

A Sociological Perspective of Gender Discrimination and Inequality towards Women

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ABSTRACT:

Gender discrimination is the inequitable treatment of an individual based on their gender, which results in disadvantage or marginalization. It can take many different forms, such as unequal access to opportunities, resources, and rights, as well as societal prejudices and harmful stereotypes. Gender inequality refers to the unfair and uneven treatment of people based on their gender, which results in disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and rights. This difference can be seen in various settings, including school, jobs, health, and politics, when one gender is frequently given an advantage over the other. In this article, a sociological perspective of gender discrimination and inequality towards women has been discussed.

Keywords: Gender, Discrimination, Inequality, Women.

INTRODUCTION

Gender discrimination is defined as the unequal treatment of a person based on their gender identity. In the preliminary phase, these instances of gender disparity appear entirely natural and commonplace, but upon reflective and profound consideration, we may discern that this has been the insidious poison administered to us since birth. Numerous instances of gender stereotypes have, over time, established a robust and intractable foundation for gender inequality and discrimination. Gender equality is a fundamental right of every individual, and our constitution regarding human rights stipulates that there will be no discrimination based on caste, race, color, or gender. Despite its illegality, gender inequality persists in our society due to ingrained childhood teachings and prevailing mindsets that inhibit criticism of these beliefs. It has been exposed to or participated in gender inequality from a young age, it has become normalized for us. Women subjected to abuse find it challenging to exercise their lawful rights, as the majority of rights violations and acts of violence occur within the private domain of the home. Women violence may be seen as a means by which men seek to exert authority and control over women, representing a kind of structural inequality. This systemic inequity is evident with more agency among males. Sexual disparities manifest in educational attainment, professional employment, asset ownership, the feminization of poverty, and other areas. The global estimate indicates that thirty percent of women endure physical and/or sexual assault at some point in their lives, highlighting the magnitude of this issue. From a feminist viewpoint, utilizing concepts of patriarchy and gender performativity, the comprehension of gender roles dictated by male-dominated societal structures and processes facilitates a deeper examination of the violence and abuse experienced by women. Men who subscribe to conventional, inflexible, and misogynistic perspectives on gender norms, attitudes, and behaviors are more prone to perpetrating violence against women. The individual and communal views of males on various established gender standards and their perpetuation elucidate men's perpetration of violence against women. Gender norms are recognized to impact violence; conversely, violence also shapes and prescribes gender performance through fear, sanctions, and corrective measures for adhering to designated gender roles. Women violence is the primary cause of mortality and disability among women and constitutes a significant global public health issue. Establishing gender equality is essential for promoting justice and achieving sustainable development; therefore, violence against women must be recognized as a fundamental violation of human rights. A report on world violence has determined that violence against women occurs at all tiers of family, community, and state.

CORRELATION OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND INEQUALITY TOWARDS WOMEN- A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Gender discrimination transpires to adverse treatment or inequality due to their gender. It encompasses limited access to education, employment, and healthcare; wage disparity; sexual harassment; and many issues. In our culture, women and men are equal; nonetheless, in numerous contexts, women are deprived of various opportunities. Although it is a societal process, men and women are occasionally subjected to unequal treatment. This discrimination and disparity

gender inequality among individuals. Some divisions are logically based, while many others are socially manufactured. Research and education reveal how diverse experiences and gender influence an individual's lived experiences. Gender discrimination or gender inequality exists across several cultures and impacts individuals such as transgender persons. Gender influences several work prospects across various sectors where both men and women are eligible for positions; yet, women are occasionally excluded for safety reasons. Gender inequality denotes the disparities in opportunities, privileges, and resources among individuals based on their sex or gender, frequently placing women and girls at a disadvantage. It emerges in multiple forms, including inequitable access to education, healthcare, economic opportunity, and political representation, alongside violence and prejudice. Females may encounter obstacles in obtaining education and appropriate healthcare, impeding their overall advancement. Gender-based violence, encompassing domestic abuse and sexual harassment, is a critical issue impacting women worldwide. Conventional gender roles and societal standards might restrict women's options and prospects. Inequality constrains women's potential contributions to the labor force. Gender inequality can confine women in cycles of poverty, obstructing their economic advancement. Women may encounter health difficulties resulting from inadequate access to appropriate healthcare and reproductive services. Gender disparity may incite societal instability and conflict.

