

## GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT

---

Mrinalini Singh\*

### ABSTRACT

*Gender Equality and Development are interconnected factors affecting worldwide nations' growth, sustainability, and progress. This research paper delves into an in-depth analysis of how gender equality is essential for development planning. The study acknowledges this subject's complexity; however, its importance cannot be overstated, as it affects every aspect of society today. Through a range of literature reviews and case studies derived from different academic sources, this essay seeks to highlight the various ways in which gender inequality hinders sustainable development efforts by affecting social norms, economic growth strategies, political participation processes and cultural values all around the world. By doing so, we hope to encourage policymakers to invest more resources towards creating policies that promote gender equality while also emphasising raising awareness about these issues among citizens globally.*

---

**Keywords:** *Gender Equality, Sustainable Development, Social Norms, Economic Growth, Planning.*

---

### Introduction

*"Breaking the Shackles: The Correlation between Gender Equality and Sustainable Development"*

Gender equality is the principle that individuals of all genders should be free to pursue their desired career paths, lifestyles, and abilities without discrimination. Gender does not serve as a basis for differentiation regarding an individual's access to societal opportunities and rights. Gender equality does not necessarily entail the uniform treatment of all individuals. Instead, the equitable valuation of diverse needs and aspirations is prioritised. Gender equity is frequently deliberated in conjunction with gender equality due to this rationale. Given the historical preference for men in society, it is evident that men have been afforded numerous advantages. The concept of equity aims to bridge the existing gaps, enabling individuals from diverse backgrounds to attain parity with men. The objective is to mitigate discrimination and disparities in society, thereby facilitating the realisation of equality. 1

The promotion of gender equality has the potential to enhance an individual's quality of life and foster more favourable economic development opportunities. The relationship between gender equality and economic development is bidirectional, with gender equality catalysing economic growth and economic development, contributing to advancing gender equality. Kim et al. (2016) have demonstrated through their research that eliminating gender inequality would significantly increase per capita income. Specifically, the increase would be 30.2% greater than the economic benchmark and 71.1% greater than that of the two generations. In addition, the overall economic growth is expected to experience a 6.6% increase, resulting in a 14% higher growth rate than the reference economy. The findings suggest that the eradication of gender inequality could potentially lead to a 1% rise in the annual growth rate of per capita income and a 0.2% increase in aggregate income.2

---

\* Masters of International Relations, The University of Sydney, Australia.

Various theories have been suggested to explain gender roles and inequality, including introducing the plough for intensive agriculture (Alesina et al., 2011) and modernisation (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). However, the highlighted elements of technology and historical processes are explained by comprehensive theories on the distal causes of gender roles and inequality. These theories fall into two categories: evolutionary psychology (Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Buss & Schmitt, 2011) and biosocial accounts (Wood and Eagly, 2002, 2012).

Evolutionary psychologists contend that specific sex differences in human behaviours and psychological traits, particularly those linked to mate selection and seeking, stem from selective pressures of intersexual choice and intrasexual competition arising from adaptive challenges (Buss, 1995; Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Puts, 2010). The challenges involve selecting partners with high reproductive value for both genders, decreasing male paternity uncertainty, and encouraging parental investment in female offspring (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Buss, 1995). Sexual dimorphism results in differential parental investment between males and females due to the higher reproductive rate of males (Geary, 2000; Archer, 2009). Sexual selection is believed to be responsible for psychological dispositions related to mating and gender roles, as it provides solutions for sex-specific challenges (Buss & Schmitt, 2011). Male-male competition for mates may increase male aggression and risk-taking, while female preference for protective and high-investment males may lead to greater female dependence and risk-aversion (Archer, 2009; Puts, 2010).<sup>3</sup>

Evolutionary psychology theories vary in their focus on sexual selection processes. However, all agree that sex differences result from selecting inheritable traits rather than non-genetic factors like social learning (Buss & Schmitt, 2011). There is a widespread agreement in behavioural genetics that the majority of human psychological and behavioural traits exhibit significant genetic influence (Plomin et al., 2016). Sexual selection pressures vary between males and females due to differences in reproductive rates and costs (Trivers, 1972; Geary, 2002). Bailey et al. (2000) found that the heritability of sociosexuality, specifically interest in casual sex, is higher in females than males (0.43 vs. 0.26). This suggests that genetic factors have a more significant influence on females' greater sexual restrictedness. The focus on genetic factors is often mistaken for genetic essentialism, which views superficial traits and social phenomena as determined by fixed genetic essence. This misunderstanding can lead to confusion about evolutionary psychology and evolutionary explanations of gender. <sup>3a</sup>

