

Global Perspectives on Gender Equality: A Quantitative Analysis of Perceptions, Policy Support, and Cultural Beliefs

Syeda Dua

Research Scholar, Department of Management Science
NUML University Hyderabad Campus
duasyeda659i@gmail.com

Ahmed Raza

Research Scholar, Department of Management Science
NUML University Hyderabad Campus
ahmedrazayousufzaki@gmail.com

Mehwish Bhatti

HoD, Department of Management Science
NUML University Hyderabad Campus
mehwish.bhatti@numl.edu.pk

Received: May 2025

Revised: August 2025

Accepted: September 2025

Published: September 2025

Abstract

The gender equality issue is a major problem affecting our world as it deprives the people of the assets they require, restricts their visibility in society, and curbs their fundamental liberties in every crucial aspect of the society. The policies should be inclusive in the sense that they should analyze the perceptions used by the individuals in various regions and groups concerning gender roles. This paper examines how gender equality is viewed in the world in a systematic quantitative research using data of 200 people in eight parts of the world. The study considers differences in perceptions, policy support, and cultural beliefs on gender equality disaggregated by gender, education, income, age, and religion. The main results show that female and non-binary respondents had better scores of gender equality perception and support of gender-equity policies. The most progressive attitudes were demonstrated by the participants who had a master degree and above, whereas the respondents with no education were less supportive. Without considering the Asian area, Europe is highly rated in terms of cultural belief, South Asia and the Middle East are lowest ranked. These findings indicate that education and regional background are important factors that influence the attitudes regarding gender. The paper reiterates the importance of culturally-specific, intersectional and multi-level policy solutions that will promote gender equality in the world. The study is part of the wider dialogue because it provides the empirical data of how identity and structure define the global attitudes towards gender equity.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Cultural Beliefs, Policy Support, Perception.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most urgent and dimensional questions in the modern worldwide agenda is gender equality. In general terms, gender equality has been found to be the lack of discrimination of an individual based on their sex in provision of opportunities, distribution of resources, and political,

economic as well as social representation. Although the principle of gender equality is embedded in many international statements, such as the Sustainable Development Goal 5 of the United Nations, there is still a great gap between the countries and even the various aspects of the society. Gender equality as a global issue carries a rich cultural, political, historical, and institutional process, thus posing a dynamic and difficult issue to both study and campaign. The problem of gender inequality is complex not only in terms of situational and interconnected expression but also due to the lack of connection between the desired policy and its real implementation in different geographies and sectors (Xu, Mussagulova, and Zhou, 2024).

The push to facilitate gender equality in the international arena has increased significantly since the late 20th century. Through holding of international conferences like the UN World Conferences on Women including Mexico City (1975), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995), historic commitments were made to improve the rights of women and the status of gender equity. One of the key aspects of these summits was to acknowledge gender inequality as a systemic problem associated with the power and socio-economic hierarchy structures. Such movements throughout the world culminated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that has gained the status of a normative guideline that governs national gender equity policies in more than 180 countries (Kardam, 2002). Nevertheless, even with the international agreement and moral conformity, there is a tendency to practice them unevenly as there are various structural, ideological, and institutional limitations.

It has also been strongly urged to incorporate a generic approach on international development and governance structures and systems through specific mechanisms like gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming can be distinct as methodical integration of gender issues in any phase of policy formulation and implementation. This approach is successful, as according to True (2003), it is only possible to have equal opportunities when every government and other public office establishes gender-related regulations. Different organizations achieved different results from their gender mainstreaming efforts. Research shows that different regions and fields made progress in female participation and gender-neutral policy creation while many others maintained outdated treatment of women through superficial updates and low investment in gender-related solutions (Kennett & Payne, 2014).

To grasp gender equality across all nations requires understanding how social, political, and economic factors determine gender roles in each region. Research shows that achieving gender equality depends entirely on how different communities understand and use their social beliefs and systems of power. Academic research must add layers that evaluate how these different forms of marginalization interact on top of gender, race, class, religious identity and area location (Syed & Ali, 2018). In Muslim-majority societies cultural and religious ideologies reinforce traditional gender roles and control what women can do in public professional spaces according to Shah (2020).

According to feminist scholarship the push for universal gender equality lost its political impact and caught too heavily in technology when planning this change. Modern foreign aid organizations agree on the need for these terms, yet experts say global development programs have lost their political power and transformative impact. Cornwall and Rivas (2015) argue that these terms have been co-opted into bureaucratic language, losing their original feminist critique and becoming vehicles for managerial and apolitical development approaches. Thus, any serious engagement with global gender equality must account for how language, ideology, and power intersect in shaping gender discourses and policy outcomes.

When analyzing the present situation, gender disparity remains high in a number of areas. In politics, women are still underrepresented in parliaments and their executive leadership in most of

the countries. Economically, the wage differences still exist with the same level of qualification and occupational segregation still routes females towards jobs that are less remunerated and less secure. In education and health, all over, improvements have been realized but inequalities still persist in the region, especially access to reproductive healthcare and quality education in girls (Shannon et al., 2019). Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic widened the existing disparities, impacting most women disproportionately in terms of economic security, augmenting household chores, and exposing them to even more risks of gender-based violence (Smith and Sinkford, 2022).

The development discourse of the world is becoming aware of the reality that gender equality is not merely a moral and human right imperative, but a booster of economic development and society welfare. The increase in productivity, innovation and inclusion in governance have been attributed to gender parity participation in education and labor. There are a number of social customs and long-standing business practices that stand in the path towards the equal rights of genders despite the difficulty in making progress. The use of private companies to make gender policy gains brings positive benefits and possible problems. Company social responsibility efforts can improve workplace diversity, but they need a stronger structure to effectively break down male power rules according to Prügl and True (2014).

Modern feminist political economy demands studying how worldwide market capitalism influences and shapes gender inequality. Under new development strategies gender equality focuses on individual empowerment instead of group action and systems transformation. According to Razavi (2019), a focus on measurable outcomes in worldwide gender policy makes it harder to address vital social factors that cannot be fully captured through numerical evaluation. Since gender equality operates across different levels and connects with relationships, we need an integrated approach that links policies at national scale with systems at regional level and personal identities at individual level. A complete view of gender equality needs to combine examination of society's laws workplaces and personal stages that produce gender effects according to Syed and Ali (2018). The existence of progressive legal systems against gender bias does not block their enforcement because workplace and social environments continue to discriminate against women. Emerging research also points to the ecological and geographical dimensions of gender inequality. Van de Vliert and Kluwer's research in 2024 shows that natural environment variation including climate systems and seasonal cycles influenced past gender standards of work division. Their global research displays societies at diverse climates experience stronger female equality because environment affects gender development. Researchers now have better ways to examine the relationship between physical environments and social systems in determining regional gender parity levels.

The academic community struggles to achieve gender equality within scientific, medical, and global health activities. Healthcare facilities employ many female workers although they hold few top positions. The elevation of single-gender teams in leadership blocks important gender viewpoint contributions and creates lasting obstacles for women's movement up the career path (Shannon et al., 2019). Studies on GTL and gender-based analysis support these efforts yet institutions find it difficult to maintain and strengthen them as documented by Smith and Sinkford in 2022.

Dilli (2024) suggests using combined long-term historical research and recent social science practices to find the real sources and possible changes of gender inequality. Her studies track how large-scale shifts including colonial activities and industrial progress led to permanent improvements and setbacks for women across many societies. Researchers studying current

inequalities need to understand past patterns to find why these challenges endure and change happens.

People now study the way education helps to create gender equality. Education systems should support their strategies by teaching faculty how to adopt gender-inclusive teaching methods and by adding gender perspective lessons to the curriculum. In 2023 Marco-Simó et al studied how a Spanish university implemented gender competence strategies across its computer science courses to reveal success barriers faced when designing inclusive education in STEM.

Laws and guidelines about gender norms produced globally need different adaptations in each region. Local actors lead to the success of international frameworks because these standards depend on institutions and people in each location who make them work. The drive toward gender equality in Southeast Asia runs into opposition from families and communities which support traditional male leadership roles according to religious or national values. As shown by Shah (2020), specific cultural perspectives in Muslim societies determine how people experience gender equality and their possibilities at work.

