



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT BARRIER

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Abstract: This article explores the various barriers that hinder women's empowerment across different spheres of life. It highlights the impact of traditional gender roles and stereotypes on limiting women's opportunities and choices in personal and professional spheres. Educational barriers, such as limited access and gender bias, impede women's educational attainment. Economic barriers, including the gender pay gap and limited access to resources, restrict women's financial independence and economic empowerment. Political participation barriers, such as gender stereotypes, lack of representation, and violence, undermine women's engagement in political processes. The conclusion emphasizes the need for comprehensive efforts to address these barriers, including legal reforms, education and training, and changing societal norms. Breaking down these barriers is crucial for creating a more inclusive and equitable society that harnesses the full potential of women's empowerment.

Index Terms - Component, formatting, style, styling, insert.

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INTRODUCTION

To promote gender equality, strengthen women's agency, and question limiting cultural conventions, women's empowerment is a multidimensional and revolutionary movement. It acknowledges that women, as full participants in society, have the authority to make choices, manage their own lives, and advance their local and global communities economically, politically, and socially. Sustainable development and the general welfare of societies depend on women's empowerment, making it a question of justice and human rights as well.

Women have always been on the receiving end of bias, sexism, and social exclusion. They face systematic gender-based abuse, less economic possibilities, fewer legal protections, and fewer rights and freedoms. But times are changing as more and more women take bold stands for equality, question outdated beliefs, and demand recognition for their accomplishments. Empowering women aims to further these initiatives by creating a climate that values and promotes women's skills, ambitions, and successes.

Education, employment, healthcare, political engagement, and decision-making are just a few of the many domains that benefit from women's empowerment. In order for women to have equal say in the political, economic, and social realms, we must provide them the tools they need to succeed. It also entails fighting against traditional gender roles and restrictive attitudes.

Empowering women has far-reaching positive effects. Societies flourish when women have agency. Empowering women has been found to generate economic development, decrease poverty, boost health outcomes, and strengthen social stability. Incorporating women's ideas and experiences into decision-making processes promotes creativity and diversity of thought. True gender equality and women's empowerment have come a long way, but there is still a long way to go. To end discriminatory norms, promote legislative changes, and build communities where women can thrive, we need the combined efforts of governments, civil society, and people.

With the world becoming more interconnected and global, the need for women's empowerment has never been greater. This is a call to action for individuals and groups to collaborate on a movement to defend and expand women's rights and opportunities. In addition to bettering individual lives, the world as a whole benefits from spending money on women's education and economic empowerment. Cultural norms contribute significantly to the difficulties women face in achieving equality and empowerment. Many women are conscious of the challenges provided by gender inequality, while others have learned to live with it. Men in positions of authority are often reluctant to challenge gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices.

Research shows that women encounter greater obstacles than males do in the job. Sexual harassment, discrimination in employment, stagnation in professional advancement, and lower compensation for equal work are all examples of gender-based obstacles. According to official statistics from 2014, the median earnings of men and women who worked full-time, year-round were \$0.79 for every dollar a male earned. According to a 2014 report by the National Partnership for Women and Children, working moms earn \$0.71 for every dollar a father earns. The "pregnancy penalty" is a significant problem for many women, despite the fact that most of the public debate of the wage gap has centered on women earning equal pay for the same job as their male contemporaries. It's hard to put a number on how often this happens, but some companies penalize women financially just for considering motherhood. The controversy over maternity leave has raged in the United States and many other nations across the globe because women are forced to choose between continuing their careers and having children.

The management of a sustainable environment is complicated by three major gender gaps:

The effects of land rights

In addition to providing necessities like food, shelter, and money, owning land is also a powerful symbol of cultural identity. Women own just 13.8% of the world's land but play a crucial role in using it for food, money, and family resources. When it comes to exercising any of their land rights (including selling, managing, or controlling), they also confront severe legal and societal difficulties. Because of the uncertainty surrounding their property ownership, this has made it hard for women to fully engage in society.