The UN Decade for Women was founded on the premise that enhancing the economic status of women would naturally result from the proliferation and dissemination of the development process. However, by the end of the Decade, it was becoming clear that development itself was the problem, as its enforced but asymmetric participation in it was responsible for women's increasing underdevelopment. Rosa Luxemburg pointed out that early industrial development in Western Europe necessitated the colonial powers' permanent occupation of the colonies and the destruction of the local 'natural economy. Colonial rule was a new colonialism, draining resources away from those who needed them most.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, women's impoverishment increased due to the privatisation of land for revenue generation and the expansion of cash crops.<sup>5</sup>

The phenomenon of women being displaced from productive activities due to the expansion of development can be attributed to how development projects have appropriated or destroyed the natural resource base crucial for sustenance and survival. The survival crisis has been generated by patriarchal categories that perceive destruction as a form of 'production' and view the regeneration of life as a passive process. Maldevelopment is a development bereft of the feminine, the conservation, the ecological principle, and the neglect of nature's work in renewing herself and women's work in producing sustenance in the form of basic, vital needs. Modernisation has been associated with the introduction of new forms of dominance.

Maldevelopment violates the integrity of organic, interconnected and interdependent systems, leading to exploitation, inequality, injustice and violence. It is associated with the poverty crisis of the South, which affects women most severely, as they are the primary sustainers of society. Dominant modes of perception based on reductionism cannot cope with equality in diversity. Maldevelopment is a fragmented, reductionist, dualist perspective that violates the integrity and harmony of man in nature and the connection between men and women. It places man, shorn of the feminine principle, above heart and women and separates them from both. This has caused violence to nature and women, as symptomatic by the ecological crisis. <sup>5a</sup>

### **Gender Inequality in Education**

Education is crucial in attaining social equity, encompassing gender parity. Ensuring equal access to education is a social priority and a natural and obvious imperative. Scholars have extensively debated this topic for several decades. The early efforts towards achieving gender equality were primarily focused on securing access to education, which was deemed crucial for this purpose.

The gender education gap has decreased, and contemporary gender disparities are rare in educated countries. Feminist efforts have led to a notable increase in the education level of women worldwide, surpassing any previous point in history. Gender inequality and the gender gap remain pertinent issues, extending beyond education. Men remain more educated and privileged. The issue lies not only in the level of educational accessibility but also in the substance of its curriculum. Gender inequality is caused by imposed stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination within the system. 6

Gender inequality in education is a significant local, national, and global issue. The factors contributing to this phenomenon include cultural norms, gender-based violence in schools, and distance between home and school. Gender equality is crucial to democracy and social justice as it ensures the right to equality and freedom from discrimination. Education is acquiring knowledge and information that can result in career opportunities, social status, self-assurance, and a prosperous future. Gender inequality remains pervasive, as evidenced by approximately 129 million girls still not receiving an education globally. Gender disparities in education persist in developing countries, with approximately 34.3 million girls remaining out of school despite progress made in recent years. The gender gap refers to the proportional disparity between males and females, including boys and girls. According to the World Bank, approximately 30 million lower-secondary school-aged girls and 67.4 million upper-secondary school-aged girls are vulnerable to various risks, including sexual violence, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, HIV infection, AIDS, and nutritional deficiencies. Household insecurity is associated with reduced educational access, a trend that the global COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated. Studies indicate that school closures and limited access to remote learning resulted in an average loss of 74 school days for children, representing over one-third of the standard global education. The gender gap in education encompasses both quantity and quality.6a

Gender-stereotypical approaches in classrooms persist despite increased access to education, resulting in inequality. Empirical evidence indicates that girls outperform boys in reading across all surveyed nations, whereas the gender disparities in mathematics are negligible. Socioeconomic status is a significant determinant of academic performance. Gender inequality is a significant concern in contemporary societies, with education being a crucial factor contributing to the issue. Studies indicate that gender diversity is present in Polish education, but admission restrictions based on gender in specific fields of study hinder equal educational opportunities.6b

Gender-related academic disparities have resulted in the rejection of female candidates during recruitment. It is assumed that these disparities strongly influence the occupational choices of girls and boys. Preventive measures should be implemented to promote gender equality in the United States and other Western countries. This study offers novel insights into the association between gender and higher education, revealing persistent discriminatory conduct towards females. It prompts enquiry into the actual magnitude of the issue. Additional research is necessary to determine the global prevalence of gender discrimination among educators and its correlation with discrimination stemming from the stereotypical treatment of students and their interests. Gender inequalities in education are multifaceted. Ensuring access to quality education and fostering a gender-respectful school environment is crucial. Preventive measures should prioritise neutralising textbooks and content, remove school and faculty restrictions, and promote interdisciplinary education for both genders.6c

### **Gender Inequality in the Workspace**

Workplace gender bias persists. Many firms are working hard to promote equality and diversity, yet women dominate lower-paying entry-level and administrative professions while males occupy management and senior positions. So let us examine workplace gender inequality.