The growing connections between public-private organizations across different nations bring fresh ideas to gender management but also raise important questions about their authority and responsibility. Private sector resources bring greater value to gender equity through efforts organized by the UN Women's Empowerment Principles. Prugl and True (2014) claim that by assessing the functionality of these programs, we will understand whether they increase the brand image without selling the idea of gender equality on the market.

Many social groups' combined political beliefs and practices influence worldwide attempts to achieve gender balance. Despite positive moves forward many essential goals remain difficult to reach between our ethical goals and our everyday life. Everyone must stay involved and make real changes in different sectors to reach gender equality while considering all gender interests and understanding local needs for success. A worldwide approach to gender equality needs to identify gender differences in all contexts while fighting global systemic systems that keep inequalities going.

Research Objectives

RO1: To assess global public perceptions of gender equality across different regions, genders, education levels, income brackets, and age groups.

RO2: To assess the degree of endorsing gender-equity policies in the different demographic groups.

RO3: To examine the effect of cultural and normative beliefs on gender roles attitudes.

RO4: To conclude best meaningful demographic analysts of progressive gender attitudes and support of strategy.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the differences in the perceptions of gender equality among different regions in the world and demographic groups?

RQ2: Which demographic variables (e.g., gender, education, income) have the most significant effect on the support of gender-equity policies?

RQ3: What is the influence of cultural beliefs and traditional norms on the attitudes towards gender equality?

RQ4: How strongly is education and income connected to progressive gender views and increased support of policy?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to the wider scholarly and political argument on gender equality in various significant aspects. First, it offers a factual insight into the role of identity features and structural locations and the formation of modern attitudes to gender equity in different worlds. Second, the study provides a better insight into the gender attitudes than single-dimension analyses by considering three different but interrelated dimensions: perceptions, policy support, and cultural beliefs. Third, the research results can be used to design more effective, culturally responsive, and specific interventions and promote gender equality at different levels. Lastly, the study has a methodological contribution because it shows the usefulness of the cross-regional survey research involving intersectional views and various dimensions of gender attitudes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Foundations of Gender Equality

Gender equality as normative ideal and analytical concept has gone through a great change especially in the past decades. Initially, the conceptualizations were more concerned with formal legal equality and equal opportunity to education and job prospects (Walby, 2005). Modern conceptualizations have understood gender equality as multidimensional, which does not just equal rights and opportunities but also substantive equality of outcome, appreciation of different gender identities, and subversion of the underlying power dynamics and cultural conventions that reinforce inequality (Kabeer, 2015). This widened understanding of equality distinguishes that formal equality, Gender equality as normative ideal and analytical concept has gone through a great change especially in the past decades. Initially, the conceptualizations were more concerned with formal legal equality and equal opportunity to education and job prospects (Walby, 2005). Modern conceptualizations have understood gender equality as multidimensional, which does not just equal rights and opportunities but also substantive equality of outcome, appreciation of different gender identities, and subversion of the underlying power dynamics and cultural conventions that reinforce inequality (Kabeer, 2015). This widened understanding of equal opportunity recognizes that proper equality, which is ingrained in law and procedure, is not enough; functional equality needs to contract with structural drawbacks, implicit biases, and intersecting discernment that allow relegated groups to exercise their privileges and access opportunities in occupied (Fredman, 2016).

Nentwich (2006) distinguishes four clearly different discursive constructions of gender equality that are frequently used in organizational and policy terms namely sameness (identifying and treating men and women in the same way), difference (acknowledging and appreciating gender differences), bandwidth (recognizing diversity within gender categories), and deconstruction (encroaching binary gender categories themselves). These conflicting frames are simultaneously present in institutions and may result in the conflictual approaches to policies and implementation issues. These various conceptualizations are crucial in explaining the attitudes of the people towards gender equality because people may have varying interpretations of the meaning and the definition of gender equality.

International activities and Policy guidelines

The global concern of gender equality was boosted by the UN Decade of Women (1975-1985) and the world conferences that put down extensive action platforms. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995, came up with statements on twelve key priorities that needed to be addressed, which included: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment and the girl child, as proposed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN Women, 1995). This framework acknowledged the inter-relationship between these areas as well as the need to have holistic, integrated solutions.

CEDAW can be termed an international bill of rights of women and has been ratified by 189 countries by 2024, becoming one of the most popular human rights documents to date (UN Women, 2024). Nevertheless, most of the signatory states have made reservations especially on the clauses pertaining to the family law and religious practice, which in effect restrain the transformative ability of the Convention (Kardam, 2002). In addition, implementation and enforcement mechanisms are still weak and most of the countries do not file necessary periodic reports and do not convert the treaty requirements into domestic laws and practice (Simmons, 2009).

The attempt to incorporate gender equality to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marks a major development with regard to international systems of development. SDG 5 is aimed at gender equality and women empowerment with the indicators referring to legal frameworks, political representation, reproductive rights and economic participation (UN, 2015). Moreover, gender equality is considered a cross-cutting issue that can be applied to all the seventeen SDGs due to the increased interest in recognizing that sustainable development cannot be achieved without gender equity (Unterhalter, 2020).

Gender Mainstreaming: Dream and Reality

The idea of gender mainstreaming was developed in the 1990s as a whole approach to considering gender outlook on all policies, programs and institutional practices (True, 2003). The strategy involves evaluating the policies on the basis of the different impacts that the proposed policies have on women and men, changing the policies to provide equal results, and putting in place accountability systems to track the progress. The advocates believe that mainstreaming is no longer limited to women-specific interventions; but rather to change the underlying institutional structures and operations that perpetuate inequality (Rao & Kelleher, 2005).

Nevertheless, there are strong challenges and inconclusive findings of mainstreaming implementation based on empirical research. Kennett and Payne (2014) record the documentations of mainstreaming programs being superficial with little resources and poor capacity building. Mainstreaming has been diminished in most places to procedural compliance e.g. gender-disaggregated information gathering or compulsory gender analysis templates without any change in power relationships or resource allocation (Bacchi, 2009). According to Lombardo and Mergaert (2013), gender washing is the widespread phenomenon according to which the organizations may resort to the rhetoric of gender equality without the intention of change.

Cornwall and Rivas (2015) present a more basic criticism, in that mainstreaming has led to feminists being depoliticized in their agendas. They argue that gender equality has been integrated in the structures of bureaucratic development in such a way that it has taken away its radical qualities and turned politically controversial needs of structural change into technical management

issues. This removes any observation of the power structures and vested interests at work in maintaining inequality and emphasizes on capacity building and transfer of knowledge as a problem that can be solved by experts as though inequality is just a technical issue.

The Gender Equality Measurement: Indices and Indicators.

In order to understand the level of gender equality in different countries, different indices have been established. Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a measurement of gender-related disadvantage, created by the United Nations Development Programme, and consists of three dimensions, which are reproductive health, empowerment (parliamentary representation and educational attainment), and economic activity (UNDP, 2023). Published by World Economic Forum on an annual basis, the Global Gender Gap Index (GGI) measures gender equality in terms of economic participation, educational achievements, health, and survival, and political empowerment (WEF, 2023).

Although these indices are useful, as comparative data and have effectively highlighted the existence of gender inequalities, they have multiple methodological and conceptual weaknesses. Permanyer (2013) illustrates that index rankings are very sensitive to the methodology used in terms of the selection of indicators, weighting, and aggregation techniques. The rankings of countries by different indices tend to differ significantly, thus casting doubt on what is measured. The more basic criticism is provided by Bacchi (2009), according to which quantitative indices inevitably reduce complex social phenomena and can be dominated by Western normative ideas of what should be considered as equality and may therefore result in the obscurement of culturally distinctive forms of gender relations and inequalities.

Razavi, (2019) warns that the prioritization of quantifiable indicators in the development of third world nations can create the temptation of assuming that it is simpler to deal with those aspects of development that are easier to quantify, leaving unexplored those aspects that are difficult to quantify like time poverty, the burden of unpaid care work, and social norms that limit agency. This measurement bias can lead to the wrong priorities of policies and resource distribution, where one will focus on those areas that are most readily shown to improve instead of those that are the necessary ones to change. is entrenched in law and policy, is not enough; substantive equality needs to deal with structural disadvantages, implicit prejudices, and intersecting discrimination that allow marginalized groups to exercise their rights and access opportunities in full (Fredman, 2016).

