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Suparna Jain
University of Delhi

Manpreet Kaur
University of Delhi

Shradha Jain
University of Delhi

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**Hostile and Benevolent Sexism in India:
Analysis Across Cultures**

**Suparna Jain, Manpreet Kaur, & Shradha Jain
University of Delhi, India**

Contact

suparnajain@dr.du.ac.in; mnprtkaur98@gmail.com ; Shradhajain311@gmail.com

Hostile and Benevolent Sexism in India: Analysis Across Cultures

The fight against gender discrimination has been an age old one, and will continue until the latent stereotypes and sexist attitudes wither away. The gender insensitive attitude is embedded in the human culture both in forms of hostile and benevolent sexism. Researchers have discussed that sexism is a special case of prejudice marked by a deep ambivalence, rather than a uniform antipathy toward women (Glick & Fiske, 1996). The Ambivalent sexism theory developed by Glick & Fiske (1996) that views sexism as a multidimensional construct that encompasses two sets of sexist attitudes: hostile and benevolent sexism. *Hostile sexism* is the most commonly identified form of sexism, in which women are objectified or degraded. Benevolent sexism has been defined by Glick et. al. (1996) as a set of interrelated attitudes toward women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that are subjectively positive in feeling tone (for the perceiver) and also tend to elicit behaviours typically categorized as prosocial (e.g., helping) or intimacy- seeking (e.g., self-disclosure).

Though the Benevolent sexist attitudes might sound positive, they are equally degrading and damaging (Glick et. al. 1996). People in various parts of the world are oblivious to the effects of benevolent sexism (BS). It has become an embedded and accepted form of gender stereotyping which is aggravating the gender gap as much as the hostile sexism (HS) is.

Glick et al. (2000;2004) have conducted cross-cultural research over the presence of both hostile and benevolent sexism towards men and women across gender. However, their work mostly involved countries from Europe, Australia, Africa and the Americas. Only Japan and S. Korea were the two Asian countries included. India is the largest democracy and is inhabited by diverse and unique cultures. Analysing a sample from India on similar lines provided rich cross-cultural data for understanding the constructs better.

Gender Discrimination in India

India falls at the 130th position among 189 countries on Gender Development Index in the UN Human Development Reports (2018). Gender discrimination is a pervasive and long running phenomenon in India, and especially the rising crime against women is a matter of grave concern for the Indian government. The issue of gender-based violence in India has been creeping up the policy agenda over the past couple of years. As a result, reducing women-based crimes has become the most essential agenda in the manifestos of Indian political parties. While many Indian women are striving to improve their state by seeking education and financial independence, the gruesome crimes against them in ways of gang rapes are increasing.

According to the National family health survey (2015-16), 27% of women have experienced physical violence since the age 15 in India. This experience of physical violence

among women is more common in rural areas than among women in urban areas.

A 2017 report by Global Peace Index had claimed India to be the fourth most dangerous country for women travellers. The Gender Vulnerability Index 2017 compiled by Ministry of Women and Child Development found Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand to be the bottom four states in terms of safety. According to a survey done by [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) in 2018, India is the world's most dangerous country for women due to the high risk of sexual violence and being forced into slave labour ([Goldsmith & Beresford](#), 2018)

It is important to understand the reasons behind the increasing crime against women in India. It is not always the overt display of patriarchal values that need to be changed rather the covert value systems should also be focused upon while bringing a change. One such latent value system is the benevolent sexist attitude.

Benevolent Sexism in the Indian Context

Benevolent sexism is evident in interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts for both men and women. Research has shown that people with benevolent sexist beliefs are likely to subscribe to the notion that only "bad girls," who have violated traditional sex role norms by behaving in a manner that invites sexual advances, get raped (Viki & Abrams, 2002). Therefore, the endorsement of benevolent sexism is associated with placing blame on female victims of rape and domestic violence, while dismissing the intentions of male perpetrators (Abrams et al., 2003; Glick et al., 2002).

