

STUDY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA
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Abstract:

Expanding opportunities for all citizens of the nation equally is the process of development. Additionally, it implies that there is little to no wellbeing gap between men and women. It is a difficult and complicated field of research that analyses gender equality and its effects on economic development in India. Equalities in rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all people, regardless of gender, are referred to as gender equality. On the other hand, socioeconomic development covers a variety of facets of a country's development, such as economic growth, poverty reduction, education, healthcare, and general well-being. The most important objectives for development are gender equality and female empowerment. It is essential for the fulfilment of human rights and a prerequisite for efficient and long-lasting socioeconomic development.

Keywords:

Gender disparities, Gender equality, socioeconomic development, Women's empowerment, Employment, Education

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Introduction:

Expanding opportunities for all citizens of the country equally is the process of development. Additionally, it implies that there is little to no wellbeing gap between men and women. It is of utmost relevance and complexity to look at gender equality and the complex relationship it's with India's advancement in society. India, a diverse and developing country, struggles with pervasive gender inequities in a variety of areas, including politics, work, healthcare, and education. Despite several legislative and regulatory initiatives focused at advancing gender parity, these discrepancies still exist. Understanding the relationships between gender equality and socioeconomic development is essential to achieving social justice and realising the full

potential of the country. The well-being of Indian society as a whole can be greatly impacted by the empowerment of women and the elimination of gender inequities. This investigation aims to delve into the many aspects of this pressing problem, offering light on the challenges, opportunities, and implications of advancing gender equality in the context of India's on-going development journey.

The main goals of development should be gender equality and female empowerment. It is essential for the fulfilment of human rights and a prerequisite for efficient and long-lasting socioeconomic development. No community or country can advance without giving men and women the same opportunities, advantages, and possibilities in life. Despite the fact that many gender



gaps have come to an end during the past few decades, there are still significant discrepancies across all industries, especially in emerging nations and among disadvantaged populations.

Concept of Gender Equality:

Between gender and sex, there is a difference. Gender equality indicates that both men and women's desires, needs, and objectives are taken into account, recognising the diversity of various groupings of men and women. Both human rights ideal and a requirement for long-term, growth that puts people first is gender equality. In reality, gender equality aims to achieve equal treatment at home, at work, in politics, in the accumulation of benefits like health, education, and employment, as well as in any other policy-designated domain.

Significant progress has been made worldwide all over the years in all facets of life. Data on the literacy rate, primary enrolment and graduation rates, life expectancy, new-born mortality rate, etc., have all demonstrated an upward trend. Unprecedented improvements in women's results, both in absolute terms and in comparison to men, have been observed in low- and middle-income nations. More women than before are educated and educated, and the gender gap in education has significantly narrowed. The enrolment gender gap in primary school has almost completely vanished, while gains in secondary and higher education have been tremendous. Women are living longer, healthier lives, and their risk of giving birth has decreased due to decreasing fertility. Additionally, they are engaging in greater market activity than ever.

The relationship between gender equality and socioeconomic development in India:

Gender Disparities in India:

India has a long history of gender inequality, with women frequently experiencing prejudice and having uneven access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making authority.

In categories like education, employment, healthcare, political representation, and property ownership, gender

discrepancies are evident. In India, gender discrepancies still exist in a number of areas, such as political representation, healthcare, employment, and education. Women frequently experience prejudice and have unequal access to opportunities, resources, and power. Significant disparities between sexes are observed in literacy rates, employment rates, and income levels. Further obstacles to gender equality include concerns including violence against women, gender-based stereotypes, and limited access to healthcare facilities. In order to achieve social justice, as well as to maximise India's human resource and promote inclusive socioeconomic growth, it is imperative to address these gaps.