The effects of leadership and decision-making

Home duties sometimes prevent women from actively participating in political and social life. This is problematic because it suggests that women's needs, goals, and abilities are being overlooked in the allocation of resources and the formulation of policy. Community agency and the ability to effect change are impacted.

The effects of violence against women

Human Rights Watch reports that many women in the globe are subjected to hostile work environments where they are subjected to sexual harassment and other forms of sexual misconduct. Long-term repercussions on women's health, well-being, and participation in public life are being seen now. The fear of experiencing violence at work is a barrier to women's development value and a factor in the discrimination of employment based on gender.

Objective of the study

- Identify barriers to women's political participation, education, economic empowerment.
- Identify barriers and challenges faced by marginalized women.

Research methodology

Content analysis is a systematic and objective approach used to analyze qualitative data, such as textual or visual content, to derive meaningful insights. It involves the systematic coding and categorization of data to identify patterns, themes, and trends within the collected content. The utilization of content analysis as a data collection technique for measuring and assessing women's empowerment allows researchers to gain valuable insights into the various dimensions and factors contributing to barriers of women's empowerment. By systematically analyzing textual or visual content, researchers can identify patterns, trends, and gaps in women's empowerment efforts, thereby informing policy and intervention strategies.

Gender Stereotypes

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes have long played a significant role in shaping societal expectations and perceptions regarding the roles and capabilities of women. These stereotypes limit women's opportunities and choices in both personal and professional spheres in several ways.

Limited Career Aspirations: Gender stereotypes can influence the aspirations and self-perception of women, discouraging them from pursuing careers in fields traditionally dominated by men. This can lead to a lack of representation and diversity in various industries, perpetuating the cycle of limited opportunities for women.

Wage Gap: Gender stereotypes contribute to the persistence of the gender pay gap. Certain jobs traditionally associated with women tend to be undervalued and underpaid compared to similar roles in male-dominated fields. As a result, women are often paid less than men for performing similar tasks, limiting their financial well-being and economic empowerment.

Family Expectations and Caregiving Burden: Traditional gender roles often place the primary responsibility for caregiving and household chores on women. This expectation can create a significant burden on women, limiting their ability to pursue full-time careers or professional advancement. The assumption that women should prioritize family over their own aspirations reinforces the notion that their role is primarily within the domestic sphere.

Leadership and Decision-Making Opportunities: Gender stereotypes can hinder women's access to leadership positions and decision-making roles. Women are often perceived as less competent or authoritative due to societal biases, leading to their underrepresentation in positions of power. This limits their ability to influence policies, make important decisions, and shape the direction of organizations and institutions.

Cultural and Social Expectations: Gender stereotypes shape societal expectations regarding women's behavior, appearance, and interests. These expectations can lead to pressure to conform and limit women's ability to express themselves authentically or pursue activities outside of the prescribed gender norms. This restriction on personal choices can affect their overall well-being and sense of fulfillment.

Lack of Support and Mentoring: The prevalence of gender stereotypes can result in a lack of support and mentorship for women in various fields. Limited access to role models and mentors who have successfully navigated traditionally male-dominated industries can hinder women's professional growth and development.

Educational barrier

One significant barrier to women's empowerment is the educational gap between men and women. Despite progress in recent decades, many girls and women around the world still face challenges in accessing quality education. This educational barrier has far-reaching consequences for women's empowerment in various ways:

Unequal Opportunities: Even when girls have access to education, they may encounter disparities in resources, quality of schooling, and opportunities compared to boys. Limited resources, gender biases in curricula and teaching practices, and inadequate infrastructure can hinder girls' learning experiences and limit their educational outcomes.

Early Dropout Rates: Girls are more likely than boys to drop out of school prematurely. Factors contributing to early dropout include child marriage, household responsibilities, financial constraints, and societal expectations regarding gender roles. Early

dropout deprives girls of the knowledge, skills, and qualifications needed to pursue higher education and gain economic independence.