This is quite evident in some Indian politicians' statements. For instance, when three men were convicted in 2014 for the gang rape of a woman journalist, Mulayam Singh Yadav, leader of the regional Samajwadi Party said: "Boys make mistakes. They should not be hanged for this. We will change the anti-rape laws." (Biswas, 2018). Mamata Banerjee, a woman who has been chief minister of West Bengal state since 2011 said: "Earlier, if men and women held hands, they would get caught by parents and reprimanded, but now everything is so open ... Rapes happen because men and women interact freely". Mohan Bhagwat, the leader of the influential Hindu social organisation the [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh](#) commented in 2013 as follows: "Rapes take place in cities and not in villages. Women should refrain from venturing out with men other than their relatives. Such incidents happen due to the influence of Western culture and women wearing less clothes." "Women should not venture out with men who are not relatives," said politician Abu Asim Azmi in 2014, in answer to a question about rising numbers of rapes. Azmi also said: "The more nudity, the more fashionable a girl is considered. Ants will swarm the place where sugar is." (Dhillon, 2017). Such statements by the Indian political leaders promote benevolent sexism in the country. These statements indirectly imply that women are pious and should take care of themselves. Anything wrong that happens is because of their own negligence.

Benevolent sexism is also evident in gender stereotypes. Within the framework of benevolent sexism, males and females are stereotyped with opposing strengths and weaknesses (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Jost & Kay, 2005; Kay & Jost, 2003). Men are given stereotypes, such as being independent, ambitious, and competitive (Jost & Kay, 2005). They

are viewed as highly competent, and therefore, well-suited for high-status workplace positions (Glick & Fiske, 2001). In contrast, women are assigned stereotypes, such as having nurturing, interdependent, and considerate characteristics, which are suitable for the duties of a proper wife and mother (Good & Sanchez, 2009). These stereotypes enforce the idea that women are subservient to men, as well as incompetent and incapable without their financial support (Dardenne et al., 2007; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Such stereotypes are quite evident in Indian society, as a result of which India suffers from a skewed gender ratio in the corporate world. India ranks 26th globally in terms of the presence of women in boardrooms. The overall percentage of women in Indian boardrooms is merely 6.91%. (Chatterjee, 2017).

Even though the content of women's communal stereotypes can be perceived as positive, they still give way to oppressive gender roles (Jost & Kay, 2005). Men are less likely to think of female communal stereotypes as sexist as they have a positive feeling tone regarding connotations to sexist phrases (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005). Therefore, in the countries studied by Glick, both men and women unconsciously promote gender inequality by endorsing benevolent sexist ideas of complementary gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick & Fiske, 2001).

The Present Study

With increasing crime against women and a depleting rank of India in Gender equality statistics, it becomes important to understand the prevalence of different types of sexism in Indian society. The present research work aims to assess the presence of both hostile and benevolent sexism across gender in India. Previous research in India has focussed more on hostile sexism and its consequences, however, have somehow missed studying the underlying benevolent sexism among Indians. The present research also aims to empirically test in the Indian context the findings of the previous cross-cultural research on Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism (Glick et al., 2000, 2004). Based on the findings across cultures by Glick et al. (2000, 2004) hypotheses for the present work are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant correlation between hostile and benevolent sexist attitudes of the present sample. Hostile and Benevolent sexism emerge as complimentary forms of sexism. This hypothesis is based on Glick's finding that Sexism encompasses subjectively benevolent as well as hostile orientations. At the societal level of analysis, these are complementary forms of sexism.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant correlation between the patriarchal values as assessed by AMI and sexist attitudes as measures by ASI for both male and female participants. This hypothesis is based on Glick's finding that AMI scale measures sexism towards men which in turn depicts patriarchal mindsets which are similarly portrayed in ASI. Previously, Glick et al. (2004) argued that cross-culturally AMI dimensions, Hostility toward men and Benevolence toward men reflect and support gender inequality by characterizing men as being predisposed for dominance. ASI and AMI scales tap a coordinated set of traditional gender attitudes (Glick et al. 2004). Thus, if men or women in a nation scored highly on one scale (AMI and ASI), both men and women in that nation are likely to score high on

the other scale (AMI and ASI scale) (Glick et al., 2004).

