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GENDER EQUALITY

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“Gender equality” which is a very important topic now a day in everywhere all over the worldwide. In modern society, gender equality is one of the most severe issues. It refers to the equality of responsibilities, rights and opportunities for females and males. Women as well as girls, still fall behind the men and boys on every aspects globally, either it is social aspect, economic aspect, fundamental aspect, etc. In every aspect it is essential to maintain gender equality for global development. Till date, women are still incapable of contributing effectively. There is no true definition to the two words “gender” and “equality” and together it makes no sense, unless we start discussing the true meaning of the words and applying them.



From early days and early decades, inequality among male and female have been a common issue. It is very sad that how the biological difference in a human being can change all types of importance and rights they can have. From birth to marriage to jobs to the living standard, both genders differ the facilities and importance they get. In early decades, females are totally depended on male but

now as girls and women are empowering themselves so women are independent and they are doing equally everything such as from social to economic aspects, financially females are also equally strong like males and in jobs either it is private or government women are given equal rights to educate themselves, get their jobs and to fulfil every dream whether it is in sports, education, dance, singing, fitness, etc., in every field. As an anthropologist I have studied and I myself did lots of research in our societies changing topics like women empowerment, gender equality, equal rights for women etc., etc., As a girl child I would love to raise my voice and stand up for every girls and women who is suffering from domestic violence.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right; it is a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Unfortunately, at the current time, 1-5 women and girls between the ages of 15-49 have reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner within a 12 month period and 49 countries currently have no laws protecting women from domestic violence, as researchers said. The main purpose for gender equality is belonging naturally linked to sustainable development and is vital to the realization of human rights for all. The overall objective for gender equality is a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. Most importantly, this topic of Gender equality first started in the United States which has been diminishing throughout its history and significant advancements towards equality have been made beginning mostly in the early 1900s.

For me the main purpose to raise my voice for gender equality is to change the mentality and thinking of both rural and urban areas. Because till date there are 60% of people from village area still suffering from domestic violence even women are fully dominated by men. When I personally met some of the village areas people from my own village that is Mangaldai I feel that it is not their fault but the fault of our generation gap they are brought up by their family members as they have to get married and they have to depend on their husbands after marriage and they cannot work outside only they have to do kitchen works and take care of their child. In that village till now their mentality is to pray their husband like God and women have to ask their husband s permission if they have to go outside and they have to cover their face every time in front of everyone.



In India Gender equality is still a faraway dream for us. In spite of all the education, advancement and economic growth many states and their villages of remote areas are suffering from the culture of gender inequality and India is one of them. In India gender equality or in any other part of India would achieved and can be called from developing to developed country only when both men and women are treated equally, such as; - two individuals not two genders. First of all I would like to say that this equality can be treated and practices at homes first, because the main environment and the best schools and teachers are at homes and our parents, family members and relatives. When there is both girl and boy child we should not avoid the wrong deeds of the boys. Because it leads to gender equality. I am giving a small example from my place and from my neighbour as I have seen them from my childhood. (They are having their kids the elder one is a girl her name is Niharika and the younger one is a boy his name is Nihal when Niharika want to go outside with her friends she was not allowed even at day time and sometimes after her class, directly she went for her tuition for which she had to come late at home. Only for that silly reason she beaten up by her parents and sometimes they used to abuse her infront of her younger brother Nihal. But when Nihal wants to go outside with his friends he was free to go and he can come home at any time even at night there is no restriction for her brother. Nihal has grown up looking that whatever his sister do whether it is wrong or right she get punished for that. They think that a girl should stay at home and she should do the kitchen works and not more than that. Since his childhood he had seen his sister with lots of domestic violence and restrictions. In that environment I personally feel the boy is learning the same thing and his parents are doing that gender differences. One day Nihal came late at night and when Niharika ask him why he was late and she got smell from him, he

