

THE CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN THEWORKPLACE

^{#1}KURELLA ASHOK, *PG Student*,
^{#2}MALLELA SAI KUMAR, *PG Student*,
Department of MBA,

SAI SPURTHI INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SATHUPALLI, KHAMMAM

ABSTRACT: According to this study, gender inequality is the term used to describe how people are treated differently depending on their gender. The prevalence of sexual harassment, men's somewhat easier access to opportunities for promotion, and the difference in retirement ages between men and women are all indicators of gender inequality in the current review. These distinctions might be detrimental to workers, companies, and the community at large. This suggests that efforts to create a welcoming and secure workplace are still hampered by gender discrimination. The importance of doing research on workplace gender inequality is stressed in order to increase public awareness of the problem. In addition, the fundamental causes of these incidents—misogyny, the influence of patriarchal and conventional society, and inadequate education—are looked at and discussed. This essay concludes by looking into possible solutions to these issues, like advocating for women's empowerment and enhancing women's views of their intrinsic value through the legal and educational systems.

Keywords: Gender inequality, Workplace, Causes, Solutions

1. INTRODUCTION

Definition of Gender Inequality

Gender inequality is a pervasive issue worldwide, characterized by varying interpretations in studies. Sen contends that gender inequality comprises a collection of distinct yet interconnected problems, rather than being a singular, all-encompassing phenomenon. Arora defines gender inequality in the study as disparities in women's access to healthcare and education. As per the article, gender inequality refers to the unjust treatment of individuals only on the basis of their gender. Universal rights and opportunities cannot be equally distributed among individuals throughout all aspects of life, encompassing society, the economy, and education.

Performance of Gender Inequality in theWorkplace

Gender discrimination in temporary employment is evident through numerous conspicuous indications. To begin with, it is common for women to encounter instances of sexual harassment in the workplace. Fitzgerald argued that the advent of the female labor market has led to the occurrence of sexual harassment in work settings. Furthermore, women who encounter sexual harassment should be granted greater empathy and support; however, they often face harsher criticism.

There is a claim that harassment occurs when women are neglected. However, managers or coworkers rarely harass male employees. Second, males are more likely to be promoted than females. Furthermore, women

face hurdles when striving to advance to executive boards. Van compared gender disparity in academia to an impenetrable seven-headed dragon with multiple sides. Van also remarked that women are still significantly underrepresented in top academic jobs around the world. According to this study, women's abilities are inferior to those of men, and employers always give women more consideration when they are promoted. This is the outcome of the long-held belief that women are better at cleaning and that men are better suited to working outside the home to support their family. Finally, men and women retire at different ages around the world. In general, women retire earlier than males. According to Pan's research, the retirement age is not specified in 172 countries and regions worldwide, with the exception of seven in Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa, twenty-four in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, twelve in Latin America and the Caribbean, seven in Europe and North America, and one in Oceania. Thus, 67 countries and regions maintain retirement ages that differ between men and women, with the former being older than the latter. However, not all men plan to retire in the future. To unwind, people may want to retire to their bedroom early. Women might be interested in continuing to work alongside men. The early retirement age, however, places restrictions on such individuals. In this instance, both sexes are treated unequally.

Importance of Studying Gender Inequality in the workplace

Gender imbalance in the workplace requires further examination. Most importantly, it can raise awareness of the hazards of gender disparity in the workplace. According to Molyneux, women's groups gather together in an attempt to overthrow the government that limits their power. For example, a dearth of female coworkers may impede efficiency. Part of a bigger effort to enhance women's working position and raise awareness about the issue. Second, it can make us realize how far we still have to go to eliminate gender bias and create an inclusive and supportive workplace for all employees. to confront gender disparities in the workplace rather than disregarding them. But you should think about this further. The final alternative is to notify individuals about the unfair treatment they have received. If this occurs, it may inspire more oppressed people to fearlessly stand up for their beliefs and defend their legal rights. Khuzwayo believes that South African women had previously formed coalitions to achieve gender equality and address other societal inequalities. More importantly, when people witness unfair treatment at work, they have the ability to dissuade others from acting in the same way. Finally, we would benefit much from learning about global gender inequity. The idea is to integrate our professional lives with society at large. Even while groups like as the Natal Women's Organization (NOW) have occasionally failed to eliminate gender inequality, Khuzwayo claims that the movement's emphasis on politics since 1994 has driven out non-political women. However, much progress has been made in bringing women together in South African society to challenge patriarchal inequalities.

After reading this essay, the public can take substantial steps toward achieving gender equality in the workplace and society as a whole. As a result, society may feel compelled to improve its legal system. This study also looks into gender inequality, its origins, and potential solutions.