Hypothesis 3: Women score higher than men in Benevolent Sexism. This is based on Glick's finding that relative to men, women are more accepting of Benevolent Sexism than of Hostile Sexism, suggesting that members of subordinate groups find ostensibly benevolent prejudice more acceptable than hostile prejudice toward their group.

Hypothesis 4: Women score higher than men in Hostility toward men. This is based on Glick's finding that in nations where men more strongly endorse Hostile Sexism; women evince more Hostility toward men relative to men. Thus, Hostility toward men on the part of women reflects resentment of men's hostility toward women.

Method

Sample and Procedure

Participants were from a community sample of 500 (249 men and 251 women) Indian residents from the northern part of India. Their mean age was 28, ranging between 25-35 years. Their state wise distribution was 30% Delhi, 26% Punjab, 23% Uttar Pradesh, 15% Haryana and 6% Himachal Pradesh. Because the questionnaires were in English, we restricted eligibility to a minimum of university graduates. Participants were contacted personally after obtaining telephonic informed consent. Initially, the questionnaires were filled by 564 respondents, however, 35 of them were discarded due to incomplete responses and 29 removed during data cleaning as they had responded the same to all the items making the error of central tendency. Participants were not provided with any form of compensation; the participation was completely voluntary. It took approximately 6 months to complete data collection.

Measures

Participants responded to both questionnaires using a 6-point Likert scale (from 0 - "strongly disagree" to 5 - "strongly agree"). The following scales were used.

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996) comprises of 22 items that assists in measuring ambivalent sexism. It measures sexist antipathy or Hostile Sexism (HS) and Benevolent Sexism (BS). There are three sub-dimensions of the Benevolent Sexism scale, namely Protective Paternalism (e.g., "Every woman should have a man to whom she can turn for help in times of trouble"), Complementary Gender Differentiation (e.g., "Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess"), and Heterosexual Intimacy (e.g., "People are not truly happy in life unless they are romantically involved with a member of the other sex"). ASI has strong convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity. The alpha reliability coefficient for ASI was .90, for Hostile Sexism alone was .89 and for Benevolent Sexism alone .83.

Ambivalence towards Men Inventory (AMI; Glick & Fiske, 1999) is a 20-item measure

consisting of a 10-item hostility toward men subscale (HM) and a 10-item benevolence toward men sub-scale (BM). Hostility toward men is mainly related to attitudes of male dominance and stereotypes men as controlling and condescending. People with attitudes high in hostility toward men negatively characterize men based on their position of advantage over women in society. Benevolence toward men is related to beliefs about support and justification of male dominance. BM portrays men as emotionally stronger than women, more willing to take risks for success, and, on the whole, stereotypes men as being higher in competence and status than women ([Glick et al., 2004](#)). Hostility toward men sub- dimensions include: “men will always fight to have greater control in society than women” (resentment of paternalism: viewing men as arrogant and abusing their power), “men act like babies when they are sick” (compensatory gender differentiation: contempt for men’s domestic abilities), and “a man who is sexually attracted to a woman typically has no morals about doing whatever it takes to get her in bed” (heterosexual hostility: viewing men as sexual predators). Benevolence toward men sub-dimensions include: “even if both members of a couple work, the woman ought to be more attentive to taking care of her man at home” (maternalism: the notion that women must take care of men in the domestic realm in compensation for men acting as protectors and providers), “men are more willing to put themselves in danger to protect others” (complementary gender differentiation: positive characterizations of men as protectors and providers), and “every woman ought to have a man she adores” (heterosexual intimacy: the idea that a male romantic partner is necessary for a woman to be complete). Average reliability coefficients for each sub-scale are as follows: Hostility toward men = .76; Benevolence toward men = .77.

