

GENDER INEQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract: - Gender inequality remains a pervasive issue in India deeply rooted in historical, cultural and socioeconomic factor. This research its causes, manifestation and consequence furthermore it explores the implication of gender inequality on sustainable development in the country. This article seeks to shed to shed light on the pressing challenges faced by women and girl In India.

Gender inequality is a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable society. It means women and men boy and girl, should enjoy the same right and liberty, resources, opportunity and protection and protections.

Gender inequality is a major problem that place women at a disadvantage which can hinder economic growth and social advantage. In the two last decade extensive research has been conduct on gender related issue studying both their antecedents and consequences. However, existing literature reviews do not provide a comprehensive and clear picture of what has been studied so far, which could guide scholars in their future research.

This scoping review aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive overview of the gender equality research literature. We identified 1,023 studies published between 1990 and 2020. The studies were analysed using a new semantic indicator that measures the degree to which a study focuses on gender equality. The results showed that the majority of studies (65%) focused on gender inequality, while only a minority (35%) focused on gender equality.

The studies that focused on gender equality were further analysed to identify the key themes that were explored. The most common themes were: The definition and measurement of gender equality

The causes and consequences of gender inequality

The impact of gender equality on economic development

The role of gender equality in promoting peace and security

The challenges and opportunities for achieving gender equality

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This scoping review provides a valuable resource for scholars who are interested in conducting research on gender equality. The review highlights the key themes that have been explored in the literature and identifies gaps in the research that need to be addressed.

In addition to the key themes identified above, the review also found that the majority of studies were conducted in developed countries. This suggests that there is a need for more research on gender equality in developing countries. The review also found that the majority of studies were quantitative in nature. This suggests that there is a need for more qualitative research on gender equality, which can provide insights into the lived experiences of women and men.

Keyword:- gender inequality, sustainable development, women empowerment, equal right, equal treatment, equal opportunity,

INTRODUCTION: -

Gender inequality is when people are treated differently based on their gender, often due to gender discrimination or sexism. This can happen when someone of a particular gender is given different or disadvantageous treatment than someone of another gender in the same situation. Gender inequality can be caused by differences in biology, psychology, or cultural norms. For example, many people believe that someone's biological sex always determines their gender, attitudes, and behaviours.

Gender inequality is a global concern that affect individual, societies and economic. It refer to the unequal treatment opportunities and access to resources experience by individual based on their gender, with women and girl unequal affected. This research paper focus on understanding and addressing gender inequality in India.

The following factor and action can create a transformative impact in addressing gender inequality and promoting sustainable development in India. We can build a more equitable and inclusive society that benefit all its member. It is imperative that we commit ourselves to this cause and work together towards a future where gender equality is a reality. [Kabeer 2005]

Gender inequality can be seen in many areas including: -

1. workplace
2. domestic life
3. education
4. violence

FACTOR AFFECTING INEQUALITY OF GENDER

Gender inequality is caused by a number of factors including social norms, gender bias, and preference between men and women. These factors can lead to gender gaps. Which can have psychological effect such as: -

1. Lower rates of schooling and employment.
2. less pay for similar work.
3. higher level of stress.
4. exposure to higher rates of sexual assault, intimate partner abuse, gender-based violence. A lack of representation in government.

Gender inequality can lead to lower rates of schooling and employment less pay for similar work higher level of stress and higher rate of unpaid work. It can also expose people to higher rate of sexual assault, intimate partner abuse and gender-based violence.

HERE ARE SOME WAY TO FIGHT GENDER INEQUALITY: -

1. giving girl access to education
2. give women platform to be in power and achieve economic success
3. end violence and sexual assault against women
4. assure girl and women have access to menstrual health facilities
5. end of child marriage

GENDER INEQUALITY CAN EFFECT MANY AREAS OF LIFE INCLUDING:-

1. **education-** in India 62% of women have no schooling. Compared to 31 % of men.
2. **income-** women earn less than men for similar work in India and the gap has widened in rural areas. Globally women earn about 20% less than men.
3. **mental health-** gender inequality can lead to increased, anxiety, depression, and post traumatic disorder [PTSD]
4. **unpaid work-** women do 76.4 % of unpaid domestic care work worldwide, while men do 23.6 % in developing and emerging economies, women do 80.2 unpaid care.