was drunk. As an elder sister she had right to ask him if he was late and while asking this question he beaten her with a long bamboo stick in front of their parents and they did not utter a single word to Nihal just because he was a boy.) In this case my question for these people is that why a girl is always restricted by her parents or relatives that don't go outside from home at night, don't do certain things which can ruin our names don't wear shorts outside, etc]. There are lots more for girls but why they do not teach their boys that if a girl is wearing shorts that does not mean that she is a bad girl she can wear anything whatever she wants like you guys wear, if a girl is coming late at home from her job, or tuition, or whatever it is that does not mean that she is doing wrong. Every parents every people should learn how to raise the equality between their children whether it is a girl or boy. Only then we can develop our countries, raising voice but doing the same narrow mentality things at home does not do any kind of changes. In India, while women express a strong preference for having at least one son, the evidence of discrimination against girls after they are born is mixed. In some states of India usually when a girl child is born the family members used to kill those girl child at the time of birth. I personally faced this when I was born. Even during marriage, in India, dowry systems are still existing, the payment of cash or some heavy amount gifts given to bridegroom's family along with the bride. This dowry system in India contributes to gender inequalities by influencing the perception that girls are a burden on families. According to the research, the payment of a dowry has been prohibited under The 1961 Dowry Prohibition Act in Indian civil law and subsequently by sections 304B and 498a of the Indian Penal Code. The recent studies show that while attitudes of people are changing about dowry, the institution has changed very little and even continues to prevail.

According to the Indian law of marriage, now men and women have equal rights with the exception of all men who are allowed to unilaterally divorce their wife. The legal minimum age for marriage is 18 for women and 21 for men except for those Indians whose religion is Islam for whom child marriage remains legal under India's Mohammedan personal laws, here also I would like to say that Indians are still backward because of their huge discrimination among themselves, i.e., castes, religion, etc.

If we closely study about the Indian constitution, we can say that India is the world's largest democratic country with 1.2 billion people and is expected to be the world's most populous country by 2050 (according to newly research studies). In recent decades, India has made substantial progress to improve child nutrition, immunisation rates, education, some extracurricular activities enrolment rates, as well as to achieve broad economic growth. The Constitution grants equality to women, ensures equality before the law and prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. It also allows personal laws, however, resulting in a dual system that allows forms of discrimination against girls and women. India has launched the National Mission for Empowerment of Women in 2010 and mandated to facilitate the coordination of all programmes related

to women's welfare and their socio-economic development across all ministries and departments. The government leads specific initiatives focused on gender equality and other programmes that though not focused exclusively on girls and women and benefit them nonetheless; including its push to enhance access to clean water and sanitation.

Feminisms have criticised and raised issues about gender biases and the condition of women in countries that do not have western culture. There have been cases of domestic violence against women and there have been cases of honour killing in some places especially in the parts of Asia and North Africa. There is also the problem of women not getting equal payment as men for equal work. They have done and women sometimes get harassed sexually and abused by their superiors at work. In India, while the laws of Independent India which are giving women a safety net, unfortunately, gender equality is still an issue. In 2018, India has topped in the unsafe countries for women. At every walk of our life we must be conscious for our self that the effort to bring gender equality into existence.



Violence against the women is a term that is used to refer to all forms of violent acts that are majorly and primarily against women in the society. Violence against women is typically gender-based which means that it is solely committed against women just because they are women or because of the patriarchal constructs of gender. These gender based inequalities are to be removed from society by bringing about gender equality. As I wrote an example above about the environment of Niharika's house such type of upbringing and environment and also the mind-set of people which are not changed till date can lead to the violence and also it does not make any kind of changes. Gender equality most probably aims at removing all boundaries and differences between men and women. It eliminates any kind of discrimination between men and women. It ensures equal rights and opportunities for both males and

females, i.e., at home or in educational institutions or at workplaces. Gender equality guarantees political, social and economic equality.

When we talk about gender equality it is not only a fundamental human right, but necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, jobs and representation in political and economic decision making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit of societies and humanity at large. When I was personally searching for this topic I have found that there are 750 million women and girls, all around worldwide who get married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in around 30 countries have undergone female genital mutilation. Secondly, in around 18 countries, husbands can legally prevent their wives from working. At present women now hold more than 30% of seats in national parliament in at least one chamber.

Now a days, because of gender equality we have seen some benefits which helps to prevent violence against women and girls and makes our societies safe. It is a human right and it is good for the economic, political and social aspects.

- It helps women to prevent themselves against domestic violence.
- Due to gender equality women can raise their voice equally for decision making.
- Whenever a women feel the emphasise of aggression and disrespect towards themselves from their husbands they can have equal right to raise their voice either through human rights, NGOs, and many more.