Results and Discussion

It was found that Hostile and Benevolent sexism are complementary forms of sexism as significant Pearson correlations were found between Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism with $r(249) = .32, p < .01$, for men and $r(247) = .42, p < .01$, for women (Table 1). Further, significant Pearson correlations were found between Hostility toward men and Benevolence toward men with, $r(249) = .59, p < .01$, for men and $r(247) = .34, p < .05$, for women (Table 2). Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. Glick et al. (2000) also reported similar findings across nations (Tables 1 & 2). Hence, it can be inferred that both Hostile and Benevolent sexist attitudes are present in the sample.

The data in Tables 1 and 2 (except for India) are based on Glick’s previous findings, and are depicted here to seek reference for present findings. In the present finding, even though the correlation coefficients have been found significant, it may be pointed out that the degree of correlation coefficients are lower than .50. However, to justify this, it is important to

Table 1.

Correlations Between Hostile and Benevolent Sexism (HS-BS) Across Genders for Various Countries

Continent	Countries	Men	Women
North America	U.S.	.44** (n = 528)	.44** (n = 729)
	Argentina	.72** (n = 35)	.59** (n = 161)
	Brazil	.29** (n = 338)	.36** (n = 488)
Latin America	Chile	.36** (n = 689)	.33** (n = 665)
	Colombia	.27** (n = 60)	.34** (n = 174)
	Cuba	.20* (n = 126)	.50** (n = 160)
	Mexico	.26** (n = 135)	.42** (n = 295)
	Peru	.52** (n = 201)	.26** (n = 194)
	M	.37	.40
	Europe	England	.31** (n = 243)
Germany		.25** (n = 383)	.31** (n = 495)
Italy		.08 (n = 125)	.31** (n = 199)
Netherlands		.44** (n = 887)	.61** (n = 705)
Portugal		.16 (n = 59)	.45** (n = 227)
Spain		.49** (n = 1186)	.64** (n = 439)
Belgium		.18 (n = 110)	.15** (n = 418)
M		.27	.42
Africa		Nigeria	.03 (n = 576)
	South Africa	.06 (n = 128)	.10 (n = 314)
	Botswana	-.14 (n = 141)	.17* (n = 219)
	M	.01	.13
Middle East	Syria	.15* (n = 268)	.14* (n = 270)
	Turkey	.21** (n = 376)	.35** (n = 315)
	M	.18	.49
Australasia	Australia	.45** (n = 192)	.46** (n = 262)
	Singapore	.39** (n = 163)	.50** (n = 245)
	Taiwan	.45** (n = 509)	.54** (n = 512)
	M	.43	.50
Asia	Japan	.19** (n = 330)	.50** (n = 220)
	South Korea	.16** (n = 1010)	.32** (n = 545)
	M	.18	.41
	INDIA	.32** (n = 251)	.42** (n = 249)
	New M	.22	.41

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Notes: HS - Hostile Sexism; BS - Benevolent Sexism. The source of the correlation values (except for India) is Glick et al. (2000, 2004).

Table 2.

Correlations Between Hostile and Benevolent Sexism Towards Men (HM-BM) Across 16 Nations