While more women enter the workforce and break gender barriers, they remain underrepresented in management, executive, and other top roles. Sports exhibit similar disparities. Despite multiple studies showing that well-educated women in leadership and senior positions improve company performance, this continues.

Women are approaching a glass ceiling, an unseen barrier. Let us examine this phenomenon's intricate causes.

Many companies do not base promotions on performance. Instead, long hours show desire and dedication. In addition, some jobs demand a lot of business travel, and working in multiple countries is a way to advance in some fields. Women are disadvantaged because their partners may have occupations and cannot move every few years. Though males do more childcare and housework than 30 years ago, women still do more.

Women are still primary carers. Thus, they can only work up to 12 or more hours a day, typically seven days a week. Therefore, women are sidetracked and compelled to take up family roles.

Outright gender-based discrimination may no longer be part of business practices. However, cultural beliefs about gender still create powerful but mostly invisible barriers to women's advancement, and many workplace practices and structures still favour men.

For instance, powerful, forceful, and confident leaders are typically masculine. However, women who behave similarly are usually seen as indifferent, confrontational, or abrasive. Empathic, loving, and collaborative women leaders generally are perceived as weak leaders. Women frequently have no choice.

Recent studies have found that many women's lack of self-confidence begins in school. For example, in one research of male and female MBAs, most women thought they were as capable as their male colleagues, but most men thought they were better. Unbelievable, right? Thus, the issue is men's great and mistaken overconfidence, not women's lack of confidence.

Studies found that more than half of women in engineering, technology, and science will leave such industries due to prejudice, isolation, a hostile male-dominated culture, or a lack of precise employment and development paths. Studies showed little change over the past decade. Companies should be inclusive, not just say they are, to recruit and retain outstanding men and women from all backgrounds. 7

### **Gender Inequality in Health**

The interdependence between the health and economic status of nations is widely acknowledged. According to McMichael et al. (8), population health should be a key consideration in discussions surrounding the sustainable development of nations. The excellent health status of human capital is believed to be crucial for economic growth [9] and is a significant indicator of a country's well-being [10]. Numerous studies have investigated the correlation between nations' health and economic outcomes [11-14]. Research indicates that improved population health leads to higher economic benefits, such as enhanced productivity and increased long-term income [15]. The advancements in reducing mortality rates may result in economic benefits by preserving population years [16]. Alkire et al. [17] found that avoidable deaths lead to economic losses in the form of a decline in countries' GDP. These findings suggest that health outcomes have financial implications. However, it is pertinent also to consider the economic impact of health disparities.

It is imperative to define health inequalities and ascertain their determinants. Health inequality pertains to differences in health outcomes that policies can influence. Health disparities refer to the unequal distribution of health outcomes and risks among disadvantaged groups, including the poor, racial/ethnic minorities, and women, compared to more advantaged groups. Reference 18 supports this definition. Health inequalities refer to differences in the health status of a population caused by social, socioeconomic, and environmental factors that interact. Social determinants are acknowledged as the basis of health inequalities. International organisations, such as the WHO and the OECD, consider health inequalities a significant issue. (19, 20-21)

Wilkinson and Marmot (22) identified ten social determinants: social gradient, stress, early life, social exclusion, work, unemployment, social support, addiction, food, and transport. Mackenbach et al. (23) examined the influence of socioeconomic status on health disparities and recognised education, income, health-related conduct, and healthcare accessibility as significant factors. Richardson and Mitchell's research [24] has shown that environmental factors, such as green space, affect health disparities. The study examined the association between urban green areas and health outcomes, including cardiovascular and respiratory disease mortality, self-reported long-term illness, and lung cancer mortality, while accounting for gender disparities. Healthcare financing has a notable influence on health outcomes. Michalski et al. recommend that non-profit organisations, including healthcare facilities, prioritise efficient funding management in social and economic contexts. [33, 34] Funding for the health sector is essential for improving population health, achieving health potential, and reducing health inequalities [25-27].28

## **Policies and Interventions to Promote Gender Equality**

### • **Gender Mainstreaming**

Member States universally acknowledge the mandate of gender equality and women's empowerment, which includes all aspects of peace, development, and human rights. Gender equality licences are based on the United Nations Charter, which explicitly reaffirms equal rights for both genders.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women endorsed gender mainstreaming as a critical approach to achieving gender equality commitments. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action mandates that all stakeholders, including UN bodies, Member States, and civil society actors, must take action in policy and programme development. 29