Nentwich (2006) distinguishes four clearly different discursive constructions of gender equality that are frequently used in organizational and policy terms namely sameness (identifying and treating men and women in the same way), difference (acknowledging and appreciating gender differences), bandwidth (recognizing diversity within gender categories), and deconstruction (encroaching binary gender categories themselves). These conflicting frames are simultaneously present in institutions and may result in the conflictual approaches to policies and implementation issues. These various conceptualizations are crucial in explaining the attitudes of the people towards gender equality because people may have varying interpretations of the meaning and the definition of gender equality.

International activities and Policy guidelines

The global concern of gender equality was boosted by the UN Decade of Women (1975-1985) and the world conferences that put down extensive action platforms. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995, came up with statements on twelve key priorities that needed to be

addressed, which included: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment and the girl child, as proposed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN Women, 1995). This framework acknowledged the inter-relationship between these areas as well as the need to have holistic, integrated solutions.

CEDAW can be termed an international bill of rights of women and has been ratified by 189 countries by 2024, becoming one of the most popular human rights documents to date (UN Women, 2024). Nevertheless, most of the signatory states have made reservations especially on the clauses pertaining to the family law and religious practice, which in effect restrain the transformative ability of the Convention (Kardam, 2002). In addition, implementation and enforcement mechanisms are still weak and most of the countries do not file necessary periodic reports and do not convert the treaty requirements into domestic laws and practice (Simmons, 2009).

The attempt to incorporate gender equality to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marks a major development with regard to international systems of development. SDG 5 is aimed at gender equality and women empowerment with the indicators referring to legal frameworks, political representation, reproductive rights and economic participation (UN, 2015). Moreover, gender equality is considered a cross-cutting issue that can be applied to all the seventeen SDGs due to the increased interest in recognizing that sustainable development cannot be achieved without gender equity (Unterhalter, 2020).

Gender Mainstreaming: Dream and Reality

The idea of gender mainstreaming was developed in the 1990s as a whole approach to considering gender outlook on all policies, programs and institutional practices (True, 2003). The strategy involves evaluating the policies on the basis of the different impacts that the proposed policies have on women and men, changing the policies to provide equal results, and putting in place accountability systems to track the progress. The advocates believe that mainstreaming is no longer limited to women-specific interventions; but rather to change the underlying institutional structures and operations that perpetuate inequality (Rao & Kelleher, 2005).

Nevertheless, there are strong challenges and inconclusive findings of mainstreaming implementation based on empirical research. Kennett and Payne (2014) record the documentations of mainstreaming programs being superficial with little resources and poor capacity building. Mainstreaming has been diminished in most places to procedural compliance e.g. gender-disaggregated information gathering or compulsory gender analysis templates without any change in power relationships or resource allocation (Bacchi, 2009). According to Lombardo and Mergaert (2013), gender washing is the widespread phenomenon according to which the organizations may resort to the rhetoric of gender equality without the intention of change.

Cornwall and Rivas (2015) present a more basic criticism, in that mainstreaming has led to feminists being depoliticized in their agendas. They argue that gender equality has been integrated in the structures of bureaucratic development in such a way that it has taken away its radical qualities and turned politically controversial needs of structural change into technical management issues. This removes any observation of the power structures and vested interests at work in maintaining inequality and emphasizes on capacity building and transfer of knowledge as a problem that can be solved by experts as though inequality is just a technical issue.

The Gender Equality Measurement: Indices and Indicators

In order to understand the level of gender equality in different countries, different indices have been established. Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a measurement of gender-related disadvantage, created by the United Nations Development Program, and consists of three dimensions, which are reproductive health, empowerment (parliamentary representation and educational attainment), and economic activity (UNDP, 2023). Published by World Economic Forum on an annual basis, the Global Gender Gap Index (GGI) measures gender equality in terms of economic participation, educational achievements, health, and survival, and political empowerment (WEF, 2023).

Although these indices are useful, as comparative data and have effectively highlighted the existence of gender inequalities, they have multiple methodological and conceptual weaknesses. Permanyer (2013) illustrates that index rankings are very sensitive to the methodology used in terms of the selection of indicators, weighting, and aggregation techniques. The rankings of countries by different indices tend to differ significantly, thus casting doubt on what is measured. The more basic criticism is provided by Bacchi (2009), according to which quantitative indices inevitably reduce complex social phenomena and can be dominated by Western normative ideas of what should be considered as equality and may therefore result in the obscurement of culturally distinctive forms of gender relations and inequalities.

Razavi, (2019) warns that the prioritization of quantifiable indicators in the development of third world nations can create the temptation of assuming that it is simpler to deal with those aspects of development that are easier to quantify, leaving unexplored those aspects that are difficult to quantify like time poverty, the burden of unpaid care work, and social norms that limit agency. This measurement bias can lead to the wrong priorities of policies and resource distribution, where one will focus on those areas that are most readily shown to improve instead of those that are the necessary ones to change.

Education and Gender Attitudes

Education has always proved to be one of the best predictors of progressive gender attitudes in various settings. The exposure to higher education is associated with a positive relationship with gender equality policies, egalitarian views on gender roles and traditional patriarchal norms (Dilli, 2024; Marco-Simo et al., 2023). There are various mechanisms that can account to this relationship. To begin with, education initiates people into different worldviews and models of critical thinking that question the assumption made about gender (hooks, 2000). Second, schools, especially those at higher level are better placed to represent egalitarian standards and offer gender lines the ability to interact in the workplace and in leadership (Ridgeway, 2011). Third, tertiary education enhances entry to professional jobs and economic self-reliance, which decreases the susceptibility of women to patriarchal control and offers males alternative sources of masculinity other than that of the provider (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

A narrow study that particularly tests gender education interventions has shown that they can be used to change attitudes and behaviors. The study by Marco-Simo et al. (2023) measured the use of gender competency training in university STEM programs in Spain and established that systematic integration of the curriculum and faculty development had a significant impact on gender awareness and adherence to workplace equity among students. They however also reported significant difficulties of implementation, such as faculty opposition, fears of standards reduction, and perceptions on the part of students that gender content had nothing to offer to technical subjects.

The connection between education and gender attitude is not always linear and unidirectional. The article by Fors Connolly et al. (2020) includes a so-called gender equality paradox, where gender equality is higher in some countries, but some occupational preferences and personality traits have greater gender differences. Instead, they state that increased equality can be counter-intuitive and can result in the more open expression of natural or acquired preferences, refuting naive beliefs regarding the connection between structural equality and individual preferences. It is this discovery that highlights the complexity of the gender attitude development and the weakness of structure interventions as the sole means of altering the long held preferences and identities.

Social economic status and Gender perspectives.

The level of income and the more general socioeconomic status itself has a strong impact on the gender attitudes but it is mediated by various other factors such as the occupational type, the geographical location, cultural background. Additional affluent people incline to be extra supportive of gender equality strategies and more egalitarian social values (Dhuli et al., 2023; Garcia et al., 2023). A number of reasons have been put forward to explain this trend. Economic security can offer both cognitive and material resources to participate in social justice issues other than the basic survival needs (Inglehart and Norris, 2003). More people with higher income are more likely to operate in professional settings that value meritocracy and formal equality policies, which are exposed to egalitarian norms (Garcia et al., 2023). Moreover, in most settings, more socioeconomic status is associated with more education, urbanization, and contact with global cultural affluences that are more likely to propagate more egalitarian gender standards.

Nevertheless, there is no simple and universal connection between income and gender attitudes. In certain settings, new up classes might shift to conservative gender ideologies as status symbols and respectability especially in a case where economic modernization is experienced, but without relative adjustment in religious or cultural models (Kandiyoti, 1988). In addition, when elite women have access to paid domestic workers, they might be less exposed to structural gender inequality, since their own empowerment is based on subordination of the working-class women, who do undervalue domestic work (Parrenas, 2001).

Feminist economic critics have also taken a critical look at the ways in which gender relationship has changed contradictory in the neoliberal capitalism. Even though the integration of the market has enabled women to participate in the economy more and gain new possibilities to be autonomous, it has also escalated exploitation, precaritization, and displacement of social reproduction costs on states to households, which disproportionately affects women (Razavi, 2019; Elson, 2010). The complexity of this bi-polar nature of market-oriented development makes it difficult to come up with simple stories of economic growth as a means of achieving gender equality.

Geographical and cultural differences.

