



SOME CHALLENGES IN GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract :

Women's economic empowerment is central to the national priority of inclusive economic growth and is critical for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs offer a historic opportunity to pursue transformational measures to ensure equality for every woman and girl, everywhere. Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. The inclusion of women and girls in the economy and the provision of safe working and public spaces must be accompanied by measures to prevent violence against women and girls, and enable them to participate fully in society and contribute to the health and prosperity of their communities. One in three Indians is a young person, aged 15 to 24 years, and children comprise almost 37% of the country's population. India has the largest youth population in the world. By 2020, the average age of the country will be 29. India's economic growth prospects and achievement of the SDGs will depend largely on their skill, energy and drive to succeed, and on the availability of effective mechanisms to nurture youth leadership, participation and volunteerism. Sixty-five out of the 169 targets for the SDGs reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on empowerment, participation and well-being. Encouraged by the right opportunities, young people can transform the social and economic fortunes of their countries. But, delivering this transformation requires sustained investments and partnerships to respond to the health, education, employment concerns of young people comprehensively. Young people must be motivated and allowed to participate in decision-making, especially in areas that have a direct impact on their future. Present study has the main objective to know about the gender equality. The major findings and some fruitful suggestions for gender equality have been given in full paper

.Key words: Gender Equality, youth development

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is largely about youth and for youth, and the force and inspiration of our youngest leaders represents one of the critical drivers for accelerating progress on sustainable development and gender equality. Advancing young women's and girls' human rights, economic empowerment and political participation are critical levers for driving progress on gender equality, fighting inequalities and eradicating poverty, supporting health and wellness in our communities, and promoting inclusive sustainable development. Despite growing evidence of the positive outcomes of young women's and girls' economic empowerment, young women and girls continue to experience unequal access to education and skills development. They face barriers to securing decent work and opportunities to thrive as entrepreneurs. Young women's access to resources, including land and loans, may be restricted by discriminatory laws and practices. Furthermore, young women and girls continue to shoulder an unequal share of unpaid care work from an early age, due to the persistence of traditional gender roles. To overcome these and other challenges, we need a strong, transnational discourse of substantive gender equality, opportunity and justice, building and gathering strength from grassroots movements and networks and coalitions.

Objectives of the study

Present study has some following objectives

- To know the gender equality present status in the nation.
- To trace the role of gender equality and role of youth development.
- To find some important steps for development of youth gender equality.

The Challenge



Since gender inequality constitutes one of the histories most persistent and widespread forms of injustice, eliminating it will call for one of history's biggest movements for change. Women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world. Gaps in gender equality exist in every sector. In South Asia, only 74 girls were enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys in 1990. However, by 2012, the enrolment ratios were the same. In 155 countries, at least one law exists which impedes women's economic opportunities. The gender pay gap costs global economy \$160 trillion. Only 23.7% of all national parliamentarians are women. One in three women experience some form of physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes.

Why is this important?

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful and sustainable world. The exclusion of women places half of the world's population outside the realm of opportunity to partner in building prosperous societies and economies. Equal access to education, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision making processes are not only rights women should have, they benefit humanity at large. By investing in the empowerment of women, we not only make progress on Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, we also make gains on the alleviation of poverty and fuel sustainable economic growth.

What can we do to address this?

Goal 5 aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women in the public and private spheres and to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership of property.

Goal 5 and India

Although India has achieved gender parity at the primary education level and is on track to achieve parity at all education levels, as of January 2018, the proportion of seats in the Lok Sabha held by women had only reached 5.1% and 9.8% in the Rajya Sabha. India is also confronting the challenge of violence against women. As an example, a baseline study revealed that in New Delhi, 92% of women had experienced some form of sexual violence in public spaces during their lifetime. In 2016, close to a third of total crimes reported against women in India was cruelty or physical violence by her husband or his relative. The Government of India has identified ending violence against women as a key national priority, which resonates with the Sustainable Development targets of the United Nations on gender equality. The prime minister's *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* initiative aims at equal opportunity and education for girls in India. In addition, specific interventions on female employment, programmes on the empowerment of adolescent girls, the *Sukanya Samridhi Yojana* on girl child prosperity and the *Janani Suraksha Yojana* for mothers advance India's commitment to gender equality, and the targets of Goal 4.

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UNFPA and its partners mobilised over 200 students through the Kickstart Equality Campaign and an online campaign to engage men and boys has been initiated in partnership with Youth ki Awaaz.

After a consultation organised in partnership with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and the Ministry of Women and Child Development, a framework on addressing data gaps in gender statistics was developed to analyse three areas – the use of women's time, asset ownership, and the prevalence of violence against women.

UN Volunteers, along with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, organised a national consultation to provide inputs into action plans towards the implementation of the National Youth Policy. Young people and technical experts brainstormed on issues related to inclusion, social entrepreneurship, environment and disaster management, gender justice and equality during the consultation.

UNFPA and UNV organised a youth adda for young boys and girls on Republic Day in Delhi to help develop an understanding among young people regarding politics – what it is, how the system works and how they could, as individual citizens, influence the decision-making process.

UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO supported the roll-out of the National Adolescent Health Programme, also known as Rashtiya kishor Swaathyab Karyakram (RKSK) by developing a joint communications strategy and products. The RKSK envisions that all adolescents in India will be able to realise their full potential by making informed and responsible decisions related to their health and well being.

The UN in India provided technical support to the Ministry of Youth Affairs for the BRICS Youth Summit in Guwahati and its Call to Action. The theme of the summit was "Youth as Bridge for Intra BRICS Exchanges". Four thematic sessions focused on Skill development and Entrepreneurship, Social Inclusion, Youth Volunteerism and Youth Participation in Governance.



Suggestions

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- 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.
- 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 nationally appropriate.
- 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.

Conclusion

The Youth Forum will be youth driven and youth led. The planning will be primarily led by UN Women, WAGGGS, and World YWCA and other members of the UN Inter-Agency Network for Youth Development's Working Group on Youth and Gender Equality (which includes 700+ individuals and organizations working on youth and gender equality, co-chaired by UN Women, the World Association of Girl Guides, and World Organizations of Scouts Movement).

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