Continent	Countries	Men	Women
Latin America	Argentina	.81** (n = 35)	.57** (n = 161)
	Colombia	.71** (n = 106)	.51** (n = 173)
	Cuba	.50** (n = 138)	.43** (n = 162)
	Mexico	.52** (n = 135)	.50** (n = 295)
	Peru	.15* (n = 201)	.19** (n = 194)
	M	.54	.44
Europe	England	.55** (n = 44)	.78** (n = 120)
	Germany	.33** (n = 205)	.31** (n = 277)
	Italy	.57 (n = 105)	.44** (n = 227)
	Netherlands	.41** (n = 835)	.40** (n = 300)
	Portugal	.16 (n = 59)	.46** (n = 227)
	Spain	.46** (n = 495)	.39** (n = 508)
	M	.41	.46
Middle East	Syria	.22* (n = 268)	.28* (n = 270)
	Turkey	.31** (n = 320)	.37** (n = 334)
	M	.26	.32
Australasia	Australia	.48** (n = 106)	.70** (n = 313)
	Singapore	.54** (n = 163)	.61** (n = 245)
	Taiwan	.57** (n = 509)	.42** (n = 512)
	M	.53	.58
Asia	INDIA	.59** (n = 251)	.34* (n = 249)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Notes: HS - Hostile Sexism; BS - Benevolent Sexism. The source of the correlation values (except for India) is Glick et al. (2000, 2004).

note that according to Cohen (1988, 1992), the effect size is low if the value of r varies around .01, medium if r varies around 0.3, and large if r varies more than 0.5. In the present case, r values have a moderate effect size with values such as .32, .42, and .34 respectively for men's correlation on Hostile Sexism-Benevolent Sexism, women's correlation on Hostile Sexism-Benevolent Sexism and women's correlation on Hostility toward men-Benevolence toward men. The effect size is large with a value of .59 for men's correlations on Hostility toward men-Benevolence toward men.

The findings that benevolent sexism is prevalent in India are also supported by previous research. Kanekar and Kolsawalla (1977, 1980, 1981) have shown that rape victim-blaming is prevalent in India, with male participants attributing greater responsibility to victims and sympathizing more with rapists than female participants do. Rape Victim blaming, or Rape myth as it is called, is influenced by a number of factors, including attitudes toward women (Costin & Schwarz 1987; Das et al. 2014), as well as hostile and benevolent sexism (Chapleau

et al. 2007; Glick & Fiske 1996). Kanekar (2007) goes on to suggest that, in India compared to America, victims of rape and sexual assault are treated more harshly by society. This suggestion is supported by Nayak et al. (2003) who found that American students were more positive, or less negative, about sexual assault victims than Indian students.

The present findings support hypothesis 2. Scores on AMI and ASI for both Indian males and females correlated significantly with, $r(249) = .57, p < .001$ for men, $r(247) = .80, p < .001$, for women and $r(498) = .63, p < .001$ for the total sample (Table 3).

Table 3.

Correlations of AMI and ASI Scale for Indian Respondents

	ASI-AMI	HS-HM	BS-BM
Total	.63***	.25**	.26**
Men	.57***	.30*	.47***
Women	.80***	.46**	.22

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Note: ASI – Ambivalent Sexism Inventory; AMI – Ambivalence towards Men Inventory; HS - Hostile Sexism; HM – Hostility towards Men ;BS - Benevolent Sexism; BM – Benevolence towards Men; for data on other countries refer to Glick et al. (2004).

Hypothesis 3 states that Indian women would score higher than men in Benevolent Sexism. In the present study, a significant gender difference was found in Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism (using MANOVA), wherein males scored higher in both Hostile Sexism, $F(1, 498) = 23.6, p < .001$, and Benevolent Sexism, $F(1, 498) = 6.2, p = .01$, on the ASI scale (see Table 4), implying that men endorse both hostile and benevolent sexism more than women among present Indian sample, thus supporting hypothesis 3.

In the study by Glick et al. (2000), similar to the present finding, men across 19 nations had scored significantly higher in Hostile Sexism. However, a higher Benevolent Sexism score of males was found only in Australia, Brazil, the Netherlands, Spain, South Korea, and the United States. In the three African countries, namely, Botswana, Nigeria, and South Africa females scored significantly higher on Benevolent Sexism. Glick stated that the more people in a nation endorse traditional gender attitudes (whether about women or men), the more women endorse Benevolent Sexism relative to men, even to the point of endorsing Benevolent Sexism more strongly than men in few nations. Through endorsing Benevolent Sexism, women justify the patriarchal social systems that they belong to, even though they are essentially supporting their own disadvantages in society (Glick & Fiske, 2001; Russo et al., 2014). In this way, women are adaptively able to convince themselves that the society they are part of is desirable and acceptable, and ultimately reduce the emotional distress of being oppressed (Sibley et al., 2007).