Economic Growth Affect:

By improving labour force participation and productivity, gender equality can have an advantageous impact on economic growth. Economic development is facilitated by empowering women to work and take part in society. The total productivity and innovation of work environments can be increased by reducing gender-based discrimination. The economic development of India may be significantly impacted by gender equality. The labour force participation rate and overall productivity rise when women are given the same opportunities to join in the workforce. A more varied and capable workforce can be generated by utilising the neglected potential of half the population, which can stimulate innovation and economic growth. Additionally, minimising gender-based discrimination at work can increase labour market effectiveness and boost overall economic results. In this setting, gender equality is not only a matter of equitable treatment but also a crucial factor in the country's overall economic prosperity and sustained progress.

It is essential to gender equality and economic growth that boys and girls have equal access to education. People who have greater education are better able to participate in society while making educated decisions.

Education and Empowerment:

Actions to raise female literacy rates and encourage girls' education can have a good long-term impact. Equal access to education for boys and girls in India is crucial for socioeconomic advancement and empowerment, in addition to being a question of equity. People who have access to schooling are better equipped to make intelligent choices, participate fully in the workforce, and develop their communities and the country as a whole. Gains from initiatives to boost female literacy rates and encourage girls' education include improved maternal and child health outcomes, decreased fertility rates, and expanded economic prospects for women. The goal of gender equality in India must be pursued with the help of laws and regulations that are implemented and enforced. By passing laws like the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, which addresses a widespread problem affecting women's safety and wellbeing, India has made great progress. The Maternity Benefit Act also significantly contributes to protecting women's freedoms in jobs by offering maternity leave and benefits.

These legal safeguards are crucial weapons for defending the rights of women and advancing gender equality. Their success, however, hinges on strict enforcement, education efforts, and making sure that they result in substantive changes in women's lives. Additionally, it is crucial to keep up efforts to narrow legislative gaps, adjust to changing societal standards, and address problems like gender-based violence and discrimination.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study of gender equality and socioeconomic development in India
2. To investigate the connection between gender equality and socioeconomic development
3. To examine the gender pay gap and other forms of inequality

Review of Literature:

Ritu Dewan (2004), a sustainable human development approach is impossible to implement without taking

gender equality into account at every single level. According to numerous field studies, women and girls are the "poorest among the poor" and receive the least amount of nutrition, protein, medical care, all-levels of education, income, and employment, negating every facet of what is meant by sustainable human development. The report identifies the aspects of gendered poverty that can be addressed through gender sensitive budgeting and other best practises that have been adopted in many nations.

Blackden et al. (2006) According to their model, gender disparity has a detrimental effect on the accumulation of assets and factor productivity, which in turn has an effect on economic growth. More specifically, it is believed that because highly qualified females are excluded from the educational pipeline and the supply of skilled workers is deliberately restricted, gender inequality in educational institutions lowers the standard of human capital in a society, which has a negative impact on economic performance. A situation where the marginal return to teaching girls is larger than that of educating boys often results from this, indicating an improper allocation of educational resources. Limiting female education has the additional expense of lowering the social capital of the next generation because education for women dramatically lowers fertility and child mortality.

Kingdon and Theopold (2008) Changes in one area of gender equality have influenced and fostered changes in others. The following generation, strengthening the entire process. For instance, the growth of economic prospects for women in service industries in Bangladesh and India has increased school enrolments of girls, which result in greater employment rates and better educational outcomes results for the following generation.

Mridul Eapen & Asha Kapur Mehta : The economics of gender equality and development are the main topics of this research. It will examine the factors that affect when men and women differ in significant facets of wellbeing,



including education, health, access to assets and job opportunities, and the capacity to make wise decisions. Outlines how gendering the planning process will allow for inclusive growth. According to the gender-based evaluation of the strategy document for the twelfth five-year plan, women need to be acknowledged as growth agents in all spheres of India's political economy. Policies regarding gendering require to expand into the realm of macroeconomics. The creation of livelihoods and employment should be the main driver of growth from the perspective of gender, and the resources produced should support social policies that ensure everyone has access to education, health care, and social security.

