

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY:  
A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE  
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**ABSTRACT:**

Gender equality remains a critical issue across the globe, influencing social, economic, and political development. This article explores the current state of gender equality from a global perspective, examining progress, persistent challenges, and regional disparities. Drawing on data from international organizations such as the United Nations World Economic Forum, the study highlights advancements in women's education and workforce participation while underscoring enduring gaps in leadership roles, wage equality, and access to healthcare and legal rights. The analysis also considers the intersectionality of gender with factors such as race, class, and geography, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies and global cooperation. Ultimately, achieving gender equality is not only a matter of justice and human rights but a prerequisite for sustainable development and peace. Gender equality is a very important thing needed for the development of a country. Gender equality has been convincingly appeared to invigorate economic growth, which is crucial for low-income countries. Gender equality among women and men alludes to equivalent rights. Obligations and open doors for women and men and boys and girls, fairness doesn't imply that women and men will become the same however that women and men's privileges, duties, and openings won't rely upon whether they are brought into the world male or female.

**KEYWORDS:**

Gender Equality, Human Rights, Political Development, Policies, Sustainable Development, Women.

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**Introduction:**

Gender equality remains one of the most pressing challenges and essential goals of the 21st century. Despite progress in laws, education, and labour participation, deep-rooted inequalities between men and women persist across cultures, countries, and institutions. From wage gaps and underrepresentation in leadership roles to gender-based violence and limited access to healthcare and education, disparities continue to affect millions, particularly women and girls.

A global perspective on gender equality reveals both shared challenges and diverse experiences shaped by history, culture, politics, and economic development. While countries in Northern Europe lead in gender parity, many regions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America face structural barriers that hinder progress. Understanding these global patterns is vital not only to identify effective strategies but also to promote inclusive and sustainable development. This article explores the global status of gender equality, the efforts being made to achieve it, and the path forward for a more just and equitable world. Gender equality is quite equal representation; it's strongly tied to women's rights and sometimes requires policy changes. As of 2017, the worldwide movement for gender equality has not incorporated the proposition of genders besides women and men or gender identities outside the gender binary.

**Gender Equality:**

While the planet has accomplished advancement towards gender equality and women's strengthening under the millennium development goals (counting equivalent access to essential instruction among girls and boys), women despite everything endure segregation and brutality in each piece of the planet.

Gender equality isn't only a fundamental right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Shockingly, right now, 1 of every 5 women and girls between the age of 15-49 have announced encountering physical or sexual abuse by a close accomplice inside a year timeframe, and 49 nations at present haven't any laws shielding from harmful practices like child marriage and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), which has declined by 30% within the past decade, but there is still much work to be done to completely eliminate such practices. Furnishing women and girls with equivalent access to instruction, medicinal services, not too bad worth, and portrayal in political and

financial dynamic procedures will fuel supportable economics and advantage social orders and humankind on the loose. Executing new legitimate systems in regards to female equity inside the working environment and accordingly the destruction of unsafe practices focused at women is critical to closure the sex-based segregation predominant in numerous nations round the world.

### **Gender discrimination:**

Gender inequality has been a social issue in India for hundreds of years. Gender discrimination is the practice of treating someone unfavorably because of their gender identity; it includes behaviors, policies, or laws that result in unequal rights, opportunities, or treatment in areas such as employment, education, healthcare, and politics.

### **Types of gender discrimination:**

1. Direct Discrimination: Openly treating one gender less favourably (E.g., denying a woman a job because she's pregnant).
2. Indirect discrimination: Policies or practices that appear neutral but disadvantage a particular gender (E.g., requiring long work hours that disadvantage mothers).
3. Systemic discrimination: Long-standing cultural, social, or institutional norms that favour one gender over another.

### **Laws against gender discrimination:**

Many countries have legal frameworks to combat gender discrimination:

India: Articles 14, 15, and 16 of the constitution ensure equality.

USA: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964).