Thus, based on the present findings and previous findings it can be stated that cross-

culturally, women (in comparison with men) reject Hostile Sexism, which stands true for the present sample too. Also, with lower Benevolent Sexism score of women, India seems to be endorsing relatively lesser traditional gender attitudes than that of many African countries as women from present sample are not using Benevolent Sexism as a compensatory mechanism. This negates the system justifying ideology among Indian women. Hence, even though Indian women are suffering at the hand of patriarchy, they are not justifying the gender discriminatory norms by using Benevolent Sexism as a defence mechanism. This seems to imply that Indian women are aware of their state and are striving to improve their plight.

Research conducted by Kapoor and Ravi (2014) talks about 'the silent revolution of Indian women' wherein it was reported that Indian women voters have become more active over the years. The sex ratio of voters, which is defined as the number of women voters to every 1,000 men voters, has increased from 715 in the 1960s to 883 in the 2000s. According to a newspaper article in *The Hindu* (2016), an online survey conducted between December 2015 and January 2016 by Accenture, covering more than 4,900 working women and men in 31 countries found that among Indian women and men with the same level of digital proficiency, women are better able to find work. The survey also found that nearly 61 percent of women respondents in emerging markets like India said they aspired to be entrepreneurs rather than mere participants in the workplace.

Thus, the significantly lower Benevolent Sexism score among women in India contradicts the common finding that women tend to endorse Benevolent Sexism so as to justify the patriarchal system and defend themselves against prevailing sexism in the society. Along with overall Benevolent Sexism scores, men also scored higher in two Benevolent Sexism dimensions; Heterosexual Intimacy, $F(1, 498) = 6.2, p = .014$, and Protective Paternalism $F(1, 498) = 25.7, p < .001$ (see Table 4). Heterosexual Intimacy is a belief that men's sexual motivation toward women is linked with a genuine desire for psychological closeness. A higher score among men on this dimension might portray their defence against their patriarchal beliefs. Protective paternalism is evident in the traditional male gender role of provider and protector of the home, with the wife dependent on the husband to maintain her economic and social status (Peplau, 1983; Tavris & Wade, 1984).

Hypothesis 4 states that women portray higher Hostility toward men relative to men. It is based on the notion that in nations where men more strongly endorse Hostile Sexism, women evince more Hostility toward men relative to men. However, no support for hypothesis 4 was found. Even though Indian men scored higher on Hostile Sexism portraying sexism towards women, Indian women have not scored higher on overall Hostility toward men. There is no significant difference between men and women in the overall extent of Hostile sexism towards males. Except in one dimension of Hostility toward men - Resentment of paternalism i.e. viewing men as arrogant and abusing their power where women have scored higher than men (see Table 4). In the other two dimensions of Hostility toward men - Compensatory gender differentiation (contempt for men's domestic abilities) and Heterosexual hostility (viewing men as sexual predators) there are no significant differences between men and women.

On the Benevolence toward men subscale, there is no significant gender difference in the overall value of Benevolence toward men. However, males have scored higher on two dimensions of Benevolence toward men - Complementary gender differentiation (positive

characterizations of men as protectors and providers), $F(1, 498) = 8.9, p = .004$, and Heterosexual intimacy (the idea that a male romantic partner is necessary for a woman to be complete), $F(1, 498) = 5.7, p = .019$) (see Table 4). Both men and women have emerged to believe almost equally in compensatory gender differentiation, i.e., contempt for men's domestic abilities, heterosexual hostility i.e. viewing men as sexual predators and maternalism i.e. the notion that women must take care of men in the domestic realm in compensation for men acting as protectors and provider.

