

## GENDER EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

---

Ms. Deepshikha Gupta\*  
Dr. Nandita\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*It has very difficult to develop in an inclusive and sustainable way when half of the population is not fully participating in economy. The women constituted 50% of population but generated only 37% of the global GDP, whereas in India economic contribution of women remains at 17%, which is less than half of the global average, hence it seems that there is problem of gender-specific disparity in India, which is an alarming situation because Gender-specific disparity can seen in many ways, many fields and many classes. The idea of inclusive growth is indispensable to economic development due to rising social and economic equality and affecting standard of living in various term. According to OECD, "INCLUSIVE GROWTH is economic growth that is distributed fairly across society and creates opportunities for all." Hence, Inclusive growth is proposed term meet the objectives of inclusiveness and sustainability together. Inclusiveness is the quality of term which includes equity, equality of opportunity, and protection in market and it is a crucial ingredient of any successful growth strategy. So, Inclusive growth required a growth process that is environmentally safe, aims for efficient governance and helps in modelling a gender sensitive society. This research paper will addressing the concept of Gender Equity. And trying to analyse the key challenges of Gender Equity which is a roadblock and prescribing practical solutions in the way to achieve complete inclusive growth.*

---

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Growth, Social Inclusion, Gender Gap, Economic Empowerment, Sustainability, Labour Force Participation.*

---

### Introduction

During the last decade, world has been experience significant progress in HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. People lived in indigence dropped from 47% in 1990 to 6.6% in 2019. Undernourished people in developing regions halved from 23.3% in 1990 to 12.9% in 2016. Since 1990, maternal mortality declined by 45% worldwide, the gross enrolment of girls increase significantly, despite these progress challenges still remain. Gender gap is still significant, women representation is low in political system and women participated less than men worldwide in labour market. India's ranking is 120 among 131 countries in women labour force participation rate and rate of gender based violence remain impermissibly elevated. Since independence of India the sex ratio is natural but, thereafter it has started showing gentle decline. As per FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION estimates 100 million people could be lifted out of the poverty, if women gets the same access to productive resources similar to men. It is widely recognised that the environment sustainability and social inclusion are both need to secure future economic growth.

### Review of Related Literature

**Asian Development Bank's Working Paper Series on Economics (2012):** This paper provides the study of key economic and development pledge on Asian development and policy challenges. This study examines gender inequality in labour market with a focus the structural drivers of women 's labour force participation.

---

\* Research Scholar, Allahabad Degree College, Constituent P.G. College of University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, U.P., India.

\*\* H.O.D., Department of Economics, A.D.C., A Constituent P.G. College of University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, U.P., India.

**Kabeer, Naila (2012)**, Women's economic empowerment and inclusive growth: labour market and enterprise development, This paper study the growing concern with women's economic empowerment within its growth research programmes. This paper successfully analyse the concept of women's empowerment in unidimensional that is economic empowerment, and interlinked the gender inequality with sustained inclusive growth. But this paper fails to identifying the other dimensions which ensuring inclusive economic growth.

**Agènor, P.j. Mares and P. Sorsa (2015)**, Gender Equality and Growth in India; This paper studied how public policies, adding the pro-women intervention steps, were raised women labour force participation and promote economic growth in India. The first part provides a brief review of gender issues in the country. The second part presented a gender-specific OLG (overlapping generations) Model, that includes the critical study of women's time allocation between office work, training to human capital and house decoration.

**Seth, Anuradha, Gender Equality and Inclusive Growth, ILO Presentation (2019)**; this study structure in 3 parts, the beginning segment is addressing the meaning and definition of Inclusive Growth, the mid section is identifying how the gender equality has been correlated to inclusive growth. And the final part identify few important economic policy issues specifically with trade, fiscal, monetary and exchange rate that need to contend to achieve gender- specific equality and inclusive growth.

### Objectives

There are following objectives of this research paper:

- To study the conception of Inclusive Growth.
- To study the concept of Gender Equity and current status of Gender equality in India.
- To understand the various causes of gender-specific inequality in India.
- To study the measures taken by Indian government to achieve Inclusive Growth.
- To provide practical solutions & Effective ideas for gender sensitive society in India.