UN: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

### **Ways to reduce gender discrimination:**

- Education and awareness
- Gender-sensitive policies
- Legal enforcement of equality
- Support for women's empowerment and leadership

**One among 17 SDGs:**

The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to finish poverty, protect the earth, and improve the lives and prospects of everyone everywhere. The 17 Goals were received by all UN member states in 2015 as a piece of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Today, progress is being made in many places, but overall, action to satisfy the goals isn't yet advancing at the speed or scale required. 2020 must inaugurate a decade of ambitious action to deliver the goals by 2030. With just ten years left to achieve the sustainable development goals, world pioneers at the SDG summit in September 2019 included a time of activity and conveyance for practical turn of events, and promised to assemble financing, upgrade national execution, and fortify establishments to deliver by the deadline of 2030, abandoning no one.

**The sustainable development goals are:**

- No poverty
- Zero hunger
- Good health and well-being
- Quality education
- Gender equality
- Clean water and sanitation
- Affordable and clean energy
- Decent work and economic growth
- Industry, Innovation, and infrastructure
- Reducing inequality
- Sustainable cities and communities
- Responsible consumption and production
- Climate action
- Life below water
- Life on land
- Peace, justice, and strong institutions
- Partnerships for the goals.

**Facts and figures:**

- Globally, 750 million women and girls were married before the age

of 18, and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone FGM. In the 30 countries where the practice is concentrated, rates have dropped from 1 in 2 girls in 2000 to 1 in 3 girls by 2017.

- In 18 countries, husbands can legally prevent their wives from working; in 39 countries, daughters and sons do not have equal inheritance rights; and 49 countries lack laws protecting women from domestic violence.
- One in five women and girls, including 19 percent of women and girls aged 15 to 49, have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within the last 12 months, yet 49 countries have no laws that specifically protect women from such violence.
- While women have made important inroads into political office across the world, their representation in national parliament at 23.7 percent is still far from parity.
- In 46 countries, women now hold more than 30 per cent of seats in national parliament in at least one chamber.
- Only 52 percent of women married or in a union freely make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use, and healthcare. Globally, women are just 13 percent of agricultural landholders.
- Women in Northern Africa hold less than one in five paid jobs in the non-agricultural sector. The proportion of women in paid employment outside the agriculture sector has increased from 35 percent in 1990 to 41 percent in 2015.
- More than 100 countries have taken action to track budget allocations for gender equality.
- In Southern Asia, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood has dropped by over 40% since 2000 (Source: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>).

### Goals:

- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early, and forced

marriage and female genital mutilation.

- Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as is nationally appropriate.
- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and outcome documents of their review conferences.
- Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.
- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.
- Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels (Source: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>).

#### **Steps taken in India to achieve gender equality:**

- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) to guarantee reasonable work and pay age for minimized and resourceless rustic and urban poor women the nation over.
- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) to give small-scale account administrations to realize the financial upliftment of poor women.
- Swadhar and Short Stay Homes to give alleviation and restoration to desperate women and women in trouble.
- National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) to reinforce the general procedures that advance all-around development of women.
- Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for the Children of Working

Mothers (counting single parents) to give daycare offices for running a crèche of 25 youngsters in the age bunch 0–6 years from families having monthly pay of not as much as Rs. 12000/-.

- Sabla scheme for all-encompassing advancement of juvenile girls in the age gathering of 11–18 years.
- Plan for universalization of Women Helpline proposed to give 24 hours prompt and crisis reaction to women influenced by savagery.

### **Conclusion:**

Gender equality remains a fundamental human right and a critical foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. While significant progress has been made globally in advancing the rights and status of women and marginalized genders, deep-rooted inequalities persist across regions and sectors. Cultural norms, economic disparities, legal barriers, and political exclusion continue to hinder full gender parity.

A global perspective reveals that no single country has achieved complete gender equality, but many have adopted progressive policies and legal frameworks to address the gaps. Achieving true equality requires not only policy reforms but also shifts in societal attitudes, inclusive education, and collective action by governments, civil society, and individuals. Ultimately, gender equality is not just a women's issue – it is a shared responsibility that benefits entire communities by fostering inclusive growth, social cohesion, and human development. To build a truly equal world, commitment must be continuous, collaborative, and rooted in justice and respect for all.

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