Anne Mikkola and Carrie A. Miles: The economic literature focusing on the role of gender in the economy is reviewed in "Development and Gender Equality: The repercussions Causes, Challenges and Cures," with an emphasis on issues that may be anticipated to be the most important for overall development. It highlights the concerns and conclusions drawn from research on gender equality and women's situation in both industrialised and developing nations. As there are many variations in economic wellbeing levels across nations, so too do women's statuses vary widely among them. In other situations, the data enables an examination of the relationship between changes in the status of women in a nation over time and its economic progress.

Sunil B. Bhosale and V.B. Kakade (2012) explain the ideas underlying SHGs and women's empowerment. The research study's findings analysed the degree of women's emancipation attained as a result of the establishment of SHGs in the district of Kolhapur. Additionally, it makes recommendations for stepping up efforts to empower women. This essay offers a fresh viewpoint on the possibility for female empowerment in self-help groups. Measuring the differences between beneficiaries' pre-SHG and post-SHG situations allows for an evaluation

of the program's effects on earnings, welfare, and social empowerment.

Need of the Study:

The urgent and pervasive gender gaps that still exist in India, despite notable advancements in growth in society and the economy, are the driving force behind the need for this study. Millions of women and girls are impacted by these discrepancies, which restrict their access to healthcare, economic opportunities, education, and political involvement. Recognising that gender equality is not just a moral requirement but also a key factor in sustainable growth will help students to understand the needed for this study. This study intends to educate evidence-based policies and actions that can help break the cycle of inequality, empower women, and contribute to the overall socioeconomic growth of India by thoroughly exploring the multiple opportunities and problems in achieving gender equality.

Statement of the Problem of the Study:

The researcher's work, "A Study of Gender Equality and Socio-Economic Development in Thane District," is an empirical investigation that considers factors related to employment, education, and health. In the socioeconomic growth of any nation, women play a special role. Since the first International Women's Year in 1979, there has been a significant shift in the position of women all around the world. However, achieving gender equality is still a long way off, particularly in India. It's time to stop and think about whether we want to continue down the same route or whether we need to make some changes.

Research Methodology:

Secondary data is used for this study. Secondary data is valuable in explaining the trends of particular variable over the years. In this regard, secondary data collection mainly involves the publication of state government, Union government and international agency. Various books, journals and reports relevant to the subject were also referred to collect the information.

Significance and Scope of the Study:

The importance of this study rests in its ability to shed light on the complex interplay between gender equality and socioeconomic advancement in India, a country distinguished by its variety and fast-paced change. This research provides a road to accurate choices regarding policies by examining the extent of disparities in gender across many domains, including education, employment, healthcare, and political representation. Addressing these inequalities has numerous benefits, including supporting inclusive development, boosting the economy, developing human capital, and improving societal well-being overall. It also maintains the values of justice. In the end, this research offers a prism through which to see India's future as one that is more just and wealthy.

Suggestions:

The study of gender equality and socioeconomic growth in India leads to a number of significant recommendations. In the beginning, on-going efforts are required to increase awareness of and alter cultural perceptions about gender roles and norms. Comprehensive initiatives for gender-sensitive education and awareness can help dispel misconceptions and advance an egalitarian culture. Second, it is crucial to consistently examine, strengthen, and effectively enforce legal and policy frameworks that promote gender equality. Maintaining equal access to women to representation in politics, healthcare, livelihoods, and education should be a primary focus. Additionally, encouraging women's economic empowerment through programmes like skill development and credit access can increase their participation in the workforce and spur economic growth. The promotion of female entrepreneurship is equally crucial.

Conclusion:

The research on gender equality and its effects on socioeconomic growth in India highlight the urgent need to overcome entrenched disparities in gender in a variety of fields. Even though India has achieved tremendous

progress towards encouraging gender equity with the adoption various laws and regulations, the path to achieving true gender equality is still a work in progress. This endeavour is important because it upholds justice values while also acknowledging the crucial role gender equality plays in promoting inclusive development, spurring economic growth, and improving the general well-being of the country. India may advance towards achieving gender equality by sustaining its efforts, including rigorous enforcement of current laws, targeted efforts, and a commitment to changing social conventions and attitudes.

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