GENDER INEQUALITY CAN HAVE MANY PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS, INCLUDING: -

- 1. Depression:** - A 2020 study found that women who have experienced gender discrimination in the past year score higher on a depression screening tool.
- 2. Anxiety:** - gender inequality can lead to higher level of anxiety.
- 3. post traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]:** - gender inequality can lead to PTSD.
- 4. Emotional vulnerability:** - women can be vulnerable to violence, discrimination, objectification, and socioeconomic inequality.
- 5. sexual harassment:** - Gender inequality can contribute to sexual harassment in the workplace.

GENDER INEQUALITY CAN HAVE MANY NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON SOCIETY, INCLUDING: -

- 1. Economic inequality:** - Gender inequality can lead to more poverty, less economic growth, and lower living standards.
- 2. psychological effects:** - exposure to violence, objectification, discrimination, and socioeconomic inequality can lead to anxiety, depression, low esteem, and PTSD.
- 3. Reduce gender equality:** - Gender inequality can block the growth and advancement of women.
- 4. Reduced reproductive right:** - Gender inequality can block the growth and advancement of women.
- 5. Social tensions:** - inequality can lead to social tension.
- 6. child labour:** - child labour is a cause and a consequence of poverty, reinforcing social inequality and discrimination.
- 7. child marriage:** - studies demonstrate the clear linkages between the indicator, often due to early child bearing that contributes to high level of mortality and morbidity.

CAUSE OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN SOCIETY: -

The main cause of gender inequality are gender bias and social norms that restrict women's rights and opportunities. Other causes include: -

- 1. lack of awareness :-** women may not be aware of their rights and ability to achieve equality due to cultural and social norms that dictate women should be subservient to men.

- 2. violence:** - women are more likely to die or become disabled in the private sphere due to domestic violence than due to cancer or traffic accidents.
- 3. Gender discrimination in education:-** without a good education, individuals are limited job opportunities, which can lead to poverty, violence, human trafficking and poor health.
- 4. Lack of resources and poverty:** - Gender inequality is greater for the poor.
- 5. Racism:** - wage gaps between white women and women of colour continue to contribute to gender inequality.
- 6. Health disparities:** - Gender inequality is often both an antecedent to and a consequence of health disparity.

LET'S KNOW ABOUT WHAT IS GENDER BIAS?

Bias comes in many forms and causes us to form prejudices against others. It helps us categorize things to make sense of the world around us. But although common biases aren't harmless. In the workplace for example gender bias is a very common problem. It is the tendency to prefer one gender over another most of the time companies and recruiters prefer men to women. We are not saying this is conscious but it's also not the most deliberate choice either, **BELIEVE ME IT'S ALSO YOUR LOSS!**

Gender bias is often a form of unconscious or implicit bias. It happens when someone unintentionally attributes certain attitudes and stereotypes to someone else for example men may be considered more analytical and less emotional. As a result, they have a better chance of being hired when these skills are required. Yep, that's completely unfair!

GENDER BIAS IN WORKPLACE: -

Gender bias is often seen as a preferential treatment that men receive. That's because in the workplace, it works mostly in the men's favour. Gender discrimination is experienced by 42% of women in the workplace 90% of senior leaders are men while only 25% of CEOs are women. Should we be ashamed? Yes, maybe we should. Because numbers don't lie!

Gender bias starts from as early as the recruitment strategy. Both male and female managers are twice as likely to hire men. In blind applications women are 25 to 46% more likely to be hired for a job. That's not cool, this shows how difficult it is for women to get invited for a job interview, it's sad but it is true. Companies are missing out on some absolute **GIRL POWER** in even more ways. Unconsciously recruiters also tend to place job descriptions on platforms that are predominantly used by male candidates and often they actively reach out to men through ads on social media.

We also see gender bias in job descriptions. Unconsciously a lot of job descriptions contain words that mostly appeal to men. These are words like dominant, confident, analytical, decisive, and strong. Many women don't feel spoken to by these words. As a result, they will refrain from applying. Another thing we know is that women want to meet 100% of the qualifications

ask for, if they don't, they want to apply. Men will apply if they have around 60% of qualification. This should be taken into account when you write a job description.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL FACTOR

Gender inequality in India is deeply rooted in its historical and cultural context. Understanding these factors is crucial for comprehending the challenges faced by women and girls in the country. Here are some historical factors which is responsible for gender inequality

1. social customs, beliefs and practices: -

These can play a big role in keeping women at lower place in society. For example, in India society view, customs and cultural practices can refuse women opportunities that are generally provided to men.