There are significant differences in gender attitudes depending on culture and geographical regions which are influenced by the various historical developments, religious orientations, colonialism and the current trends of development. The studies always report higher egalitarian attitudes in the Western European and Scandinavian countries that possess high welfare system, high participation of women in labor forces and extensive gender equality measures (Inglehart and Norris, 2003). Conversely, most Middle Eastern, North African, and South Asian societies have more traditional attitudes regarding gender, with patriarchal families, religious conservatism, and low participation

of women in public life coming together to restrict gender equality (Shah, 2020; Moghadam, 2013).

Nevertheless, regional groupings may hide a lot of within-region difference, and simplify intricate cultural dynamics. Shah (2020) shows that there is considerable diversity in the conceptualization and practice of gender equality in Muslim-majority societies and is difficult to present a monolithic view of what Islamic gender norms are. Although other interpretations of Islamic law lead to extreme constraints of women in their autonomy and communal involvement, other liberalized interpretations focus on gender fairness, egalitarian matrimonies, and rights of women to get an education and political involvement (Mir-Hosseini, 2006). It is also, in similar vein, that Atobrah (2020) records various gender arrangements in sub-Saharan African societies and warns against viewing Africa as a unified culture.

Van de Vliert and Kluwer (2024) give a new ecological approach, showing that geographic and climate aspects determine gender equality trends worldwide. According to their study, more egalitarian gender relations are likely to develop in places where survival requires more co-operation between men and women since both genders are now highly needed to achieve community welfare. On the other hand, where the individual male strength has more benefits in acquiring resources, more hierarchical gender relations can be formed. Although this ecological perspective is insightful, critics remind of environmental determinism and refer to cultural meanings and institutional structure in mediation of the relationship between environmental conditions and social organization (Huber et al., 2020).

Religion and Feminine ideologies.

Religious traditions play a significant role in influencing the gender norms and attitudes and practices in various settings, and the interdependence has been complicated by the interpretive traditions, institutional forms and encounters with modernity. Major world religions are composed of both egalitarian as well as hierarchical aspects and texts and traditions of the sacred have been subject to continual debate and redefinition (Woodhead, 2007).

Traditional gender roles are often propagated by conservative religious groups, where men are expected to lead in the public sphere and women, in turn, should major in household chores and child bringing up. The gender inequality in different traditions has been rationalized by religious leaders through selective scriptural interpretation, natural differences according to divine mandate, and even that gender complementarity (different, but equally valued role) is better than identical treatment (Daly, 1973; Mir-Hosseini, 2006). However, feminist theologians and religious reformers across traditions have developed alternative interpretations that challenge patriarchal readings and recover egalitarian strands within religious traditions (Ruether, 1983; Wadud, 1999). Empirical research on religion and gender attitudes yields nuanced findings. Individual religiosity (measured by belief strength and practice frequency) generally correlates with more traditional gender attitudes, but this relationship varies substantially across denominations, national contexts, and specific attitude dimensions (Seguino, 2011). Moreover, religious institutions' positions on gender equality have evolved over time in response to broader social changes, feminist movements, and internal reform efforts. Many mainstream Christian denominations have moved toward gender-inclusive language, women's ordination, and explicit affirmation of gender equality, though these changes remain contested and incomplete (Woodhead, 2007). Similar reform movements exist in Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu contexts, though they face substantial resistance from conservative elements.

Intersectionality and Multiple Marginalization

Intersectionality, originally articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) to describe how race and gender intersect to produce distinct experiences of discrimination for Black women, has become a central framework in contemporary gender studies. An intersectional approach recognizes that individuals hold multiple social identities (gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, nationality, religion, etc.) that interact to shape their experiences of privilege and oppression in ways that cannot be understood by examining each identity dimension in isolation (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Applied to gender equality research, intersectionality reveals how women do not constitute a homogeneous category with uniform experiences and interests. Rather, gender intersects with other identity dimensions to produce qualitatively different experiences. For example, working-class women face distinct challenges compared to professional women; women of color experience racialized sexism that differs from the discrimination facing white women; LGBTQ+ individuals encounter heteronormative and cisnormative barriers that heterosexual cisgender women do not face (Hancock, 2016). Nevertheless, feminist theologians and religious reformers in the various traditions have worked out other interpretations that contradict the patriarchal readings and salvage egalitarian strands in the religious traditions (Ruether, 1983; Wadud, 1999).

Empirical studies on the topic of religion and gender attitudes provide subtle results. In general, individual religiosity (strength of belief and frequency of practice) is more strongly associated with more traditional gender attitudes, although the strength of this correlation differs significantly across denominations, national settings, and dimensions of attitudes (Seguino, 2011). Additionally, the attitudes toward gender equality of the religious institutions have been changing with time in the reaction to more general social developments, feminist trends and the reform activities within the organization. Most of the mainstream Christian churches have shifted toward the use of gender-inclusive language, ordaining women, and a direct affirmation of equality between the genders, although all this is now being disputed and is yet to be fully accomplished (Woodhead, 2007). Mimicking reform movements are present in Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu settings, but are met with a lot of opposition of conservative elements.

Multiple Marginalization and Intersectionality.

The intersectionality term, which was first explained by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) to explain the interaction of race and gender in order to create specific experiences of discrimination towards Black women, became a major paradigm of the modern gender studies.

These overlapping marginalities are not merely additive (undergoing both sexism and racism as distinct phenomena) but multiplicative with their own distinct modes of discrimination and distinct forms of response (Crenshaw, 1991).

Syed and Ali (2018) suggest a multilevel, relational approach to gender equality and includes the intersectionality, but also considers institutional and structural levels of analysis. Their model explores the ways in which gender inequality is created and sustained in the process of interaction at various levels: at macro-level (global norms, national policies), at meso-level (organizational practices, community norms) and at micro-level (individual attitudes, interpersonal interactions). This multilevel intersectional strategy does not focus on structural determinism (that fails to recognize the agency of individuals) or individualistic voluntarism (that fails to recognize the influence of structure), but on the interaction of structure and agency at various social locations.

Masculinity Studies and Men Roles.

The current field of gender studies is starting to understand that to reach gender equality, it is important to transform masculinities as well as meet the disadvantages of females. Hegemonic masculinity, the most prevalent type of masculinity in a given culture that justifies the regime of patriarchy, is defined by such features as dominance, emotional coldness, physical power, heterosexual success, and the position of a breadwinner (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Although this idealized type of masculinity is in fact practiced by quite a small number of men, it is a normative ideal with all men evaluated against and subordinates both of the female and the non-hegemonic masculinities subordinated under it.

Men and masculinities research study reveal that patriarchal gender systems are detrimental to both men and women, albeit in a different manner. The restrictive masculine norms also compel men to inhibit feelings, not seek assistance, be reckless in their actions and demonstrate their masculinity by their domination and aggression, which contribute to increased violence, drug abuse, accidents, and suicide in men (Courtenay, 2000). According to Connell (2005), though on the whole, patriarchy benefits the men as a group (the so-called patriarchal dividend), it has a high cost especially on those men that do not meet the hegemonic ideals or those that are members of marginalized racial, class, or sexual categories.

The involvement of men and boys in gender equality programs has become a global agenda on development and gender issues. MenEngage and HeForShe campaign are programs that are meant to mobilize men to become allies in fighting gender-based violence, advocating equal parenting and empowering women (Flood, 2011). It has been indicated that the endorsement of gender equality by men depends on their personal associations with empowered women, the understanding of feminist principles, and the possibility to imagine other masculinities, which are not based on domination (Messner, 2016). Nevertheless, critics warn that making men the focus of gender equality efforts and initiatives poses the danger of reinstalling male opinions and interests at the expense of women speaking or feminist concerns (hook, 2004).

Neoliberal Development and Economic Dimensions.

Global capitalism and neoliberal development policies on gender relations have received widespread attention by feminist political economists. Initial WID strategies aimed at assimilating women into the current development projects and this was mainly done by incorporating women into income generating projects and microfinance (Rathgeber, 1990). Although these programs gave certain women economic benefits, critics claimed that these programs could not address structural inequalities and could even increase the volume of work of women without matching benefits in power and change in gender relations (Kabeer, 2015).