### What is Inclusive Growth?

Inclusive growth means an economic growth that has been distributed equitably covering entire society and creates opportunities to everyone. Inclusive growth is a cornerstone for environmentally-safe economic growth which is compulsory and crucial condition for poverty reduction and social inclusion.

According to United Nations Development Program, "Inclusive Growth is the process where all groups of people participated in the institution of growth and reap benefits of Inclusion." Hence, inclusive growth is that type of growth, which shared by all sector, all segment and all community by the country. Once Former President PRANAB MUKHERJEE had mentioned that, "Inclusive growth should not be a mere Phrase but it is a fundamental driving force for sustained inclusive development." Inclusive growth have several features, which are as following-

- It has a long run perspective of sustained economic development.
- It has a far-reaching base and proliferate across different line of sectors for economic heterogeneity.
- It must include large work force regarding market access, resources, and provides equal environment to trade and businesses.
- The end-product Inclusive Growth are creating capabilities, opportunities and income distribution.
- It is an extensive approach that is in order with pro-poor growth.

### Concept of Gender Equity

Gender Equity takes gender equality one step further. Gender equality means that, every person, regardless of gender, should have equal rights and access to opportunities, services, resources, benefits, participation and responsibilities in all around. It is important to note that here, being given equal chances does not necessarily result in equal outcomes for women and men. So, for that, it is important to ensure Gender Equity. Gender equity entails recognising the differences between genders, and acknowledging their different needs, constraints. Only then can equal chances and equal outcomes be created. This process of ensuring fair treatment is called Gender Equity.

### Current Status Gender Inequality in India

Gender-specific inequality is a pressing issue in Indian society. Despite a constitution that guarantees equal rights for men and women and decades of legislation, some deep-rooted gender discrimination in India takes a brutal toll on women's lives. India has been ranked low on various indices that measure gender equality-including economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; political empowerment; and legal protection. According to a Global Gender Gap 2021 report, India ranked 140 out of 156. In India, there is no parity in the sex ratio, also There are states like Puducherry and Kerala where the number of women is greater than the number of men. In state like Kerala, a number of 1084 female to 1000 male population. While, the regions of Daman and Diu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana have the low density of female population.

When women accounts for fifty percent of global population, inclusive growth can only be achieved if it encourages gender-specific equality. Despite recent progress, gender disparities remained every phase of women's life, including prior to birth, and adversely impacted health, education and economic opportunities for women. The roadmap to gender equity has to rely on legal framework reforms, policies to promote equal access and efforts to tackle entrenched social norms.

### Causes of Gender Disparity in India

Over the years, the world has gotten closer to achieving gender equality, which is also a 5th goal of sustainable development, in terms of gradual increase in representation of women in politics, greater economic opportunities, and fitter healthcare services in various places of the world. However, the renowned institution estimates it will take another century before true gender equality becomes a reality. The major reasons behind gap between genders are following:

- **Uneven Access to Education:** In the world, women still get slighter access to education than the men. The enrolment of girl students in school and higher education is very shorter. 1/4th of the young women between 15-24 are not finish their basic education. If girls are not educated on the same level as boys, it have adverse effects on their future and the types of opportunities they will get in forthcoming.
- **Lack of Employment Equality:** In the world, only 6 countries were giving women the same legislative work rights as men. Even most economies give women only 3/4th legal protection of work to women than men including India. According to some studies, Employment plays a key factor which reduce the gap between gender.
- **Job Segregation:** In India another reason of gender-specific inequality within work culture is the segregation of jobs. In Indian society, there is an implicit belief that men can easily handle the work pressure and better equipped to handle certain jobs. Usually, for those works men gets better remuneration then women. This distinction results in to unequal pay for equal work to women. Women also assign prime responsibility for unpaid worker, so even as they participate in the paid workforce, they do extra work that never gets recognized economically.
- **Lack of Legal Protections:** According to a study of the world Bank, approximately one billion women don't get legal rights against domestic sexual harassment or domestic financial violence. Both have adverse effects on women's ability to make choices and live independently. In many countries, there's also a lack of legal protections against harassment in the workplace, at school, and in public. These places become unsafe and without protection, women frequently have to make decisions that compromise and limit their goals.
- **Poor Medical Care:** In India due to lack of access to contraception, women significantly received poor-quality of medical facilities and treatment than men, which will lead other gender disparity reasons such as a lack of education and job opportunities, which results in more women being in poverty. Hence, due to lack of quality of education and job opportunities women are unable to afford good healthcare, and women fails to actively participate in productive activities.
- **Lack of Political Representation:** As per the data collected by the Inter-parliamentary Union, in India women represent only 14.44% in Lok Sabha. Despite of progress in different areas, women percentage is still low in government and the political processes. Due to lack of least understanding of political sphere, women do not have knowledge about essential and political rights. This means that certain issues that female politicians tend to bring up like parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender-specific equality laws and gender-based violence are often neglected.