Hence, Indian women don't seem to be avenging the patriarchy by being hostile towards Indian men. They might be focusing on their own growth, which is a positive sign to improve the state of affairs of Gender discrimination in India.

Table 4.

Gender Differences in Dimensions and Subdimensions of ASI and AMI in the Present Indian Sample (F-values)

Variables	F	M (Male)	M (Female)
ASI			
Hostile Sexism (HS)	23.66***	2.73	2.07
Benevolent Sexism (BS)	6.17**	2.93	2.54
Heterosexual Intimacy	6.22**	3.14	2.61
Protective Paternalism	25.70***	2.88	1.97
Complementary Gender Differentiation	.57	-	-
AMI			
Hostile Sexism (HM)	2.75	-	-
Heterosexual hostility	2.11	-	-
Resentment of paternalism	12.24***	2.40	3.16
Compensatory gender differentiation	.30	-	-
Benevolent Sexism (BM)	.08	-	-
Maternalism	.99	-	-
Heterosexual Intimacy	8.92**	2.87	2.15
Complementary Gender Differentiation	5.66*	3.22	2.70

Conclusion and Implications

India has to progress towards reducing gender inequality by taking steps against both hostile and benevolent sexist attitudes. The male sample in the present research has emerged high on both hostile and benevolent sexism. The culture of victim blaming in rape cases has

become so prevalent among Indians is an indication of prevailing benevolent sexism. Benevolent sexism is more dangerous than hostile sexism as it is a sugar coated means to gender discrimination. Since benevolent sexist beliefs are mistaken as harmless, people accept these ideas more readily, which leads them to become complacent about gender discrimination (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Jost & Kay, 2005). Research has found that women's experiences within interpersonal interactions that are marked by benevolent sexist attitudes have implications for their internal thought processes as well (Glick & Fiske, 1996). When facing an employer's benevolent sexist attitudes, women doubt their cognitive capabilities and perform significantly worse on executive functioning tasks (Dardenne et al., 2007). Women who hold benevolent sexist beliefs have less ambitious educational and career goals and feel more dependent on their future husbands for financial support (Fernandez et al., 2006).

Through endorsing benevolent sexism, Indian society is less likely to challenge the rampant gender inequality that exists today. Considering benevolent sexism's various manifestations and contributions to gender inequality, both men and women need to be educated about the menacing consequences of prevalent benevolent sexist attitudes. Interventions should also aim to increase men's understanding of benevolent sexism's oppressive nature and help them develop empathy for women who experience gender discrimination (Connelly & Heesacker, 2012). Also, present research implies that both men and women should be provided with interventions at school, college, and organisational level that explicate the differences between benevolent sexism and politeness (e.g., opening a door for a woman because she is a woman vs. opening a door for a woman to partake in a kind, civil act; Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Becker & Wright, 2011; Connelly & Heesacker, 2012).

Overall, the present study based on the sample from northern part of India has generated intriguing findings about Hostile and Benevolent sexism, which in the present study were found to be complementary forms of sexism. Further, men were found endorsing both Hostile and Benevolent Sexism more than women among the present Indian sample. Unlike the trend in many countries, wherein as a result of oppression faced due to hostile sexist attitudes of men, the women tend to display hostility against men (Glick & Fiske, 1996), Indian women were not found avenging patriarchy by being hostile towards men.

A suggestion for future researchers working on hostile and benevolent sexism in India include taking a sample more representative of the entire country. India is a land of diversity and every Indian state has its own cultural belief system which can affect the nature and extent of sexism prevalent in that particular state. Also, future research can involve qualitative analysis of the everyday situations in India wherein hostile and benevolent sexism are prevalent and thus change is required. Research can also be done on analysing how Indian women are handling patriarchy if they are not displaying hostility towards men.

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