The approaches to Gender and Development (GAD), a result of the feminist critique of WID, place focus on structural change, power dynamics and strategic interests of women instead of the practical needs (Moser, 1993). GAD accepts that development is not gender-neutral and that ostensibly universal economic policies have gendered effects that fall down the line. Indicatively, the structural adjustment programs that demand reduction in public expenditure adversely affect women who have to offset the loss of social services by spending more time on unpaid care (Elson, 1995).

The authors Prugl and True (2014) examine the emergence of transnational public-private partnerships as new strategies of establishing gender equality in commercial settings. Although such efforts as the UN Women Empowerment Principles have mobilized corporate resources and

focus on gender issues, they bring up issues of commodification of gender equality and gender washing of companies where they produce gender friendly branding, but have not transformed their exploitative labor practices or gender hierarchies. Gender equality as a business case, with its accent on economic efficiency and competitiveness may give some varieties of equality and hide more radical issues of structural change and redistribution (Eisenstein, 2009).

Synthesis and Research Gaps

The overall literature review demonstrates a number of important insights that can be applied to the ongoing research. The main aspect is that gender equality is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes legal rights, political representation, economic participation, cultural norms, and subjective attitudes that have to be discussed, so as to gain a holistic comprehension. Second, demographic variables (especially education, income, age, and gender identity) have a strong impact on gender equality attitudes, but these correlations are subject to the cultural background, religious orientation, and historical developments. Third, gender attitudes in the region are different because they are viewed as complicated interplay of colonial legacies, religious and religious practices, economic development trends, and policy frameworks. Fourth, intersectionality is crucial to comprehending the nature of gender intersection with other identity dimensions to generate various experiences and views.

Although much has been done on the topic of gender equality, there are a number of gaps. There is a paucity of comprehensive cross-regional comparative studies that would focus on the perceptions, attitude towards policies and cultural beliefs all at the same time and by use of similar methodological tools. Most of the available literature is devoted to individual countries or states and thus it is not generalizable. Also, there are limited studies which use a different gender identity as opposed to male-female model yet there is increased awareness that gender is a diversity.

Lastly, global gender indices offer macro-level comparative data but perhaps they do not reflect subjective experiences, cultural specifics, and local manifestations of inequality.

The paper answers these gaps by exploring the perspectives of gender equality in eight global geographical regions with multiple demographic dimensions, considering three different yet interconnected attitudinal dimensions (perceptions, support of the policy, and cultural beliefs), and non-binary and gender-diverse respondents as well as cisgender men and women.

METHODOLOGY

My research employs a quantitative approach and constructs a survey tool to gain information on how the inequality between men and women is perceived by nations. Quantitative research approaches that take measurements can be suitable to examine how individuals perceive and react to gender challenges as they analyze numerous different environments. This research will focus on the way gender equality in educational institutions and in politics, business, and legal affairs are perceived by the respondents in the various countries in an organized survey.

Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional survey method was adopted by the researchers to gather and process survey data at one point in time. The research design assists the scientists in determining the current thoughts of individuals of different countries concerning gender equality. Our study was aimed at

discovering associations between the popular opinion related to gender equality and their social characteristics such as gender, age, location, and educational status.

Questionnaire method will be a good option since it can be effective in acquiring data among a broad range of participants around the globe. It will assist researchers to compare the nature of individuals who have different ideas of gender equality based on their personal characteristics and social backgrounds.

Population and Sampling

The study population of this study is going to be adults who are over the age of 18 years and who live in various parts of the world. To achieve a representative sample, the study used a stratified purposive sampling strategy to cover eight geographic regions, which are North America, Europe, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, South America, and Other.

The sampling approach was designed in such a way that it would be diverse in various aspects such as geography, gender identity, age, education, income, and religion. Although a probability sampling would have been great in terms of generalizability, practical considerations such as access to the internet, the ability to speak the language, and voluntary nature made a non-probability sampling the only option. Purposive sampling made it possible to get the desired recruitment of varying demographic groups to achieve sufficient representation of the groups that could be underrepresented in mere convenience samples (Etikan et al., 2016).

The sample size used was calculated using practical considerations of a descriptive survey study guidelines and feasibility. A sample of 200 was considered adequate to do descriptive analysis and the subgroup comparison, but not adequate to pursue any multivariate modeling of such extensive data. The given sample size enables the identification of a moderate to large effect size (Cohen d [?] 0.5) with sufficient statistical power and is yet not exceedingly expensive in terms of resources and time (Cohen, 1992).

The recruitment was done in several ways so as to ensure diversity is maximized. The survey invitation was spread using online social networks, academic forums, professional associations and community organizations. Initial recruitment was supported by snowball sampling, where the participants were asked to pass on the survey to their contacts. Although this method presents a possible selection bias, since the respondents will be self-selected and might be different from the non-respondents in a systematic manner, it was a way of accessing populations that are geographically spread which would have been very hard to access, using the conventional sampling frames.

Instrument Development

The development of the research instrument was carried out in several phases based on wide reading of the literature and already existing gender equality assessment models. The questionnaire was based on the existing tools such as the Gender Equality Index (European Institute for Gender Equality) and measurements created by UN Women, the elements of the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, and validated scales of peer-reviewed gender research (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2023; WEF, 2023).

The questionnaire used was the final one with 48 questions divided into five thematic parts:

The questions in the first section are designed to collect the demographic information of the participants.

Section 1: Demographic Information

The questions in the first section will gather the demographic information of the participants.

The section used data on the personal characteristics of the respondents such as:

Age (categorical: 18-25, 26-35, 36-50, 51-65, 66+)

Gender characteristics (Male, Female, Non-binary, Favor not to say)

Education level (No formal education, Primary school, Secondary/high school, Bachelor, Master degree or higher)

Household income per year (according to USD: less than 5000, 5001-15000, 15001-30000, 30001-50000, more than 50000).

Residence country / region (eight geographical groups)

Religious Association (Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Other, None)

Employment status and type of occupation.

Section 2. perceive gender equality (Q1-Q10)

Ten questions were used to evaluate the perception of the respondents about the prevailing situation of gender equality in various areas such as education, the labor market, politics, access to healthcare facilities, legal framework, and social avenues. Questions were put in a frame that would not only attract general perceptions, such as, in my country, men and women have equal access to good education) but also domain-specific evaluations. The answers were measured in a 5-point Likert scale (1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree). Questions focusing on inequality were also inverted in order to have uniform directionality and higher scores reflected more positive views on gender equality.

Section 3. Q19-Q28: Support of Gender-Equity Policies.

Ten items which assessed the support of respondents to a range of gender-equality policy interventions such as gender quotas in political representation and corporate leadership, gender-based pay policies, paid parental leaves, gender sensitive education reforms, affirmative action programs, legal measures against gender-based discrimination and violence, and publicly funded childcare comprised this section. Questions were also rated on 5-point Likert scales ranging high-to-low with higher points recording high levels of policy support.

Section 4: Personal Experiences (Q11-Q18)

Eight items examined the personal and observed experiences of gender inequality, such as the experiences of gender-based discrimination, the experience of treating unequally in school, work environments, perceptions of gender differences in opportunities, and sensitivities to gender-based violence. It was sought in this section to relate abstract attitudes to lived experiences but the response should be understood in the light of the possibility of recall bias and the social desirability effects.

Section 5: Personal and Social Beliefs (Q49-Q51)

There were twelve questions which evaluated the commitment to traditional ideologies of gender roles, the beliefs about the proper gender-differentiated behavior, the attitudes to female leadership

and public participation, the perceptions about religious or cultural prescriptions concerning gender, as well as the normative expectations of the family roles and duties. They consisted of both explicitly given beliefs (i.e., men are naturally better leaders than women) and assessments with a scenario. The responses on the 5 point likert scales were coded in such a way that the higher the scores the more the egalitarian less traditional beliefs. The instrument was intended to be short enough (12-15 minutes) and long enough (comprehensive) enough so the respondents did not feel overburdened. Strict guidance was given at the onset of every section and attention check items were introduced to detect sloppy responding.

Validity and Reliability

The original draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by five academic researchers having the necessary knowledge in the field of gender, survey methodology, and cross-cultural research. There was a review of the items in terms of relevance, clarity, cultural appropriateness, and compatibility with research objectives. Strengths and weaknesses were used to revise the questionnaire such as the simplification of complicated terms and terms that had a certain culture were eliminated and added items that covered non-binary gender identity. This continuous review of the expert level promoted the content validity as it provided a good coverage of the construct domain without sacrificing the clarity of the items and cultural sensitivity (Polit and Beck, 2006).