- **Gender Stereotypes:** In Indian society, the responsibility of managing household activities are traditionally assigned to women. How society determines the differences and value of men vs. women plays a starring role in every arena, whether it's employment or the legal system or healthcare. It's also common for everyone (men and women) to ignore other areas of gender inequality when there's progress, such as better representation for women in leadership. Such kinds of stereotypes will result in to gender disparity and delayed in significant changes in to society. Another reason of the decline of the sex ratio in India is due to the biased attitude towards the women, which push back the potential growth of Indian Economy.

#### **Measures Taken by Government to Attain the Inclusive Growth**

The government of India has launched various program and awareness campaign which attain the inclusive growth:

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Scheme (MGNREGA):** Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in brief MGNREGA is a legislative provision which enacted on August 25, 2005, provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in accounting year to members of any rural household who willing to do unproductive public work-related which does not require any specific skill at the statutory minimum wage. The responsibility of effective implementation of this scheme lies with MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT in coordination with respective state governments
- **Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP):** This scheme was launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) who work and monitor the scheme at central level. But at the state level, the effective implementation is done through State KVIC Directorates, State Khadi and Village Industries Boards (KVIBs), District Industries Centres (DICs), and banks. under this scheme the remunerations in terms of government subsidies are eventually disburse in the bank accounts of beneficiaries /entrepreneurs directly.
- **Mudra Bank Scheme:** Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) was launched Government in 2015 for providing micro loans up to 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro-enterprises. These loans are classified as SHISHU, KISHORE AND TARUN as per the fund needed under PMMY. MUDRA, which stands for Micro Units Development and Refinancing Agency, provide funds to the small businesses through various last mile financing institutions like Banks, Non-banking Financing institution, RRBS and Micro finance institution.
- **Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY):** this scheme aimed to inculcate skills in rural youth who are deprived and provide them work at current monthly wages or above the minimum wages. It is one of the initiatives of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India that encourage rural livelihoods. This scheme is a sub-segment of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) – which aims to reduce poverty and prove a source of income called Aajeevika. The scheme will benefit more than 55 million poor rural youth who have specific skill by providing sustainable employment.

This scheme derives significance from its potential to reduce poverty in country. It is also contributed in to the Prime Minister's 'Make in India' campaign.

- **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana:** National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM): This program was launched by aiming to provide housing which furnish with essential services to the urban pro-poor homeless in systematic manner. Also, this mission aim to address the livelihood issues of the urban street vendors by facilitating access to suitable sustained places, institutionalised credit, social security, and skills to the urban street vendors for accessing the emerging market opportunities.
- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):** Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the Government of India's flagship program which aiming the Universalization of primary and junior secondary Education in a time-phrase manner, which come after 86th Constitutional Amendment, ensuring FREE and COMPULSORY education of children age between 6 to 14 years of group as a fundamental Right.
- **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM):** The National Rural Health Mission was launched by former Prime Minister in April, 2005. This scheme brings forth to providing equitable, affordable and quality of health care facilities, especially to pro-poor or Deprived class. Its long-term aim to provide fully-functioned and decentralized health delivery system. It focuses on generating strategies to improve child care and maternal health.