From a sociological standpoint, gender discrimination and inequality may entrench in societal structures and conventions, affecting multiple facets of life, including the job, family, and politics. Gender is regarded not as a static biological characteristic but as a social construct that shapes perceptions and treatment of persons. Sociological theories elucidate the formation, reinforcement, and contestation of gender roles throughout many civilizations, emphasizing the interaction of gender such as race and class. Sociologists assert that gender is not only dictated by biology but is influenced by social expectations, cultural standards, and historical situations. These norms delineate what is deemed "masculine" and "feminine," shaping behavior, roles, and expectations across diverse disciplines. Gender stratification denotes the hierarchical organization of society predicated on gender, wherein men frequently possess greater power and privilege than women, transgender individuals, and those who are gender-nonconforming. This stratification is evident in domains such as jobs, politics, education, and familial roles, where women frequently encounter disadvantages and obstacles. Feminist theory, a fundamental paradigm in sociology, analyses the mechanisms by which gender inequality is sustained by patriarchal structures that generate and perpetuate male dominance and authority. It emphasizes the function of societal structures and organizations in perpetuating gender norms and hierarchies. Intersectionality acknowledges that gender inequality overlaps with several forms of oppression, including race, class, and sexuality, resulting in distinct experiences of discrimination for individuals. It emphasizes that individuals may encounter multiple forms of discrimination due to their diverse social identities. Gender roles are acquired through socialization, the process by which individuals assimilate attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors from family, schooling, peers, and media. These roles may restrict individuals' options and choices, thereby perpetuating stereotypes and expectations. Women frequently encounter obstacles in professional progression, wage disparity, and sexual harassment, while men may experience pressure to adhere to conventional masculine norms. Conventional gender norms may result in an inequitable distribution of home labor, frequently placing the onus of childcare and domestic duties on women. Women are inadequately represented in political leadership, encountering obstacles and difficulties in acquiring power and influence. Gender discrepancies in healthcare access, treatment, and research outcomes underscore the influence of gender inequality on health. Sociologists advocate diverse measures to mitigate gender disparity, including confronting gender stereotypes and advocating for gender equality in media and education; enforcing anti-discrimination legislation and enhancing awareness of sexual harassment and violence; facilitating access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women and gender-nonconforming individuals; and addressing the fundamental causes of gender inequality within social structures and institutions.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hing, L.S.S. et al. (2023). This paper presents a comprehensive review of the extent of gender inequities in organizational practices, addressing performance evaluation, compensation, leadership, work-family conflict, and sexual harassment throughout the employee lifecycle from selection to departure. Where the literature permits, we examine intersectionality findings. We examine the elements and processes that promote and obstruct gender parity in the workplace, utilizing the most substantial empirical evidence. In this work, we differentiate between data that indicate gender injustice and those that suggest gender equality. Integrating these diverse literatures enables us to construct a model that elucidates the accumulation of gender disparities across the employee lifecycle, which are perpetuated across many levels (i.e., social, organizational, interpersonal, and individual). We identify significant gaps in the literature, propose subsequent research directions, and underscore practical consequences for organizations seeking to promote gender equity.

Madi, I., Morales, L., Yosef, F., & Andreosso, B. (2023). Gender inequality persists as a critical global issue with substantial implications for the MENA area. Safeguarding human rights, addressing discrimination against women, and improving women's quality of life are essential as we develop more sustainable and equitable socio-economic models. The acknowledgment of women's rights across all countries has emerged, as substantial research demonstrates women's vital contributions to societal growth and their economic impact. Gender equality is fundamental to human rights and essential for fostering a sustainable environment in which individuals can prosper through the reinforcement of stable

economic and political systems. Fundamental research findings indicate that Arab nations encountered a decrease in subjective well-being following the Arab Spring in 2011. This paper offers a critical examination of current research that illustrates the correlation between life satisfaction and the principal grievances revealed during the revolution, with corruption identified as the predominant factor influencing life satisfaction, especially in nations that underwent substantial revolts and uprisings.

Fitong Ketchiwou, G. & Dzansi, L.W. (2023). Despite a global demand for gender parity in businesses, discriminatory practices based on gender persist as a significant barrier. Numerous women continue to experience gender discrimination and occupy subordinate positions inside organizational hierarchies despite their attempts to advance. This research aims to analyze the correlation between gender discriminatory behaviors and the skill development and advancement of women in the workplace. The research adopted a quantitative methodology. A self-administered online questionnaire survey was conducted with 412 women using a suitable non-probability sampling method. Descriptive statistics, normality tests, validity assessments, reliability evaluations, and regression analyses were conducted utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and AMOS 27. Although fostering a gender-inclusive workplace is commendable, enhancing women's competencies and facilitating their career progression necessitates greater commitment from organizations. Organizations must intentionally focus on the skills development and career advancement of women, institutionalizing efforts that actively promote their participation in developmental activities and support their professional progression.