Gender-Based Violence: In some contexts, girls face the threat of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and assault, while pursuing their education. Such violence creates a hostile and unsafe learning environment, leading to fear, trauma, and a reluctance to continue schooling.

Economical barrier

Occupational Segregation and Limited Opportunities: Women are often concentrated in low-paying and less-prestigious sectors and occupations. Occupational segregation, driven by gender stereotypes and biases, limits women's access to higher-paying jobs and leadership positions. This segregation restricts their earning potential and professional growth.

Unpaid Care and Domestic Work: Women disproportionately bear the burden of unpaid care and domestic work, which can limit their participation in paid employment or entrepreneurship. Balancing caregiving responsibilities with economic pursuits becomes a significant barrier, as women often face societal expectations to prioritize family duties over their careers.

Lack of Access to Education and Skills Development: Limited access to quality education and skill-building opportunities can hinder women's economic empowerment. Without proper education and training, women may lack the skills and qualifications needed to access higher-paying jobs or start businesses. This perpetuates the cycle of economic disadvantage.

Gender Bias in Entrepreneurship: Women entrepreneurs often face gender-specific challenges, including limited access to capital, biased lending practices, and lower levels of business support and mentorship. These barriers make it more difficult for women to establish and grow their businesses, limiting their economic empowerment.

Lack of Social Safety Nets: In many societies, inadequate social safety nets, such as maternity leave policies, affordable childcare, and support for work-life balance, pose economic barriers to women. The absence of these support systems can force women to make difficult choices between career advancement and family responsibilities.

Political Participation barrier

Political participation barriers can significantly limit women's empowerment in the political sphere. Here are some key barriers that women face in participating in politics:

Gender Stereotypes and Discrimination: Gender stereotypes and discrimination create biases against women in politics. Deep-rooted beliefs about women's roles and capabilities can lead to prejudice and skepticism regarding women's leadership abilities, reducing their opportunities for political participation.

Lack of Representation: Women are often underrepresented in political institutions and decision-making bodies. This underrepresentation limits women's ability to shape policies and legislation that directly affect their lives and the lives of other women. Limited representation also hampers the visibility of women as political role models and diminishes the diversity of perspectives in political discourse.

Unequal Access to Political Resources: Women often face challenges in accessing the necessary resources for political participation, such as funding, campaign support, and networks. Financial barriers and the lack of access to established political networks can hinder women's ability to compete effectively in elections and gain political influence.

Violence and Intimidation: Women in politics are frequently subjected to various forms of violence, including physical attacks, harassment, and online abuse. These acts of violence and intimidation aim to silence and discourage women from participating in politics, creating a hostile and unsafe environment.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, women's empowerment is hindered by a multitude of barriers across various spheres of life. Traditional gender roles and stereotypes limit women's opportunities and choices, both personally and professionally, leading to disparities and inequalities. Educational barriers restrict access to quality education and limit women's potential for personal and professional growth. Economic barriers, such as the gender pay gap and limited access to resources, impede women's financial independence and economic empowerment. Political participation barriers, including gender stereotypes, lack of representation, and violence, undermine women's ability to engage fully in political processes and decision-making. Addressing these barriers requires comprehensive and concerted efforts from governments, organizations, communities, and individuals. It necessitates the implementation of gender-responsive policies, legal reforms, and affirmative action measures to promote equal access and opportunities for women. Empowerment programs, education, and training initiatives can enhance women's skills, confidence, and leadership abilities. Challenging and changing societal norms and attitudes regarding gender roles and expectations is crucial to foster a more inclusive and equitable society. Ultimately, breaking down these barriers and promoting women's empowerment is not only a matter of justice and human rights but also a key driver for social and economic development. When women are empowered, societies benefit from their diverse perspectives, talents, and contributions. By dismantling barriers and creating an enabling environment, we can foster a world where women can fully participate, lead, and thrive in all spheres of life, contributing to a more equal and prosperous future for all.

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