According to the 1997 agreed conclusions of ECOSOC, gender mainstreaming refers to evaluating the potential impact on both men and women of any proposed action, such as legislation, policies, or programmes, across all levels and domains. Gender mainstreaming is a policy approach that aims to incorporate the perspectives and experiences of both women and men in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies and programmes across all societal spheres. The goal is to promote gender equality and prevent the perpetuation of inequality. The overarching objective is to attain parity between genders. Gender equality is the primary development objective, while gender mainstreaming refers to the particular strategic approaches, technical processes, and institutional measures employed to attain this objective. Gender mainstreaming is incorporating gender equality into public and private organisations' policies, programmes, and services at the national and local levels. The overarching objective is to modify discriminatory societal institutions, laws, cultural norms, and community practices that impede certain groups, such as women, from obtaining property rights or accessing public spaces.29

Gender mainstreaming's acceptance is due to its conceptual ambiguity. Gender mainstreaming is commonly defined as evaluating the potential impact of a proposed action on both genders. This pertains to integrating a gendered perspective into policies, programmes, and projects. The definitions provided do not offer a precise characterisation of gender equality or the specific nature of the equality to be attained. Gender mainstreaming can create the impression of modernising public policies without a clear agenda commitment.29A

Meier and Celis (2011) found a technocratic bias in Belgian gender mainstreaming policies since 1995. Policy approaches can facilitate gender mainstreaming, but policy actors may struggle to establish clear gender equality objectives due to insufficient knowledge or reluctance. This leads to policies that prioritise integration over transformation. Feminist scholars have identified various methods of meaning-making, including shrinking, stretching, and bending. These methods can be utilised to narrow gender equality to non-discrimination or equal opportunities for both genders, expand it to encompass intersectionality, or adapt it to align with other policy objectives. Gender mainstreaming has been utilised beyond its original intent, including achieving development and neoliberal labour market policy objectives. The reinforcement of traditional gender roles has resulted in policies prioritising women as primary carers. This approach to gender inequality situates it within the framework of sameness/difference or equal treatment/special treatment. Meaning-making processes can be intentional or unintentional and can be constructed accordingly. This framing strategy supports the integrationist perspective of gender mainstreaming. 29A

### • **Affirmative Action**

Affirmative action (AA), equal employment opportunities (EEO), and diversity management (DM) are distinct but interconnected concepts. This has been noted in previous research [30,31]. Affirmative action (AA) refers to measures that address societal obstacles that impede women's equal representation [14,15]. Alternatively, AA aims to address historical inequities and unequal employment outcomes for marginalised groups, including women [32].

Gender quotas or affirmative action refer to measures aimed at enhancing the participation and representation of women in politics, government, and the workforce. Electoral and corporative quotas are the most prevalent mechanisms for improving women's involvement in politics and decision-making roles. These quotas necessitate a compulsory proportion of women in leadership positions. The process usually entails establishing a percentage goal for including women who have been historically marginalised or inadequately represented [33]. Gender quotas, implemented through affirmative action or diversity management, typically aim to achieve a critical mass of female candidates and leaders, although the specifics may differ across nations and institutions.

Research on Affirmative Action (AA) at the organisational level has yielded contradictory findings regarding its effectiveness in promoting workplace success for underrepresented groups. The study's findings indicate that implementing such corporate actions may have adverse effects. These actions may stigmatise targeted groups, such as women, and decrease performance outcomes [34]. AA initiatives in management, including gender quotas, have been controversial among employees, as noted by several authors [35,36,37,38,39]. Opinions on using AA to enhance women's descriptive representation vary among individuals, with some advocating for it and others opposing it. Niederle et al. (40) contend that implementing affirmative action (AA) to achieve gender parity results in a rise in women's entry and a corresponding decline in men's entry. The implicit notion is that equity could be attained not by granting women access but by diminishing the presence of men, which constitutes clear evidence of reverse discrimination. When employees lack conviction regarding the necessity of gender affirmative action, it can lead to exceptional levels of scepticism and distrust, which can impact their personal beliefs. 41

- **Obstacles**

The insecure sharecropper, exploited landless worker, overworked domestic helper, and obedient housewife can all accept their situation and turn grievance and discontent into cheerful endurance through the need to survive. The hopeless underdog appreciates small favour.

"If we do not dare to live a certain way, even though we could, can it be said that we do not have the freedom to live that way, i.e., the corresponding capability?" Sen asked. (UNIFEM, 2000). Ester Duflo (2005) suggests that gender stereotypes prevent economic development from improving women's decision-making. Psychologists have shown that the "stereotype threat" makes women think they are less capable than men. Spencer et al. (1999) discovered that female students who believed they were less capable than men scored worse on tests.

