

THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Abstract:

Women play a vital role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through their contributions to economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability. This paper highlights how women act as key agents of change in areas such as education, healthcare, poverty reduction, and climate action. Despite their importance, gender inequality and limited access to resources restrict their full participation. The study emphasizes that empowering women through education, equal opportunities, and inclusion in decision-making significantly accelerates progress toward the SDGs. It concludes that gender equality is essential for sustainable and inclusive development.

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Introduction:

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, provide a global framework to address major challenges such as poverty, inequality, and climate change by 2030. Gender equality is a central component of these goals, as women play a crucial role in driving economic growth, social progress, and environmental sustainability. Their contributions are especially significant in areas such as education, healthcare, poverty reduction, and community development.

However, despite their important role, women continue to face barriers such as unequal access to education, limited economic opportunities, and underrepresentation in decision-making processes. These challenges restrict their ability to contribute fully to

sustainable development. This paper explores the contribution of women in achieving the SDGs and highlights the need for empowering women through equal opportunities, access to resources, and inclusive policies to ensure sustainable and inclusive development.

Conceptual Framework:

This study is based on the concept that women's empowerment plays a central role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Women's empowerment is treated as the key independent variable and includes factors such as access to education, economic opportunities, healthcare, and participation in decision-making. These elements strengthen women's capacity to actively contribute to development processes. Overall, the framework suggests that when women are empowered and supported by inclusive systems, their contributions

significantly accelerate progress toward sustainable and inclusive development.

Review of Literature:

Studies show that women play a vital role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in areas like economic growth, education, health, and environmental sustainability. Research highlights that women's empowerment improves family well-being and community development. However, barriers such as gender inequality, limited resources, and social norms restrict their full participation. Overall, literature emphasizes that promoting gender equality and empowering women are essential for achieving sustainable development.

Research Methodology:

This study uses a descriptive research design based on secondary data collected from books, journals, reports, and online sources related to women's empowerment and the SDGs. The data is analyzed qualitatively to understand the contribution of women in sustainable development. The study focuses on key areas such as education, health, economy, and environment, and examines how women's participation influences the achievement of the SDGs.

Role of Women in Achieving SDGs

Women contribute to SDGs in several ways:

- Education (SDG 4): Educated women promote literacy and awareness in society.
- Health (SDG 3): Women improve family health and childcare practices.
- Economic Growth (SDG 8): Women's participation in the workforce boosts economic development.
- Poverty Reduction (SDG 1): Women help increase household income and reduce poverty.
- Environmental Sustainability (SDG 13): Women play a role in conservation and sustainable resource use.

Challenges Faced by Women:

Despite their contributions, women face several challenges:

Gender discrimination:

Limited access to education and employment
Lack of financial independence
Underrepresentation in leadership roles
Cultural and social barriers

Discussion:

The analysis shows that women are essential contributors to sustainable development. Their roles in education, health, economy, and environment directly support the achievement of multiple SDGs. However, structural inequalities continue to restrict their potential.

Empowering women through education, skill development, financial inclusion, and policy support can significantly accelerate progress toward the SDGs. Governments and institutions must ensure gender-sensitive policies and create equal opportunities for women in all sectors.

Recommendations:

Women should be given equal access to education, employment, and skill development to strengthen their role in achieving the SDGs. Economic empowerment through financial support, self-help groups, and entrepreneurship opportunities is also essential. Governments must ensure women's participation in decision-making and implement strict laws to reduce gender discrimination. Improving healthcare access and promoting awareness about gender equality will further support sustainable development. Overall, strong policies and social support are needed to fully utilize women's potential in achieving the SDGs.

Conclusion:

Women play a vital role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through their contributions to education, health, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Their active participation strengthens families, communities, and national development.

However, persistent challenges such as gender inequality, limited access to resources, and social barriers continue to restrict their full potential. The study concludes that empowering women is essential for accelerating progress toward all SDGs. Ensuring equal opportunities, removing discrimination, and supporting women's participation in decision-making will lead to more inclusive and sustainable development.

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