Peter, R. & Pathak, A. (2023). In our societal or communal existence, individual's roles within the established parameters of that community, which may pertain to religion, caste, or gender. Such circumstances can be characterized as stereotypes, which can be succinctly defined as a particular archetype of a person. In the context of gender, a gender stereotype categorizes individuals as male, female, or other based solely on their actions, behaviors, or personality traits. Gender inequality serves as a primary mechanism for perpetuating gender disparities; therefore, it is essential to comprehend gender stereotypes and their influence on gender discrimination and inequality. The primary objective of this study was to comprehend the diverse manifestations of gender-based inequity encountered by women daily due to gender stereotypes. This research article concludes by revealing two aspects of gender discrimination: gender stereotypes and gender inequalities.

Dahal, P., Joshi, S.K. & Swahnberg, K. (2022). Gender inequality and violence are interrelated phenomena that influence one another in various ways. Women in Nepal encounter numerous disparities and abuse. The causes are varied, although the majority of these outcomes stem from the socially designated inferior status of women. Power hierarchies in Nepal subject women to subjection and violence. The study seeks to examine participants' comprehension and experiences to ascertain the state of inequality for women and the emergence of violence as a consequence. The findings indicate that the enslavement of women results from behaviors rooted in gender disparities, limited life prospects, and the internalization of socially constructed distinctions among women. The study indicates that interpersonal and sociocultural violence may arise from established disparities between men and women. The study has established a concept of power play, recognized as both a cause and result of women's subjugation and violence. This power dynamic operates at multiple levels, with societal endorsement for men to employ violence and perpetuate inequity. The theoretical notion of power dynamics illustrates the unequal power interactions between men and women. Mozumder, S.K. (2022). Gender discrimination engenders significant inequity in our society, particularly affecting women. Women continue to face discrimination, which directly affects their empowerment. This study will examine gender inequality and women's empowerment, which are global issues. This survey aims to identify women who face discrimination in our culture. In contemporary rural communities, women continue to face discrimination, particularly upon the birth of a female child, since diverse individuals exhibit inequitable treatment based on her gender. This study employed a quantitative research methodology and utilized a questionnaire for data gathering. Gender discrimination persists in our culture and country, with many women becoming victims, particularly in rural areas where women and girls continue to encounter discrimination, significantly affecting their fundamental education. Inequality is a significant aspect of our society. Upon altering our mindset, we must eliminate gender prejudice from society.

Gurieva, S.D. (2022). Gender inequality perpetuates itself through subtle and ambiguous manifestations, resulting in unseen obstacles in women's professional and personal lives. The research was executed through an online survey from February to September 2019. The sample comprised 106 individuals aged 18 to 68 ($M = 30.2$, $\sigma = 10.5$), with 49% of respondents identifying as female. The authors have created and evaluated a questionnaire that measures adherence to concepts concerning apparent gender disparities across many domains of life. The reliability of every scale in the questionnaire has been evaluated. Participants also filled out a questionnaire assessing their beliefs about gender inequality and provided a narrative of their experiences related to this issue. Disparities in Career Opportunities and Social Domains. Indicators reflecting the subjective importance of gender inequality—such as gender awareness, the frequency of witnessing gender inequality, personal experiences of gender discrimination, and the emotional weight of these experiences—exhibited a positive career disparity, which reinforce notions of gender differences in professional opportunities. Conversely, these indicators showed a negative disparity in social spheres, which bolster beliefs in fundamental gender differences in family, politics, and daily life. The expression of gender inequality correlates with

societal beliefs of the lack of significant gender inequalities across numerous social domains (egalitarianism) and an awareness of gender inequality concerning professional possibilities.

Llorens, A. et al. (2021). Notwithstanding heightened awareness of gender inequity in academia and an expanding array of efforts aimed at addressing diversity issues, progress is sluggish and disparities persist. Gender prejudice is a significant source of injustice, adversely affecting the careers, work-life balance, and mental health of underrepresented groups in science. We contend that gender prejudice is not a singular issue but rather a compilation of diverse problems that affect the lives of researchers. We clarify these aspects and present specific solutions that can be implemented by people, academic institutions, and society.