"You may have heard that girls are less good at math than boys, but this is not true for this particular test," began the test, and girls performed equally. Discrediting stereotypes hurts performance. Developmental nations realise the power of stereotypes and patriarchal familial systems. Patrilineal inheritance standards that pass on productive assets to men maintain gender hierarchies. Married women lose liberty, legal and social personhood. Only males who favour their mothers gain control in the new household. If the system fails when they need it most, elderly women will lose. Gupta et al. (2000) analysed gender policy in India, Korea, and China from 1950–2000. China's communist government recognised that private property could not be eradicated without disrupting the patrilineal system's strong kinship, age, and gender structures. So they began an extensive gender equality campaign to get women working. Campaign success.

Women worked outside the home and gained family respect and influence throughout communism. Power shifted. The 1950 Marriage Law ended child marriages and bride prices. Losers in ancient familial ties reacted fiercely. Privatisation after 1979 hid women's work. China increasingly faces gender challenges like Western capitalist countries. 42

In Market-economy, women confront common obstacles. They earn less. Statistical discrimination can explain lower salaries without saying women are less productive.

- **European Women earn 80% of Men's Wages**

The extent of wage discrimination has been studied empirically. Direct discrimination, such as providing additional compensation for the same job to people with identical qualifications, accounts for just a tiny portion of wage variations in industrialised countries. Less discrimination arises with finer occupation and position classifications: Men and women earn similar salaries in the same job categorisation. Luukkonen (2003) finds an 8% gender pay gap in Finnish industries. These findings imply that employment market segregation is the main reason women earn less. Economists struggle to explain why female-dominated occupations are paid and regarded less. In developing nations, cultural limitations may make it difficult for educated women to be productive, making statistical discrimination likely.

Rational parents may prioritise educating their sons to support their families, while daughters are expected to marry a richer guy. This alone makes it unprofitable for parents to educate their daughters, regardless of talent.

Lagerlöf (2003) attributes European growth over the previous 2000 years to greater education equality, eventually leading to a higher growth equilibrium. In the new equilibrium, husbands (and sons) did not automatically provide economic security. Therefore parents invested in their daughters' productive

potential. This shows how hard it is to achieve equality in a gender-biased society. Since this equilibrium benefits certain people, seeing any changes as threatening is simple. This slows development and growth at the macro level since half of the people cannot employ their full potential, and the other half must supply economically regardless of their talents. 42A

Earnings and resources influence economic decisions. Contemporary feminists advocate for women's workforce participation. Gender hierarchy in modern welfare states is sustained by labour market segregation and women's lower earnings.

Women transitioned from providing unpaid care for children and elderly individuals to providing paid care. Women are responsible for childcare, caring for the sick and elderly, and providing pre-university education. Mokyr (2002) emphasised the significance of women's labour in any economy, which is frequently overlooked. He correlates the Industrial Revolution with the heightened awareness of sanitation in the 19th century. Poverty was a cause of illness. Studying germs and sanitation heightened the significance of homework. The study emphasised women's "invisible" labour, including nutrition, childcare, and hygiene tasks. As a result, mortality rates declined by the late 1800s. The low female labour force participation during that period was attributed to the increased acknowledgement of women's work. Women were expected to perform unpaid care work. This assumption was challenged when women in industrialised societies gained independence through employment. There is a belief that women are inclined to care for others. Folbre (2001) contends that external regulation was necessary for the "natural" to function effectively. In recent decades, women in the Western world have gained more freedom to pursue their self-interest and autonomy, similar to what men have enjoyed for years. In industrialised nations, women are no longer economically and culturally disadvantaged by morality.

Folbre (2001) argues in her book *Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values* that freedom from discrimination has negative consequences. Male involvement in domestic care for children and elderly individuals has risen, while female involvement has declined. The degradation of human capital will have negative consequences for society. Child neglect can impair children's abilities. The possibility of this "threat scenario" may have been anticipated by Cambridge scholar Alfred Marshall. Folbre (p. 12) warned that if women were permitted to attend university in the 19th century, they would prioritise themselves over their children. During that era, it was uncommon for men to assist with childcare, eldercare, or household duties. In industrialised cultures, women experience the negative impact of hierarchical values as they bear the financial burden of having children who may have lower earning potential (Fuchs, 1989). The woman either takes a leave of absence to attend to a sick child or receives paid maternity leave from her employer.