2. THE CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Sexism

Sexism is the root cause of unequal treatment for women in the workplace. According to a Cope study, sexism is a major reason why women continue to face barriers at work and why their advancement to higher positions in firms is so slow. Female employees frequently face additional workplace criteria such as physical appearance, height, and age. Furthermore, many people believe that women are less capable than men. Furthermore, there is a tendency to exclude married or reproductively problematic female applicants when selecting female prospects for work. Concerns have been raised about women's capacity to manage work and family obligations, with the belief that women should prioritize domestic duties. Because of this gender bias, women are typically demoted to lower-level positions. Gender discrimination occurs in ways that cause women to be treated unfairly in professional settings. According to World Economic Forum predictions, in 2021, 83.3% of Chinese men will hold legislative, senior official, or management posts,

whereas only 16.8% of Chinese women will do so. According to Khuzwayo's research, only 18% of senior managers in South Africa are women, while men make up 79.4% of the group. Furthermore, this significant disparity persists despite the fact that 43% of women have technical and professional aptitude and degrees comparable to men in their fields. Furthermore, there is still bias in society against women who work in temporary roles since they are incorrectly perceived to be better suited to the service business. According to Naidu, women account for the majority of business owners in the service industry, whereas men traditionally rule the manufacturing sector. Female entrepreneurs continue to be underrepresented in the manufacturing sector.

Culture

Patriarchy in the society

After examining how patriarchy is passed down through the generations, Edley and Wetherell came to the conclusion that patriarchy is a trait exclusive to men in households. Khuzwayo believed that the father's authority would never be questioned. It is used by males who are seen as the heads of the home and by women who are beneath them. Women are therefore perceived as having a lesser status in the workplace. In addition, men are generally seen as holding leadership positions in society compared to women. According to Khuzwayo's research, patriarchy is also evident in the kind of professions that men and women can pursue in the workplace and in the limited voice that women have when it comes to speaking out against gender discrimination [7]. Moreover, patriarchy robs women of their rights and ownership. As a result, in many traditional IGBO villages, women do not own land. Nonetheless, they manage most of their output and work the land.

Traditional culture

Oluwagbemi-Jacob and Uduma propose that male productivity is more highly valued in culture than female productivity. This indicates that society values masculinity and rewards individuals who achieve it. Because of their low social status, qualities associated with women are not widely valued or rewarded. Zhang hypothesized that in traditional Chinese culture, men are strong on the exterior while women are soft inside. Traditional Chinese beliefs consistently reflect this trend. Feminist society in China valued women primarily for their ability to provide an ongoing stream of worldly and spiritual treasures to the clan. In today's world, childrearing is the only way for women to realize their ontological worth. The feudal, patriarchal system first valued a lady and her daughter based on their ability to bear their own children. This criterion was created by the state through legislation. As a result, female employees frequently skip advancements because they are perceived to be preoccupied with family responsibilities.

Education

According to Kane's research, women have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education, and many Americans continue to believe that because they are not permitted to enroll in postsecondary programs or get science and technology training, gender equality will never be achieved. A lack of information regarding gender equality prevents one from identifying the problem as soon as it emerges. Many women are unaware they are victims of gender discrimination because they believe it is normal. According to Kane's research, even while women with higher education have the potential to become economically dominating, they yet remain subordinate within the gender stratification structure. Even worse, many young females are denied access to education. They have no notion how to approach gender equality in this context and are completely ignorant of it. In 2005, almost one-third, or 59, of the 181 nations with available data achieved gender parity in overall primary and secondary enrollment (average enrollment rates ranging from 0.97 to 1.03). Women's lack of education is mostly caused by their inability to employ laws and rights to protect themselves against gender discrimination, as well as their forced labor in more exploitative positions for lower pay.

3. SOLUTIONS TO GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Empower women

As a potential remedy, Kim and Kay hypothesized that the cultural community has recently taken an interest

in the "empowerment" of women or their self-improvement in the workplace. Moreover, the discourse surrounding women's empowerment is constructive, emphasizing forthcoming behaviors rather than retrospective ones. Furthermore, they believe that further unfavorable evidence establishes a connection between historical gender-based actions and inequality. Expanding women's rights increases the likelihood that they will occupy higher-level positions in the workplace and makes them more prepared to do so. Klugman, Kolb, and Morton document substantial disparities in wages, labor force participation, and employment. Given greater opportunities, women might arrive at the same conclusions as men. Modify, for instance, the recruiting procedure. Companies will not impose more stringent hiring standards on female candidates if the demands are equivalent for both gender. Kim and Kay anticipate that this information will enlighten more individuals about the means by which women can work toward gender equality. Data pertaining to women's empowerment illustrates that through surmounting their own internal limitations, women are capable of resolving problems. In actuality, the centuries-old sense of inferiority is diminishing for all individuals, while a corresponding sense of superiority—founded on socioeconomic advantages, gender, and political standing—is emerging gradually. Women's positions are strengthened through empowerment, specifically through the provision of political participation opportunities. Presently, women are encouraged to assume more prominent roles in politics, particularly those associated with governance and its institutions. Research by Anyalebechi indicates that more women hold ministerial and parliamentary positions in Nigeria. During the 2003-2007 administration, women comprised 21 of 360 members, 10 of 35 special advisers, and 6 of 34 ministers. Women are nominated for grassroots political leadership positions at the local, state, federal, and community levels throughout election campaigns. In order to mitigate gender inequality, it is imperative to advance the liberties of women.

