

→ Gender Equality
is a Myth

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The Essay

On the starry night, an unidentified girl, severely injured, was roaming on the road in a search of assistance. Suddenly, she reached to a filling station with her injuries. Then she was shifted to hospital and received necessary treatment. This girl is Saba who is known as a survivor of honour killing. Saba wanted to marry a boy whom she liked. However, her family did not display their consent. After being disappointed with her family, Saba decided to elope with her boyfriend. Unfortunately, she was captured by her uncle and brother. They had shot her in face but she survived. This is a heart-wrenching story entails that how women are not independent in their decisions. On the contrary, men are not dependent on anyone for their decisions. Therefore, the complete gender equality has not been achieved yet. In society, the male child is still preferred over female child. Additionally, women face inferior status, restrictions, and gender discrimination. They are considered a mere object that can be used in either way for getting benefits. Furthermore, women have limited opportunities in education, politics, and job sector. Apart

from this, transgenders are also victims of gender discrimination. Although, gender inequality has penetrated itself in society, certain careful strategies can root out this disease. These steps include ending patriarchal mindset, educating women, and treating all genders equally. Thus, unequal treatment of women in society entails that gender equality still remain a myth. However, some careful steps can effectively convert this myth into an undeniable reality.

Before delving into the complexities of gender inequality, it is pertinent to explore the hidden meaning of gender equality. This term refers to the equality of all sexes irrespective of biological distinctions. According to UNICEF, gender equality refers to a situation where all boys, girls and transgender children enjoy equal reputation and respect. It is deprived of any kind of discrimination among any gender. Therefore, gender equality refers to the equality of all genders. Currently, gender equality has become a myth because of prevailing discrimination among genders. Various grounds illustrate that gender equality is a myth.

First ground indicating gender inequality is having an obsession with male child. In pure conservative societies, male child is given more preference than female child. On the other hand, female child is considered ominous in many parts of the world. For instance, the case study of India is very important in this regard. In many societies of India, female child is killed before birth through abortion. In 2023, 200 cases of female infanticide cases occurred in India (The Hindu). Therefore, the killing of female child entails that gender equality is a myth.

Secondly, women are considered inferior than men. Due to biological differences, they remain marginalised to acquire more benefits like men. Resultantly, women are not allowed to ~~join~~ participate in difficult tasks. Although, women are capable of performing hard tasks but conservatives do not consider it right. Under this concept of fragile women, most of the women do not get proper opportunities. For instance, tribal women are not allowed to perform outside works. Hence, considering women inferior than men highlights gender inequality.

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Thirdly, women bear the trap of restrictions. As a result of their biological difference, they are restricted from performing many tasks. Conversely, men are allowed to perform all types of works. To explain it further, women are confined to homes. For instance, Taliban have restricted women from singing and visiting bazaars without veil. These restrictions on women create gender-based differences. Hence, the strict restrictions on women makes gender equality a myth.

Similarly, women face gender discrimination. They are discriminated due to their feminine gender. Women are not allowed to perform certain jobs. Unfortunately, many jobs have become man-specific due to gender discrimination. A pertinent example of gender discrimination can be observed in Afghanistan. The Afghan women are not allowed to participate in outdoor activities. This highlights that gender equality is still a distant dream. To conclude, the gender discrimination promotes gender inequality.

The most unfortunate factor indicating gender inequality is that women are considered as an

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Object. Under this perception, women face exploitation at the hands of men. For instance, domestic violence occurs only when men treat women not like an object. Tehmina Durrani, a renowned author, has argued that domestic violence originates due to a grim mentality of man. [My Feudal Lord]. The domestic violence also highlights the gender difference between man and woman. Therefore, gender equality still remains a myth because of woman's status of an object.

In the same manner, women are not allowed to live their life independently. They are forced to live under numerous restrictions. The woman who dares to separate her way from the traditional route she faces the wrath of society. Qandeel Balouch, a model, had faced a similar fate. She dared to mould her life according to her own wish. However, she was not liked by her family. Her own brother had harassed her mercilessly. Conversely, men are allowed to live their life according to their own wishes. Hence, restrictions on women stimulate gender inequality.

Apart from this, women are discouraged from the educational sector. Many girls are not allowed

to pursue education. According to the estimation, 18 million girls are not enrolled in schools. [Economic Survey of Pakistan]. Furthermore, in most of educational institutions, women are not hired as teachers. This provides an edge to men over women. Therefore, the discouraging women in educational sector, enhances gender inequality.

Similarly, women have limited opportunities in politics. Only the women of influential families get access to politics. The common women are confidentially discouraged from joining politics. A renowned author Tehmina Durrani has argued that women are discouraged from joining politics by their male counterparts. [My Feudal Lord]. Moreover, the cabinet of Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif, includes only one woman minister. This indicates gender disparity in politics. Hence, limited opportunities for women in politics prove that gender equality is a myth.

Additionally, women are not preferred for high level jobs. It is due to misconception that women have less mental capacity than men. Resultantly, they are unsuitable for high profile jobs. For instance, all the CEOs of major multi-national

corporations are men. Moreover, it is a rare incident that a woman is authorised to supervise any department single-handedly. Therefore, discrimination against women in jobs also reveal that gender equality is a myth.

Apart from this, transgenders face societal discrimination. They are looked as inferior creature. Moreover, they face public criticism and harsh attitude of many individuals. Most importantly, transgenders are discouraged from pursuing jobs. Moreover, they are also restricted from living a respectful life. Hence, similar to women, transgender also face societal discrimination. This gender-based discrimination makes gender equality a myth.

Gender equality has become an obvious myth. However, it does not mean that this myth can not be converted into a reality.

Firstly, there is a dire need of eradicating patriarchal attitude. The sufferings of women and transgenders are due to patriarchal attitude of men. Once this evil of patriarchy is uprooted, the gender discrimination will ultimately end.

A renowned feminist author, Simone De Beauvoir has also argued that

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the eradication of patriarchy could end the sufferings of other genders. Hence, eradicating patriarchal mindset will promote gender equality.

Similarly, equal opportunities should be provided to women. The provision of equal opportunities can create equality among all genders.

According to Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, the provision of equal opportunities to all genders can promote gender equality. Moreover, the provision of equal opportunities can end the grievances of all genders. Hence, equal opportunities to all genders can end gender inequality.

In addition to above mentioned factors, women should receive education for fighting against discrimination. The education will make women able to understand their issues effectively. As a result of this, women will raise a voice for their rights. "Aurat March in Pakistan is a manifestation of this reality. Moreover, educated women will force men to provide them their fair rights. Therefore, educating women is necessary for uprooting gender inequality.

The last but not the least, women all genders should be

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treated respectfully. This change in behaviour of men can provide secure space to all other genders.

For instance, providing respect transgenders can create possibility of jobs for them.

Similarly, respect to women can end gender discrimination and harassment.

Therefore, treating all genders with respect can end gender inequality.

In conclusion, it becomes abundantly clear that gender equality is a myth due to various problems.

The problem of gender discrimination, and gender lockdowns make gender equality a myth. However, certain steps like providing education to women and treating all genders respectfully can end gender inequality.

Many countries has converted this myth into a reality. Iceland is a prominent example of converting gender equality from myth into a reality. By following the example of Iceland, other countries can also uproot gender inequality and promote gender equality. The day is not far enough when the myth of gender equality will become an undeniable reality.