Face Validity:

Cognitive interviews were carried out on ten interviewees with different backgrounds after careful examination by experts to determine face validity and comprehensibility. The survey was done as the participants read it out loud during which they were able to identify confusing, confusing wording as well as misleading response choices that failed to represent the intended meanings well. The cognitive interviewing has shown that there are a few things that have to be clarified especially in terms of income categories that needed to be made more global (some items in the policy that have to be further explained in the context).

Internal Consistency Reliability:

The alpha coefficients of the three major subscales were determined to evaluate the internal consistency of the scale. Findings showed high levels of reliability:

Gender Equality Perception Scale (Q1-Q10): $\alpha = 0.86$

Policy Support Scale (Q19-Q28): $\alpha = 0.88$

Cultural Belief Scale (Q37-Q48): $\alpha = 0.81$

Overall instrument: $\alpha = 0.89$

These coefficients are more than acceptable level of 0.70 in terms of sufficient internal consistency and are close to or beyond the 0.80 level of sufficient reliability (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The score of alpha is high which shows that items within a scale are assessing a similar underlying construct, which justifies the validity of composite scores.

Data Collection Procedure

The dates of data collection were between January and February 2024 and were 5 weeks. The questionnaire was electronic, and it was conducted with the help of Google Forms and Qualtrics.

The participants got informed about the aim of the study, voluntary participation and the confidentiality of the answers. A briefing form has been included at the start of the questionnaire, and the respondents were allowed to quit at any stage.

To ensure that no duplicate submissions, IP address filtering and device limitation features were turned on. Data were automatically coded and sent to SPSS and Excel where they were cleansed and analyzed. Data cleaning was done to eliminate missing data and to ensure internal consistency of data. The data collection was carried out over five weeks (between January and February 2024). The questionnaire was completed online with the aid of Google Forms, which was chosen due to its accessibility, the possibility to use multiple languages, and technical stability. The invitation to the survey contained:

A short outline of the research purpose and meaning.

Team and institutional affiliation Information.

Clear guidelines on voluntary involvement.

Anonymity and confidentiality guarantees.

Estimated completion time

Means of contact, questions, and concerns.

Informed Consent:

The respondents were shown an informed consent page before viewing the items of the survey, which explained:

Research procedure and objectives.

Participation is voluntary with a right to withdraw any time.

Lack of direct benefits or payment.

Low risks involved in participating.

Procedures of data confidentiality and anonymization.

Data security and storage.

The research findings are intended to be used in the following ways.

Contact details of the research team and institutional review board.

The respondents expressed their willingness to participate by pressing an I agree to participate button. Only informed consent providers were able to continue surveying items. This process made sure that it was ethical and registered voluntary participation.

Data Quality Measures:

A number of technical solutions were introduced to improve the quality of data:

Submission of the same device was blocked by IP address blocking.

Careless/random responding was detected by attention check items.

Incomplete data on key variables was not possible due to required response formatting.

The logic of the survey was used to have the correct skip patterns and item presentation.

Monitoring of response time was used to identify unusual fast completions which indicate a lack of attention.

Computation and Construction of Variables in Scoring.

Mean responses in each subscale were averaged to obtain 3 major composite scores:

Gender Perception Score:

Computed as the average of answers to Q1-Q10, whereby reverse coding should be done to items that have negative wording. The scores are rated between 1 and 5, with a higher level of the score denoting a more positive perception of the fact that gender equality has been reached or is getting better.

Policy Support Score:

Determined by dividing by the responses to questions 19-28, which gauges the level of support to different gender-equity policy interventions by the respondents. A score of higher numbers depicts a stronger policy support.

Cultural Belief Score:

Measured as an average of the answers to Q37-Q48, evaluation of sticking to conservative gender role ideologies. The coding of items was done in the way that the higher the scores, the more egalitarian and less traditional beliefs regarding the gender roles and norms.

These composite scores are the key dependent variables in the further analysis and can be compared between different groups of people and correlate variables. Instead of the summed scores, mean scores were computed so that it is easier to compare and interpret scores across the different length scales.

DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative analysis was done with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28). The analysis of the data was conducted with both the descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distributions, means and standard deviations were determined on all variables to get to know the overall tendencies and central tendency in the attitudes and perceptions of respondents.

Cross- tabulations and Chi-square Tests: It is applied to assess the relationship between nominal demographic variables (e.g., gender and region) and chosen survey answers (e.g., support of gender quotas).

Independent Samples t-tests: use to test the difference in the mean attitudes toward gender equality in binary groups (e.g., men vs. women; high-income vs. low-income respondents, etc.).

One-Way ANOVA: It is used to determine significant differences in gender attitude between the regions or education level. The significant effects of the pairwise differences were identified by using post hoc tests (Tukey HSD).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA): It is performed in order to determine latent dimensions of the items related to the attitude. The principal component analysis adopted was principal component with varimax rotation which produced four distinct factors with total variance of 68.2 percent.

Multiple Linear Regression: Regression models were developed in which the support of gender policies was predicted on the basis of demographic and attitudinal variables. The age, education, region and cultural belief scores were used as independent variables.

All the statistical tests were performed at $p < 0.05$. The calculation of confidence intervals and effect sizes were made to complement the significant testing in order to allow complete interpretation of the results.

Ethical Considerations

This study complied with the international ethical guidelines on research involving human subjects such as respecting persons, beneficence and justice (Belmont Report, 1979). The research was cleared of ethical research by the institutional review board of the university where the lead researcher is based. The voluntary nature of the participation was explained to all the participants, and they were assured of anonymity. No identifiable data was gathered and all data had been encrypted in files that can only be accessed by the research team.

The survey had a debriefing page containing educational materials associated with gender equality. The interested participants were redirected to UN Women, local NGOs, and websites of public health links to gain more information on the issue and be able to receive gender-based support services.

Limitations

Questionnaires will offer consistent research findings and broad generalizability, but have serious limitations in our study:

Self-Report Bias: Survey respondents tend to respond in a way that makes them look good rather than respond to the question in a truthful manner.

Sampling Bias: Internet connectivity was a issue that influenced our attempt to achieve geographic diversity since access was inaccessible to some groups particularly language differences.

Cross-Sectional Design: The survey only gives a picture of the attitudes at one given time and does not enable the capture of changes and causation.

Cultural Sensitivity: Despite the neutrality review, there is still a possibility of some items being based on Western normative assumptions of gender, which can affect the response in non-Western environments.

Measurement Limitations: The survey measure, though psychometrically reliable, scales down complex attitudes and beliefs in to a numerical score on Likert scale. Such quantification helps to make a systematic comparison, but it is bound to oversimplify subtle views and miss out on the richness of the context. Also, attitudes obtained in abstract survey questions do not necessarily relate in a direct manner to actual behavior in certain situations since the behavior is subject to situational pressures and social demands as well as structural imperatives that are not necessarily related to the attitudes of an individual.

Regional Aggregation: The process of lumping countries into large areas (e.g., "South Asia," "Sub-Saharan Africa") hides significant within-region differentiation. The nations of the same region can vary radically in level of gender equality policies, cultural practices, level of economic development and political systems. Regional categories are analytical conveniences that run the risk of essentializing a variety of contexts and must be viewed in proper regard.

RESULTS

This part gives empirical results of the survey 200 responses conducted into the views of the world concerning gender equality. Findings will be presented in a systematic manner addressing the research questions starting with descriptive characterization of the sample, then results will be presented in a disaggregated form by demographic variables under the three main outcome measures: Gender Perception Score, Policy Support Score and Cultural Belief Score. All the findings are organized in table format and with descriptive explanation.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Count
Prefer not to say	54
Male	50
Female	48
Non-binary	48

There is a comparatively even representation of the different gender category in Table 1, and the various categories constitute about one-fourth of the respondents. The large number of people who chose Prefer not to say (27.0) indicates either the desire to be non-disclosed or perhaps unease with the possible categories. The option of non-binary, and a great representation of this population (n=48, 24.0) is a step forward in comparison to binary system(s) of gender, which largely dominate the gender research field.