Gender discrimination is also known as sexual discrimination, i.e., any action that specifically denies opportunities, privileges or rewards to a person because of gender. Most discrimination charges claim that a woman was discriminated against in favour of a men. The law was passed after heated debate in both the Senate and House of Representatives. It stated that it was unlawful for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions or privileges or employment. Because of such individual's race, colour, religion, sex, etc.

On discourse and policies employed in order to achieve the following items such as- gender stereotypes, preventing violence against women, guaranteeing equal access of women to justice, achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures. This is a common fact that women are criticised till date in there each and every step of their life. Some argue that various gender equality indices place men at a disadvantage. In several important ways, while India's population is examined as a whole, women are at a disadvantage. In India, discriminatory attitudes towards either sex have existed for generations and affect the lives of both males and females. Research shows gender discrimination mostly in favour of men in many realms including the workplace. This

discrimination affects many lives of women from career development and progress to mental disorders.

One of the most common factors driving gender inequality is the preference for sons, as I said being a girl child I myself suffered a lot when I was born. As the sons are deemed more useful than girls, these are the mind-sets created by people. Boys are given the exclusive rights to inherit the family name and properties and they are viewed as additional status for their family. When I was doing my post-graduation in Shillong I feel so free and strong even I feel me as empowering myself because those Khasi tribe people of Shillong were matrilineal. They follow the matrilineal society, where women rules and during my post-graduation I feel it was the safest place for the girls. As we all know that recent survey had said that when we search for the safest states for women in India, first comes Arunachal Pradesh, second Goa, third Himachal Pradesh, fourth Manipur and the last is Meghalaya where I studied my post-graduation. This is a serious fact that women are not safe till date. Another factor is that of religious practices, which only a male member of the family can performed afterlife. All these factors whether it's a religious factor, preference, social, economic or property factors makes sons more desirable. We need to change this so that we can actually feel the equality among both males and females. Moreover, the prospect of parents losing daughters to the husband's family and expensive dowry of daughters further discourages parents from having daughters. Generally, sons are often the only person entitled to performing funeral rights for their parents. It is a combination of factors which has shaped the imbalanced view of sexes in India. In 2005 a study in Madurai by some scholars, India, found that old age security, economic motivation and to a lesser extent, religious obligations, continuation of the family name, and help in business or farm, were key reasons for son preference. The emotional support and old age security turns into daughter preference.

Gender equality is very much important now a day because although our spiritual beliefs consider females as a deity, we fail to identify her as a human first. Women still understated in the positions of decision making in different companies. By offering gender equality in several areas we should first keep in our mind that the monetary of decision making practices will ultimately will be the benefit in attaining the economic sustainability overall.

As an anthropologist I have learned that anthropology means studying the human as a whole and we do not have any right to judge the people but yes we can raise our voice and we can give our valuable opinions whenever we see or feel something wrong. This topic gender equality is very recent and this is to organising the principle in human history. Ultimately, we aim to see gender not as a specialization but as a crucial dimension of any phenomenon we may want to analyse and of any problem we may want to solve. There is no definite and perfect definition for

gender equality. It is very essential to maintain gender equality for global development as well. Till now, women are still not capable of contributing effectively and in fact, they do not recognize their complete potential.

People judge me as a feminist, but trust me I do not care about it. In a positive way, positive growth must be seen in the region of gender equality. I personally feel that in our society when girls get married to a guy after having their babies they keep their surname of their father. In that case if we are shouting and trying to make our society with equal rights for both males and females then from my point of view a mother has the equal right to keep her surname for her baby. And whenever I discuss this type of things and try to keep these things in a debate or whatever it is people called me feminists. But trust me if raising your voice for your own equal rights makes you feminists then I will tell each and every people that I am a feminists and I will keep raising my voice for equal rights. There is a definite necessity to make our legal and regulatory framework stronger for fighting the deep-embedded practice of gender inequality. We all know how women are being treated in society due to lack of awareness and inequality. Even in the womb, they are being killed thinking that they are going to be a burden to the family. Even after their birth they are made to stick to the household activities and are denied education, good jobs, etc., etc., I hope the entire world recognizes the efforts of men and women equally soon in our modern society.