Raise women's awareness of human dignity

As women gain a greater sense of self-worth, they will no longer tolerate being regarded merely as intellectual instruments, as stated by Pope John II and cited by Anyalebechi. However, insist that the protection of human rights be observed in both public and private spheres. Consequently, enhancing women's understanding of human dignity empowers them to contend with males in professional environments.

Law

Society can shape women's self-awareness by modifying legislation and increasing women's understanding of the most perilous character qualities. Klugman, Kolb, and Morton argue that the objective of action should be to reduce the procedural and legal barriers to obtaining productive work. Efforts should be made to eliminate the obstacles that prevent women from participating in the workforce and securing employment. Unjust provisions in family law, such as the head of the household clause, should be abolished. Women should be actively encouraged to own and co-own land. Inheritance laws should be fair and unbiased. Customary law should be treated with equal respect and consideration under the principle of non-discrimination. Over the past few decades, the majority of countries have made substantial progress in implementing legislation that promotes greater equality. Nevertheless, development in many regions, including the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, has been slow. As a consequence, the reform in the law will increase women's awareness of society's support for them. It instills women with the self-assurance and courage to undertake job-related risks. It has the potential to significantly alter the self-perception of women who feel inferior.

Education

Education reform can help society reduce gender inequality and increase women's self-worth. According to Anyalebechi, for there to be gender equality, a woman must give up positions of subservience and acknowledge her inherent human dignity. As a result, the government may implement legislation and regulation control, develop curricula and textbooks that are inclusive of all genders, and provide teacher training that takes gender into account. Colleges also need to train their teachers about sexuality and offer comprehensive sexuality education. This instance may subtly affect women's understanding of personal dignity in relation to the gender gap in education. Once people begin to reject gender inequality and

recognize that they are substantial rather than modest, the majority of women in society will be able to change it. According to Anyalebechi's research, women need to unite in resolve to bring about long-lasting change, just as a single tree cannot create an entire forest. It creates the foundation for the future of the following generation. Furthermore, women may be dissuaded from believing that having children is the sole path to achieving ontological worth by increasing their understanding of their own dignity.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examines a number of workplace gender inequality issues, including the frequency of sexual harassment, the relatively small number of possibilities for women to progress compared to males, and the differences in retirement ages between men and women. Furthermore, the main causes identified by this study are a lack of education, traditional cultural norms, patriarchy, and misogyny. Ultimately, a few strategies can help people deal with these issues: giving women more power and raising their consciousness of human dignity through legal and educational channels. This study aims to provide government and workplace workers with comprehensive knowledge by examining the phenomena, causes, and solutions related to gender imbalance.

REFERENCES

- Sen, A. (2001). The many faces of gender inequality. *New republic*, 35-39.
- Arora, R. U. (2012). Gender inequality, economic development, and globalization: A state level analysis of India. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 147-164.
- Fitzgerald, L. F. (1993). Sexual harassment: Violence against women in the workplace. *American Psychologist*, 48(10), 1070.
- Van den Brink, M., & Benschop, Y. (2012). Slaying the seven-headed dragon: The quest for gender change in academia. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 19(1), 71-92.
- Jintang Pan. (2002). Retirement age for men and women in the world. *Population and economy*, 000(001), 75-80.
- Molyneux, M. (2001). Mobilisation without emancipation? Women's interests, the state and revolution in Nicaragua. In *Women's movements in international perspective* (pp. 38-59). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Khuzwayo, Z. (2016). Separate space: An approach to addressing gender inequality in the workplace. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 17(4), 91-101.
- Cope, J. J. (2016). Culture, Sexism, and Legal Remedies: A Three Country Study of Gender Inequality at the Corporate Level (Doctoral dissertation).
- Global Gender Gap Report 2021: Insight Report. World Economic Forum.
- Naidu, S., & Chand, A. (2017). National culture, gender inequality and women's success in micro, small and medium enterprises. *Social Indicators Research*, 130(2), 647-664.