- **Swachh Bharat Mission:** This mission accelerates the efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage and it is aiming on sanitation, launched on 2nd October, 2014. Under this mission all Villages, Gram panchayats, Districts, states, UTs, in India declared themselves open defecation free by 2nd October, 2019. This mission ensure behavioral change of Indian residents that prohibited open defecation, it is based on the idea of NO ONE LEFT BEHIND. It also includes facilities of solid and liquid waste management, which is accessible to everyone. SWACHH BHARAT MISSION 2.0 is being implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25 to encourage cement the work of Phase- I .
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana:** This scheme can be considered as most prominent, which is initiated by Prime Minister on 28th August, 2014, in order to attain the goal of financial inclusion. It aim to ensure access to financial product and services at affordable cost. It is a part of JAM trinity of government. Where 'J' stands for Jan Dhan, 'A' stands for Aadhar, 'M' stands for Mobile. It ensuring every individual provided with a bank account, which is connected with Aadhar and Mobile. It facilitates direct benefit transfer in future by government. It also promotes cashless transactions in to Economy because holders are provided debit cards, cheque book and online banking facilities.

DISHA Project is the project which is implemented with collaboration of UNDP for creating employment and encouraging entrepreneurship skill in women in India.

### **Suggestions and Practical Solutions**

Gender equality potentially affects economic growth through various channels. A first potential link is via increased quality of human capital inputs, which is reflected in the increased productivity of labour and other complementary inputs to the production process. Many studies have noted that the marginal returns to schooling for women frequently exceed those for men (Schultz, 2002; DFID, 2007); this suggests that the growth impacts of education for girls may be greater than the impact for boys.

I refer to the famous quote, "If you give a person a fish, you feed person only for a day. If you teach a person to fishing, you feed person for a lifetime." I use the same approach while advocating for equal rights for girls and women. Through my work experience, I assured that educated women and girls are usually understand the importance of self- empowerment, Freedom of independence and self-respect. Once girls and women learn this fundamental doctrine, the sky is the limit, and they can help in attaining the equality and equity for coming generations.

However, these above policy steps and interventions alone are insufficient, there are following suggestions:

#### **Legal Framework**

- Eliminate discriminatory laws Like domestic violence, child marriage)
- Property rights (disjoint ownership and equal inheritance rights)
- Access to education
- Design laws to define the digital worker's rights
- Aware women about women's rights in India

#### **Education Campaign**

- Introduce Reservation (political and corporate sector)
- Anti-discriminatory education: information campaigns against stereotypes, television programs with educational and entertaining contents against stereotypes
- Provide access to contraception and educate for its use

#### **Labor Market**

- Subscribe to ILO conventions
- Organize active Labour participation
- Awareness about equal pay for equal work.
- Financial and digital literacy
- Provide "long" paid and non-transferable parental leave to fathers

**Fiscal**

- Review and amend tax code
- Introducing gender budgeting
- Invest in digital infrastructure and render it accessible to tele-workers
- Incentives for women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, medical)
- Effective implementation of BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO Campaign.

**Financial**

- Provide incentives to banks to promote financial access for women
- Develop wireless payment systems
- Awareness about DIGITAL LITERACY among women.

**References**

1. Yoko, Niimi, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Economics working paper series 186, Inequality and Inclusive Growth: Measurement, Policy Issues, and Country Studies (ADB 2010).
2. Kabeer, Naila (2012), Women's economic empowerment and inclusive growth: labour market and enterprise development,
3. Agènor, P. .j. Mares and P. Sorsa (2015), Gender Equality And Growth in India
4. "World Bank Group. 2015. World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16-23): Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/23425> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."
5. Ferna´ndez, Raque I; Luna, Francesco; Rambousek, Barbara (2021), IMF Working paper no. 2021/059, Gender Equality and Inclusive.

**Websites & Books**

6. En.m.wikipedia.org
7. <http://www.drishtiiias.com>
8. [www.investopedia.com](http://www.investopedia.com)
9. Indian Economy by Puri, V.K. and Mishra, S.K., Himalayan Publication (39th edition).