2. Education: -

Education is a fundamental human right. Educated women and girl are better advocate for their right access economic opportunities and make informed decisions their lives.

3. Political participation: -

Achieving gender equality in politics require women and men of all background to have equal access to parliamentary seats and ministerial positions. It also requires women and men to have equal access to decision making.

4. Women empowerment: -

Women empowerment is an stereotypes about gender roles often lead to unequal treatment of individual based on their gender.

5. Gender violence: -

Gender violence is rooted in cultural and institutional social structure. Discrimination rule customs. Tradition, law and misogynistic language are example of structural violence against women.

What is the role of culture in gender inequality?

Cultural provide the context for gender roles, identity and stereotypes. It also affects variation in gender related behaviours between individual within a cultural group and between cultural.

Culture can influence gender inequality in a number of ways including: -

1. Education: -

Two third of illiterate adult are women. This can impact families and children because many mother are the caretaker of the family.

2. Gender inequality in the cultural field: -

These include women limited access and visibility in the profession and different participation in cultural activities between women and men.

Popular culture plays a key role in how gender norms, stereotypes, challenge and identities are formed.

Gender equality is a pillar of cultural diversity and has a key role to play in challenging stereotype and promoting societal change.

Culture affected variation on gender related behaviour within a cultural group as well as variation between culture. Culture can maximalize and minimize or even behaviour and gender difference in social behaviour and cognitions.

SOCIO – ECONOMIC FACTOR

Social inequality socioeconomic factor like income, wealth, access to education, pension levels, social status, and socioeconomic safety net. Some examples of gender inequality include: -

1. *wage disparity*: -

Women receive less than men for several reasons including the philosophy of equalizing difference and women might be less competitive or prefer a specific career direction than men.

2. *Discrimination*: -

Men typically occupy position of power in society and males in power are more likely to hire or promote other men. Thus, discrimination against women.

3. *Poverty*: -

In patriarchal Indian society women are more likely to live below the poverty line than men.

4. *Unpaid work*: -

Women are more likely to do unpaid work, such as caring for sick relative.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION

Gender-based violence and discrimination pose significant challenges to gender equality in India. These forms of violence and discrimination are deeply entrenched in societal norms, cultural practices, and power imbalances. The following key aspects highlight the issues related to gender-based violence and discrimination in India:

1. High prevalence of violence against women.

2. Child marriage and female infanticide.

3. Son preference and its implications for gender imbalance.
4. Sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in the workplace.

Measures such as stringent legal frameworks, awareness campaigns, gender-sensitive education, and support services for survivors are essential. Additionally, eradicating harmful practices like child marriage and promoting gender equality in social and cultural spheres are crucial steps toward achieving a society free from violence and discrimination. Creating safe and inclusive workplaces that uphold gender equality is also paramount for empowering women and promoting their full participation in the workforce.

GENDER – BASED VOILANCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS: -

The declaration in the elimination of violence against women defines “violence against women” as any of gender-based violence that result on or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such fact, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.

It has taken decades of struggle by the women right moment to persuade the international community to view gender-based violence against women as a women right concern and not just as a private matter in which the state should not interfere.

STATE ROLE IN ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL, DEEP-ROOTED DISCRIMINATION

Framing gender-based violence against women as a human rights violation implies an important conceptual shift. It means recognizing that women are not exposed to violence by accident, or because of an in-born vulnerability. Instead, violence is the result of structural, deep-rooted discrimination, which the state has an obligation to address. Preventing and addressing gender-based violence against women requires legislative, administrative and institutional measures and reforms, including the eradication of gender stereotypes.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the CEDAW Committee’s General Recommendation No. 35 provide for the concept of due diligence as an obligation of States. Under this obligation, States have a duty to take positive action to prevent and protect women from violence, punish perpetrators of violent acts and compensate victims of violence. The principle of due diligence is crucial as it provides the missing link between human rights obligations and acts of private persons.

INNOVATIVE, PROMISING NEW PRACTICES

Considerable progress has been made in many countries of the world. Comprehensive legal frameworks and specific institutions and policies have been put in place to promote women’s rights, prevent and protect women from violence.