Gender equality in economic terms requires men to increase their involvement in child-care responsibilities to match women's contributions. 42B

Globalisation may result in oppressive economic institutions for women, causing concern. Export processing zones often hire women for monotonous and poorly compensated work. Young girls and single mothers may take these jobs temporarily, even if their families disapprove. Critics argue that these jobs lack a sustainable career path for women, as noted in *The Women, Gender and Development Reader* (2002). Despite the limitations, employment prospects in export processing zones could represent a developmental advancement by providing young women with autonomy and the ability to exercise their consumption preferences. In addition, export processing zone firms may adopt advanced production methods as they mature. 42C

Many developing nations resemble 19th-century Western Europe. Developing nations face the same issues as industrialised ones a century or two ago. These include girls' education, women's political, legal, and marital rights, gender-neutral employment, and lower fertility and child mortality.

Hierarchical gender values exist in economic literature. The literature links gender inequality to economic development through values, religion, cultural restrictions, legal and inheritance laws, marital patterns, labour market access, education, fertility, gender-specific market failures in finance, and political power. Future concerns may require men's perspectives. Gender inequity harms men. Men's cultural and economic constraints? Men may face more significant gender-specific restrictions than women. Only in technologically advanced cultures have men's positions been questioned. Gender equality requires improving men's and women's well-being. From a policy standpoint, it is essential to distinguish between how political actions affect cultural and economic structures and how underlying gender-based values and preferences affect progress.

The literature says both are important. Economic values seem endogenous. Equitable economic systems and incentives can influence cultural values and customs and boost economic progress. Economic progress leads to gender equality as economic limitations loosen. As nations prosper, they can educate both genders.

Technology that moved production from self-sufficient households to the market may have driven gender equality in developed nations. These developments changed gender roles for women, men, and children. Technology has made things cheaper than home manufacturing. Thus, men, children, and women became unneeded for home production. The move to outside production made the traditional household economy obsolete, where women focused on domestic production and child care. High fertility rates no longer pay. Children moved from producing to consumption. Technology has lessened the need for full-time housewives. Like men, in developed countries, women are working outside the home.

Adapting to these changes took time. The transition from patriarchal culture, where gender roles were clearly defined and women's identity and obligations were primarily focused on childbirth, was enormous. In wealthy nations, divorce rates, single-parent families, marriage, and birth rates have grown due to the family's declining economic importance. Miles covered these arguments in 2006. The affluent world has not achieved gender equality while developing future generations' human capital, but many underdeveloped countries still confront these issues. 42D

### Conclusion

In conclusion, achieving gender equality is crucial for sustainable development. The link between gender equality and economic growth has been extensively researched, highlighting the importance of empowering women in all spheres of life. Moreover, gender inequality perpetuates poverty and reinforces social injustices. The thesis statement of this essay was to examine the relationship between gender equality and development. Through an analysis of various literature sources, it was evident that there is a strong correlation between these two concepts. Gender mainstreaming strategies have become increasingly popular to achieve more significant societal equity. Throughout this essay, we have seen how education is critical in promoting gender equality by breaking down traditional societal stereotypes and norms.

Additionally, policies to improve access to healthcare services can help ensure that women's reproductive rights are respected. While significant progress has been made towards achieving gender parity globally, much work remains. Discrimination against women persists in many areas, such as politics and the workforce. Therefore, governments worldwide must continue implementing measures geared towards closing these gaps. In summary, while progress has been made over recent decades regarding Gender Equality & Development issues globally, more needs still need addressing if we will achieve complete emancipation from patriarchal systems that impede our collective success as humans everywhere. In concluding remarks, let us strive to attain accurate equity without any discrimination - moving ever forward until we get closer each day!

### References

1. Soken-Huberty, E. (2020, April 2). *What Does Gender Equality Mean?* Human Rights Careers. <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/what-does-gender-equality-mean/>
2. Khasanah, U., & Sasana, H. (2022). Significance of Gender Equality in Economic Growth. *Research Horizon*.
3. Zhu, N., & Chang, L. (2019, July 9). *Evolved but Not Fixed: A Life History Account of Gender Roles and Gender Inequality*. *Frontiers*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01709>
- 3(a) Zhu, N., & Chang, L. (2019, July 9). *Evolved but Not Fixed: A Life History Account of Gender Roles and Gender Inequality*. *Frontiers*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01709>
4. Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, London: Heinemann, 1960, p. 45.
5. Shiva, V. (1989, January 1). *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1604/9780862328238>
- 5a. Shiva, V. (1989, January 1). *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*.
6. Nowak, J.K. (2021). Gender Inequality in Education. *Human, Technologies and Quality of Education, 2021*.
- 6a. Nowak, J.K. (2021). Gender Inequality in Education. *Human, Technologies and Quality of Education, 2021*