Table 2: Regional Distribution of Respondents

Region	Count
South Asia	31
Sub-Saharan Africa	30
Europe	29
North America	28
East Asia and Pacific	26
Middle East and North Africa	27
South America	16
Other	13

Table 2 shows Geographic distribution has done well in representing each region although not evenly spread. The highest contribution was made by South Asia (15.5%), and South America (8.0) and Other (6.5) made smaller contributions. This allocation partly represents population sizes and internet availability in different geographical areas, and this may over represent the over one-fifth of South Asian respondents, which might be explained by institutional location and recruitment connections by the research team.

Table 3: Age Group Distribution

Age Group	Count
18–25	50
26–35	56
36–50	48
51–65	46

Table 3 presents Age distribution which indicates comparably balanced representation at the levels of adults age groups, with a slight overrepresentation of the younger adults (26-35 age group constitutes 28.0 percent of the sample). The fact that respondents are mostly younger is probably due to the recruitment processes that use online platforms and social networks, which tend to favor more digitally-savvy and younger demographics. The study did not include any respondents above 66 years of age, which is a weakness in terms of getting the views of the old age groups.

Table 4: Education Level Distribution

Education Level	Count
No formal education	21
Primary school	30
Secondary/high school	48
Bachelor's degree	55
Master's degree or higher	46

It can be seen in Table 4 that the sample has a comparatively high level of education, with more than half (50.5) having bachelor's degrees or greater. This educational bias is probably indicative of both modes of recruitment (on-line, academia networks) and the association of education, internet access, and probability of survey response. The number of respondents who have limited formal education (10.5% have no formal education, 15.0% only primary education) also offers some diversity although these groups are underrepresented compared to population distributions in the world.

Table 5: Perception Scores by Gender (Q1–Q10)

Gender	Mean Score	Std Dev
Female	3.24	1.05
Male	3.01	1.14
Non-binary	3.35	0.98
Prefer not to say	3.18	1.12

Table 5 Analysis of gender perception scores by gender identity shows interesting trends. The average perception of people who are not binary is the highest ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.98$), indicating that this group has a higher perception of gender equality or at least advances to it than other forms of gender. The same perception was shown by female respondents albeit slightly lower ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.05$). The lowest mean score was obtained with male respondents ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.14$), they made more negative or less positive evaluations of the current gender equality situation. The male-non-binary difference (0.34 points) is a small to medium effect size indicating that there is a statistically significant but not dramatic amount of variation between non-binary and male. The standard deviations of males and those who prefer not to say are higher, which means that within-group heterogeneity in the perceptions is more prevalent in the former and less in the latter, as the standard deviation of the latter is smaller, meaning considerable agreement.

These trends are in accordance with theoretical expectations that were to be born to marginalized groups of increased awareness to inequality based on experienced discrimination (Collins, 2000). Non-binaries, who are socially marginalized due to gender non-conformity, might be especially sensitive to gender inequality matters.

The observation that males have lower positive gender perceptions than should have been the case needs more exploration- either the male participants were more cognizant of the existing inequality than might otherwise have been the case, or it may have been due to selections by the samples, such as that male respondents were biased towards gender-conscious or feminist-receptive groups.

Table 6: Perception Scores by Education Level

Education Level	Mean Score	Std. Dev
No formal education	2.88	1.12
Primary school	2.93	1.17
Secondary/high school	3.07	1.15
Bachelor’s degree	3.12	1.04
Master’s degree or higher	3.28	1.01

Table 6 indicates that A positive linear relationship is formed between gender perceptions scores and educational attainment. The respondents that have master degrees or higher indicated the most positive underlying gender perception (M = 3.28, SD = 1.01), and those who have not received any formal education have indicated the lowest (M = 2.88, SD = 1.12). The difference between highest and lowest education categories is 0.40 which indicates that the effect is of moderate size. This tendency is in line with a vast body of research that education is a significant determinant of gender attitudes (Marco-Simo et al., 2023; Dilli, 2024). This relationship can be based on several mechanisms. Universities expose people to a variety of views, critical analysis models, and overt content of gender education. The norms of egalitarianism are reflected in universities and colleges more than in other social institutions. Also, education is related to other variables (urbanization, professional employment, income) which can have effects on gender attitudes on their own. Interestingly, the standard deviations also do not change much with the levels of education implying that the level of education only causes average perceptions to change upwards but does not always result in a decrease of within-group variance. Among individuals with high education, there are significant individual variations, which means that education is not a deterministic factor, but it is one of the influences among the numerous factors that contribute to the development of gender perceptions.

Table 7: Perception Scores by Age Group

Age Group	Mean Score	Std. Dev
18–25	3.19	1.08
26–35	3.21	1.04
36–50	3.14	1.10
51–65	3.05	1.15

Table 7 has highlighted Age-related patterns shows a slight negative correlation of which younger respondents have slightly more positive gender perceptions as compared to older respondents. The highest mean was reported by the age group between 26-35 ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.04$) and the lowest was reported by the 51-65 age group ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.15$). Nevertheless, the age-group differences are not very pronounced (the range of 0.16 points), which implies that age does not affect the perceptions to such an extent as gender identity or education.

The trend may indicate the change in gender socialization of generations, where newer generations are brought up in a surrounding where there is more gender equality discourse and visibility. Alternatively, it can be a life-course effect, where older people have more time horizons to measure the presence of long-term inequalities, which may result in less emotional evaluations. The comparatively minor scale of the age effects indicates that there is no possibility of the generational change but it is not rapid.

Table 8: Perception Scores by Income Level

Income Level	Mean Score	Std. Dev
<5000	2.92	1.19
5001–15000	3.01	1.11
15001–30000	3.09	1.14
30001–50000	3.21	1.03
>50000	3.32	0.98

Table 8 presents A positive significant relationship is emerging between the income level and the gender perception scores. The respondents with higher income (>50,000 yearly) gave the most positive perceptions ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.98$), and the respondents with the lowest income (<5,000 yearly) gave the least positive perceptions ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.19$). The difference of 0.40 can be described as a mediocre influence that is similar to that on education.

This trend is probably a combination of several factors. Increased income is linked to increased education, living in an urban area and doing professional jobs in areas which have more chances of focusing on gender equality. Economic security can also offer cognitive resources to interact with the social justice concern that is not necessarily tied to the survival concern. Moreover, more educated people can be exposed to the world culture and world standards of gender equality.

The fact that the standard deviations are declining with the rise of income (1.19 to 0.98) indicates that more respondents having higher income have a more consensus, which may be attributed to similar exposure to professional settings that have clear gender equality rules and norms.

Table 9: Policy Support Scores by Gender (Q19–Q28)

Gender	Mean Score	Std Dev
Female	3.48	1.08
Male	3.21	1.10
Non-binary	3.52	0.97
Prefer not to say	3.34	1.13

Patterns of support of gender-equity policies are also largely similar between gender perception results indicated in Table 9, with non-binary (mean = 3.52) and female (mean = 3.48) respondents

indicating the highest level of support, whereas male respondents exhibited relatively low gender-equity policy support (mean = 3.21). The difference between the non-binary and male respondents (0.31) is a small to moderate effect.

It is noteworthy that the total support scores of policy (M = 3.38) are more supportive than the gender perception scores (M = 3.19), which indicates that respondents are more supportive of policy intervention actions than optimistic of the status quo regarding equality. This trend is conceptually significant, which shows that additional policy is required to mitigate the existing disparities. The result that male respondents too show higher-than-midlevel policy support (M = 3.21 on a 5-point scale) indicates a possibility of a reasonable policy view by gender groups about whether the policy should continue to be given attention to gender equality even though the absolute rates of support may not be the same.

Table 10: Policy Support Scores by Education Level

Education Level	Mean Score	Std. Dev
No formal education	3.08	1.15
Primary school	3.18	1.10
Secondary/high school	3.25	1.07
Bachelor’s degree	3.36	1.05
Master’s degree or higher	3.49	1.00

Table 10, which compares Education shows a positive correlation with policy support as it is the case with perceptions. The difference between the no formal education (M = 3.08) and master or higher (M = 3.49) is 0.41-point, which is moderate in the effect size. This pattern of high and low education across both measures of perception and policy supports the meaning that education plays a fundamental role of how individuals interpret and respond to gender equality issues.

