. In China, for example, the economic reforms of 1979 reduced the economic role of women since the agriculture-based economy was abolished. As a result, the perceived "entitlement" of women was significantly reduced. This change was aggravated by the introduction of the "One Child Policy," which made families to choose on whether to favor males, who are culturally perceived to care for their families, or females, who relocate to their husbands home. Therefore, cultures that empower women to have an economic contribution to the family, whether as wives or daughters can significantly increase the level of perceived "entitlements" that they should be given.

Sen also notes that if the ratio of women to men was modified in the countries that have a low ratio to match that of the world average, women population would increase by more than 100 million. The main cause for this structural imbalance is retrogressive cultures, which make women miss out on economic and essential social service such as health care and in turn results

in them having high mortality rates. In order to reduce the cases of deaths that are attributable to cases of uneven distribution of resources among all genders, these countries should implement public policies that enhance inclusiveness of both males and females in economic and social development.

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Works Cited

Sen, Amartya. "More Than 100 Million Women are Missing." *The New York Review of Book*, 20 Dec. 1990, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1990/12/20/more-than-100-million-women-are-missing/>. Accessed 5 Sept. 2017.

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