- 6b. Nowak, J.K. (2021). Gender Inequality in Education. Human, Technologies and Quality of Education, 2021
- 6c. Nowak, J.K. (2021). Gender Inequality in Education. Human, Technologies and Quality of Education, 2021
7. *Gender Inequality in the Workplace – Gender Stats-Education*. (n.d.). Gender Inequality in the Workplace – Gender Stats-Education. <https://genderstats.org/gender-inequality-in-the-workplace/>
8. McMichael, A. J., McKee, M., Shkolnikov, V., & Valkonen, T. (2004, April). Mortality trends and setbacks: global convergence or divergence? *The Lancet*, 363(9415), 1155–1159. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(04\)15902-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(04)15902-3)
9. MIHALACHE, I. C. (2019, December 19). Health State of Human Capital in the Economic Theory. *Postmodern Openings*, 10(4), 182–192. <https://doi.org/10.18662/po/102>
10. Madsen, J. B. (2016, January 21). HEALTH, HUMAN CAPITAL FORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION: TWO CENTURIES OF INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE. *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 20(4), 909–953. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1365100514000650>
11. Bloom, D. E., Canning, D., & Sevilla, J. (2004, January). The Effect of Health on Economic Growth: A Production Function Approach. *World Development*, 32(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2003.07.002>
12. Well, D. N. (2007, August 1). Accounting for the Effect Of Health on Economic Growth. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 122(3), 1265–1306. <https://doi.org/10.1162/qjec.122.3.1265>
13. Husain, M. J. (2010, April 28). Contribution of Health to Economic Development: A Survey and Overview. *Economics*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.5018/economics-ejournal.ja.2010-14>
14. French, D. (2012, January 7). Causation between health and income: a need to panic. *Empirical Economics*, 42(2), 583–601. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00181-011-0541-5>
15. Monterubbianesi, P., Grandes, M., & Dabús, C. (2017). New evidence of the health status and economic growth relationship. *Panoeconomicus*, 64(4), 439–459. <https://doi.org/10.2298/pan150505020m>
16. Boisclair, D., Décarie, Y., Laliberté-Auger, F., Michaud, P. C., & Vincent, C. (2018, January 4). The economic benefits of reducing cardiovascular disease mortality in Quebec, Canada. *PLOS ONE*, 13(1), e0190538. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190538>
17. Alkire, B. C., Peters, A. W., Shrimpe, M. G., & Meara, J. G. (2018, June). The Economic Consequences Of Mortality Amenable To High-Quality Health Care In Low- And Middle-Income Countries. *Health Affairs*, 37(6), 988–996. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.1233>
18. Braveman, P. (2006, April 1). HEALTH DISPARITIES AND HEALTH EQUITY: Concepts and Measurement. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 27(1), 167–194. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.27.021405.102103>
19. Marmot, M. (2005, March). Social determinants of health inequalities. *The Lancet*, 365(9464), 1099–1104. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(05\)71146-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(05)71146-6)
20. *Social determinants of health*. (2023, May 15). Social Determinants of Health - Global. [https://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/sdh\\_definition/en/](https://www.who.int/social_determinants/sdh_definition/en/)
21. Reibling, N., Ariaans, M., & Wendt, C. (2019, July). Worlds of Healthcare: A Healthcare System Typology of OECD Countries. *Health Policy*, 123(7), 611–620. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2019.05.001>
22. Singh-Manoux, A., Adler, N. E., & Marmot, M. G. (2003, March). Subjective social status: its determinants and its association with measures of ill-health in the Whitehall II study. *Social Science & Medicine*, 56(6), 1321–1333. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0277-9536\(02\)00131-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0277-9536(02)00131-4)
23. Mackenbach, J. P., Stirbu, I., Roskam, A. J. R., Schaap, M. M., Menvielle, G., Leinsalu, M., & Kunst, A. E. (2008, June 5). Socioeconomic Inequalities in Health in 22 European Countries. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 358(23), 2468–2481. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmsa0707519>
24. Richardson, E. A., & Mitchell, R. (2010, August). Gender differences in relationships between urban green space and health in the United Kingdom. *Social Science & Medicine*, 71(3), 568–575. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.04.015>