There is growing awareness of the nature and impact of gender-based violence against women around the world. Innovative and promising practices are reported every year to the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, including in the areas of investigations, prosecution and provision of services. For example:

1. Commissions of Inquiry and Fact-Finding Missions have increasingly integrated a gender lens in their methodologies and analysis, enhancing the visibility of human rights violations that have affected women and girls, such as gender-based violence. They have also addressed the continuum or exacerbation of pre-existing forms of gender-based discrimination, and the differentiated impact that human rights violations and conflicts have had on women and girls.
2. OHCHR collected and analysed experiences of strategic litigation (e.g. in Guatemala, DRC, Liberia, Mexico) on how to operationalize victim-centred and gender-sensitive approaches.
3. Promising experiences can be found in Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, DRC, Mali, Uganda and Guatemala on how protection measures have enhanced access to justice for victims of gender-based violence, in particular sexual violence, by enabling their participation in judicial processes. These include measures against reprisals, intimidation and stigmatization, as well as the critical importance of psychological support and income-generating opportunities for victims at all the different stages of accountability processes.

GLOBALLY EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE

Yet, the figures on prevalence of gender-based violence against women are alarming. According to data by the World Health Organization, one third of women globally experience violence at least once in their lifetime.

There are still obstacles to women's access to justice, resulting into widespread impunity for violence. Considerable efforts are still required to promote women's and girls' autonomy and choice and to ensure the realization of the right of women and girls to a life free from violence.

HOW CAN WE REDUCE GENDER INEQUALITY

Here is some way to reduce gender inequality: -

1. **Provide equal opportunities:** In education, employment, and leadership roles, this can help underprivileged girls thrive.
2. **Raise awareness:** Educate people about child rights and gender biases.
3. **Confront gender stereotyping:** In the media and by popular culture, address the reasons, extent, and consequences of sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, and pornography.

4. **Enforce laws:** Increase enforcement of existing laws against gender-based employment discrimination and against sexual harassment.
5. **Fund services:** Increase funding for rape-crisis centres and other services for girls and women who have been raped and/or sexually assaulted.
6. **Be transparent:** In the workplace, provide training on unconscious bias, and have a clear policy on discrimination.
7. **Support women:** In the workplace, support women into more senior roles, and implement gender neutral recruitment processes.
8. **Promote gender equality in the home:** Let your children play with whatever toys they like regardless of their sex, and teach your child to understand and respect their body.
9. **Challenge stereotypes:** Interrupt sexist and discriminatory language, and be critical and question.
10. **Develop an action plan:** Stop sexual harassment, stop victim blaming, and stop rape culture.

We can also stop gender discrimination by: -

1. ensure equal access to education.
2. empower women in the workplace.
3. protect reproductive right.
4. strengthen legal protection.
5. provide better medical care.
6. achieve better political representations.
7. prioritize the most marginalizes.

CONCLUSION

The research article has provided a comprehensive analysis of gender inequality in India, highlighting its causes, manifestations, and consequences. Gender inequality in India is deeply rooted in historical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors. Traditional gender roles, caste-based discrimination, and patriarchal social structures contribute to the persistence of gender disparities. Socio economic factors, including education disparity, employment and wage gaps, unequal political representation, and limited access to resources, such as high prevalence of violence against women, child marriage, son preference, and workplace harassment, pose significant challenges to gender equality.

Gender inequality has wide-ranging implications for sustainable development. It imposes economic costs, hinders human development indicators, and undermines progress towards

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Addressing gender inequality is crucial for achieving sustainable development in India. The importance of addressing this issue cannot be overstated. By promoting gender equality, we can unlock the full potential of women and girls as agents of change and contributors to economic, social, and political development.

Individuals: Promote gender equality in daily life by challenging stereotypes, supporting women's empowerment initiatives, and fostering respectful and equal relationships.

Organizations: Implement gender-responsive policies and practices, ensure equal opportunities for career advancement, and foster inclusive work environments free from discrimination and harassment.

Policymakers: Strengthen legal and policy frameworks that promote gender equality, invest in quality education and healthcare for women and girls, enhance women's political representation, and address gender-based violence through effective implementation and enforcement of laws.

The Indian government has implemented various policies and legal frameworks to promote gender equality. These include laws against gender-based violence, measures to enhance women's political representation, and initiatives to address workplace discrimination. Examples include the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, and the Maternity Benefit Act.