Vigod, S.N. & Rochon, P.A. (2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledges that health results are disparate among individuals, both internationally and domestically, with disparity particularly disadvantaging women throughout their lives. The pronounced social and economic disparities frequently encountered by women, including diminished educational and employment opportunities, lower remuneration for equivalent roles, insufficient representation in leadership, and elevated psychosocial stressors—ranging from caregiving responsibilities to intimate partner violence—contribute to these inequalities. In recent years, these explicit instances of gender inequity have appropriately garnered the attention of numerous initiatives aimed at enhancing health. Research indicates that daily, nuanced language and behaviors can adversely affect a woman's sense of well-being and success, often remaining unacknowledged by others and typically requiring the woman to determine how or whether to confront the issue.

SteelFisher, G.K. et al. (2019). To investigate documented instances of gender discrimination & harassment among women in the United States. The data originate from a nationally representative, probability-based telephone survey of 1,596 women, performed between January and April 2017. We computed the percentages of women who reported experiencing gender discrimination and harassment across many domains, including healthcare. We employed logistic regression to analyze variations in experiences among women based on race/ethnicity and sexual orientation/gender identity. Findings indicate that women, especially those belonging to racial/ethnic minorities or the LGBTQ community, frequently encounter discrimination and harassment in various aspects of their lives. Additional legislative and programmatic initiatives beyond existing legal protections for women are essential to significantly mitigate these adverse experiences, as they affect women's healthcare and general well-being.

Heilman, M.E. (2012). The workplace ramifications of descriptive gender stereotypes (which characterize the attributes of women and men) and prescriptive gender stereotypes (which dictate the expected behaviors of women and men), along with their effects on women's career advancement. The primary thesis posits that gender stereotypes engender biased perceptions and decisions, hindering women's progress. The paper examines how descriptive gender stereotypes foster gender bias due to negative performance expectations arising from the perceived incongruence between women's characteristics and the attributes deemed essential for success in male-dominated positions and roles. The text examines by establishing normative behavioral standards that elicit disapproval and social sanctions when disobeyed or inferred through a woman's achievement.

Pokharel, S. (2008). The study examines women's perceptions of discrimination across various facets within a male-dominated society. We structured the study as a descriptive analysis using a sample survey. A total of 200 women were selected randomly for this study. The study findings indicate that discrimination against women exists in multiple areas. Women recognize the presence of discrimination both in society and within the household. They observe a greater degree of discrimination at the societal level in comparison to the household level. Married women experience heightened discrimination in areas such as mobility, property rights, occupation, and education. Unmarried women similarly experience a heightened perception of discrimination regarding their mobility and behavior. Gender and customary practices are regarded as significant factors contributing to discrimination.

CONCLUSION

Studies demonstrate that equity crowdfunding mitigates gender discrimination and reveals a bias favouring women entrepreneurs among novice investors. Women generally achieve higher success rates in crowdfunding initiatives, especially in underrepresented sectors such as technology. Nonetheless, the benefits evident in crowdfunding are less relevant to conventional equity financing, such as venture capital, which is primarily restricted to professional investors, with a predominance of male participants. The literature has extensively examined how the characteristics and possible deficiencies of women entrepreneurs, including proactiveness, risk aversion, confidence, experience, and education, influence the success of venture capital funding. A perceived distrust and diminished credibility toward women entrepreneurs typically create obstacles to obtaining funding. Prior research demonstrates the drawbacks in funding mechanisms attributable to gender preconceptions, resulting in discrimination and the occurrence of improper and detrimental treatment. Although certain notable studies have measured the economic impact of this disadvantage via experimental and observational methods, revealing a substantial bias favouring male voices in venture pitches, there exists a deficiency in directly surveying venture capitalists regarding their perceptions and biases. Indirect methods may inadequately represent the many disadvantages women face in securing funding. When the disadvantage is only

vaguely recognized and not thoroughly measured, there is a heightened danger that venture capitalists, legislators, and researchers may overlook it; therefore, it must be precisely characterized. Utilizing gender role congruity theory, we examine three categories of potential gender disadvantages encountered by venture capitalists. Despite evidence showing teams with a balanced gender composition exhibit superior performance, we posit that venture investors, influenced by gender bias, fail to appreciate the significance of gender diversity in starting teams. Despite women performing comparably to men, female entrepreneurs are undervalued according to gender role congruity theory. The second consideration is that gender bias against women entrepreneurs may result in detrimental discriminatory investment decisions.

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