25. Bein, M. A., Unlucan, D., Olowu, G., & Kalifa, W. (2017, May 23). Healthcare spending and health outcomes: evidence from selected East African countries. *African Health Sciences*, 17(1), 247. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v17i1.30>
26. Obrizan, M., & Wehby, G. L. (2018, January). Health Expenditures and Global Inequalities in Longevity. *World Development*, 101, 28–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.08.003>
27. Golinelli, D., Bucci, A., Toscano, F., Filicori, F., & Fantini, M. P. (2018, August 29). Real and predicted mortality under health spending constraints in Italy: a time trend analysis through artificial neural networks. *BMC Health Services Research*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-018-3473-3>
28. Stefko, R., Gavurova, B., Ivankova, V., & Rigelsky, M. (2020, May 19). Gender Inequalities in Health and Their Effect on the Economic Prosperity Represented by the GDP of Selected Developed Countries—Empirical Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(10), 3555. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17103555>
29. *Gender Mainstreaming*. (2023, August 3). UN Women – Headquarters. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>
- 29A. Caglar, G. (2013, August 2). Gender Mainstreaming. *Politics & Gender*, 9(03), 336–344. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1743923x13000214>
30. Syed J., Kramar R. Socially responsible diversity management. *J. Manag. Organ.* 2009;15:639–651. doi: 10.5172/jmo.15.5.639.
31. Hirsh E., Kmec J.A. Human resource structures: Reducing discrimination or raising rights awareness? *Ind. Relat.* 2009;48:512–532. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-232X.2009.00571.x.
32. Bacchi C. Arguing for and Against Quotas. In: Dahlerup D., editor. *Women, Quotas and Politics*. Routledge; London, UK: 2013. [(accessed on 17 June 2019)]. pp. 73–105. Available online: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203099544>
33. Phillipow E. *A Cabinet that Looks Like Canada: A Critical Evaluation of Media Responses to Trudeau's Representative Cabinet (Mimeo)* University of Saskatchewan; Saskatoon, SK, USA: 2019.
34. Shteynberg G., Leslie L.M., Knight A.P., Mayer D.M. However, Affirmative Action hurts Us! Race-related beliefs shape perceptions of White disadvantage and policy unfairness. *Organ. Behav Hum. Decis Process.* 2011;115:1–12. doi 10.1016/j.obhdp.2010.11.011.
35. Connell R. News from the Coalface. *Int. Fem. J. Polit.* 2007;9:137–153. doi: 10.1080/14616740701259788.
36. Connell R. Glass Ceilings or Gendered Institutions? Mapping the Gender Regimes of Public Sector Worksites. *Public Adm. Rev.* 2006;66:837–849. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00652.x.
37. Wiersema M., Mors M.L. What Board Directors Think of Gender Quotas. *Harvard Business Review*. [(accessed on 24 April 2019)];2016 Available online: <https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-board-directors-really-think-of-gender-quotas>
38. Foley M., Williamson S. Managerial Perspectives on Implicit Bias, Affirmative Action, and Merit. *Public Adm. Rev.* 2019;79:35–45. doi: 10.1111/puar.12955.
39. Choi S., Rainey H.G. Organizational Fairness and Diversity Management in Public Organizations: Does Fairness Matter in Managing Diversity? *Rev. Public Pers. Adm.* 2014;34:307–331. doi: 10.1177/0734371X13486489.
40. Niederle M., Segal C., Vesterlund L. How costly is diversity? Affirmative action in light of gender differences in competitiveness. *Manag. Sci.* 2013;59:1–16. doi: 10.1287/mnsc.1120.1602.
41. Furtado, J. V., Moreira, A. C., & Mota, J. (2021). Gender Affirmative Action and Management: A Systematic Literature Review on How Diversity and Inclusion Management Affect Gender Equity in Organizations. *Behavioural sciences (Basel, Switzerland)*, 11(2), 21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs11020021>
42. Carrie. (2007). Development and gender equality Consequences cause challenges and cures. *Development and Gender Equality: Consequences, Causes, Challenges and Cures*. Retrieved from <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/16781/developm.pdf?sequence=1>

- 42A. Carrie. (2007). Development and gender equality Consequences causes challenges and cures. *Development and Gender Equality: Consequences, Causes, Challenges and Cures*. Retrieved from <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/16781/developm.pdf?sequence=1>
- 42B. Carrie. (2007). Development and gender equality Consequences causes challenges and cures. *Development and Gender Equality: Consequences, Causes, Challenges and Cures*. Retrieved from <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/16781/developm.pdf?sequence=1>
- 42C. Carrie. (2007). Development and gender equality Consequences causes challenges and cures. *Development and Gender Equality: Consequences, Causes, Challenges and Cures*. Retrieved from <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/16781/developm.pdf?sequence=1>
- 42D. Carrie. (2007). Development and gender equality Consequences causes challenges and cures. *Development and Gender Equality: Consequences, Causes, Challenges and Cures*. Retrieved from <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/16781/developm.pdf?sequence=1>