More educated respondents might be more favorable of policy interventions because more aware of structural obstacles that need institutional responses, because of exposition to policy-oriented discourse at school, and because of work experience in institutions where formal policies are practiced to influence workplace cultures. On the other hand, the reduced educational attainment can be associated with working in informal sectors whereby the formal policies do not reach everybody and the perceived policy relevance or effectiveness may be lower.

Table 11: Policy Support Scores by Income Level

Income Level	Mean Score	Std. Dev
<5000	3.12	1.13
5001–15000	3.18	1.08
15001–30000	3.26	1.07
30001–50000	3.36	1.02
>50000	3.44	0.98

Table 11 indicates that there is a positive relationship but a rather small one between Income and policy support. Higher-income respondents are more supportive (M = 3.44 in >\$50,000 income, M = 3.12 in <\$5,000 income) than the lowest-income respondents who registered the lowest score of 0.32 points. This implies that as much as economic status affects policy attitudes, the impact is not very intense as compared to the educational attainment.

The trend can be an indication that better people are better off in the formal institutional systems, and they tend to work in organizations where policies are made and realized. Moreover, the economic security can facilitate the wider social interests than the immediate material interests. Nevertheless, the comparatively small scale indicates that policy support cuts across income lines more than other attitudes perhaps because gender-equity policies are not presented as benefiting the society in general and not only certain income groups.

Table 12: Cultural Scores by Region (Q37–Q48)

Region	Mean Score	Std Dev
Europe	3.57	0.98
North America	3.50	1.04
South America	3.48	1.10
East Asia and Pacific	3.33	1.03
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.29	1.12
South Asia	3.15	1.09
Middle East and North Africa	3.06	1.15
Other	3.27	1.08

Table 12 give Regional analysis of cultural belief scores indicates the largest change that was recorded in any category of demographic. The European respondents indicated the highest cultural beliefs of egalitarianism (M = 3.57, SD = 0.98) and were closely followed by North American (M = 3.50) and South American respondents (M = 3.48). Middle East and North Africa (M = 3.06, SD = 1.15) and South Asian (M = 3.15, SD = 1.09) respondents, on the other hand, had more traditional cultural beliefs about gender roles.

The 0.51 difference between Europe and Middle East/ North Africa is moderate and large in effect size, which is significantly higher than differences between other demographic variables. The trend is consistent with the body of substantial cross-cultural literature indicating that gender norms are more egalitarian in Western and Northern European societies than South Asian and Middle Eastern societies (Inglehart and Norris, 2003; Shah, 2020). These regional patterns are due to a number of historical, religious, political, and economical factors including individual patterns of women movements, varying religious impacts on gender norms, different patterns of economic development and women participation in the labor force and different colonial and post-colonial histories.

The standard deviations of all the regions are high (between 0.98-1.15), which implies that there is a high amount of heterogeneity within regions. Regional classifications bring different countries, cultures and situations together and those in any one region have different views. The within-region variation is alarming against the essentialization of regional pattern or the monocultural perspective of regions.

Table 13: Cultural Scores by Education Level

Education Level	Mean Score	Std. Dev
No formal education	2.91	1.13
Primary school	3.00	1.08
Secondary/high school	3.18	1.01
Bachelor’s degree	3.36	0.98
Master’s degree or higher	3.54	0.95

Table 13 describes Educational gradients are especially strong in the case of cultural beliefs with a 0.63-point gap between the highest and lowest education levels- the highest educational impact as compared to the other two outcome measures. This implies that education has particular impact on cultural and normative beliefs regarding gender roles, which may be even more powerful than the impact it has on current equality status perceptions or policy support.

This trend favors theoretical models that focus on education as a cultural change agent. Higher education aligns people to the alternative worldviews, to critical assessment of the assumed-natural and inevitable, and offers the intellectual instruments of understanding construction of the cultural norms as socially constructed instead of natural or inevitable (Freire, 1970). The fact that cultural beliefs exhibit the highest educational gradient indicates that although education affects all dimensions of gender attitudes, its contribution is the highest in the highly held cultural values and normative systems.

Table 14: Cultural Scores by Religion

Religion	Mean Score	Std Dev
Buddhism	3.05	0.38
Christianity	2.99	0.33
Hinduism	2.86	0.37
Islam	2.98	0.34
None	3.02	0.43

When comparing the Religious affiliation analysis, Table 14 indicates comparatively small variations in the cultural belief scores using categories, with an average score of between 2.86 (Hinduism) and 3.05 (Buddhism). It is worth noting that secular/non-religious respondents did not portray significantly more egalitarian beliefs ($M = 3.02$) as compared to religious respondents as would be assumed. All the groups are concentrated around the middle of the scales, indicating the moderate, not strong traditional or not strong egalitarian stand.

It is worth noting that standard deviations in all the religious groups are very low (ranging between 0.33 and 0.43), and this requires clarification. These limited standard deviations are very low by comparison to the far greater standard deviations of the same measure based on education, income, or region (all of over 0.95). This tendency can be interpreted as indicating robust within-religion agreement on gender beliefs or some measurement problems with religious comparisons.

It can be interpreted in a number of ways: it is possible that religious affiliation is important but also crosses other variables like interpretive tradition, personal religiosity level and cultural context in a complex manner that leads to significant within-religion variance hidden by mean scores. A Muslim woman in France, a Muslim man in Saudi Arabia, and a Muslim non-binary individual in Indonesia might have radically different gender beliefs even though they belong to the same religious group. This complexity cannot be sufficiently represented by general religious categories and this indicates that there are constraints of categorical religion variables in gender studies.

DISCUSSION

The general quest of achieving gender equality in the world has become more of an international agenda in development discourse, academic studies, and international policymaking, which elucidates its integration across international norms and human rights regimes. When viewed through the prism of the latest academic work, the outcomes of this research support the dynamic

and multifaceted essence of gender equality and indicates the progress and the structural imbalance. The discussion is based on major tendencies of differences in gender perception, concerns on the policy support, and cultural beliefs, and their changing according to the demographic and geographic factors and incorporates the perspectives of modern academic works. The presence of gender divisions can be seen among the members of the community when they see and favor gender equality actions. The evidence of previous studies proves that the simple features influence the perception of gender fairness in a person (Shah, 2020). It is found that women and non-binary individuals are more aware of gender equality policies due to their disadvantaged status and therefore they pay closer attention to forms of discrimination (Chary, 2017; Fors Connolly et al., 2020). Experiences of gender make individuals think about the policy and need policies to provide everyone with an opportunity to make a change.

Learning institutions regularly produce people who understand and want to support equal rights for men and women. Studies by Marco-Simó et al. in 2023 show that people with more education know more about gender equality (2023). People who completed graduate studies showed strong backing for gender equality policies and adopted egalitarian values compared to people with lower education levels. Studies show these results may happen because students learn critical thinking while interacting with diverse people who value human rights through advanced education (Dilli, 2024). When education establishments teach students about gender diversity while setting gender-inclusive policies they enhance genuine societal values (Booth & Bennett, 2002).

The perception of gender disparities across the variables of distinct incomes presents significant division with other perceptions. Those in the high-income families preferred gender change programs and expressed the modern cultural beliefs. Economic strength both supplies resources and opens mental space for people to study social justice matters (Garcia et al., 2023). People with above-average incomes tend to work in companies or international businesses that boost the application of gender equality standards and understanding of these standards (Dhuli et al., 2023). The differences in cultural belief ratings between regions demonstrate how local Patriarchal practices continue to exist. Respondents in Europe and North America answered most questions based on their egalitarian cultural values but South Asia and Middle East participants had lower response scores. Global studies of gender reveal this gap which exists because traditional gender values run deep in particular social and religious regions (Xu et al., 2024; Atobrah, 2020). Gender programs require different actions depending on local cultural practices as shown in these results. Different gender policies must adapt to local circumstances and fight gender inequality effectively across the world.

Different experts demonstrate support for viewing gender equality both as a human rights issue and a key development driver. Today gender equality serves as both a vital fairness principle and an effective way to advance nations through enhanced social and economic prosperity (Shannon et al., 2019). Gender equality boosts total output of nations and makes governments deliver better results while creating fairer systems for education and health. Despite global policies including CEDAW and SDG 5 their real impact remains limited due to insufficient implementation as noted by Kardam (2002) and Kennett & Payne (2014).

Gender equality discourse transformation loses its political significance according to Cornwall and Rivas (2015). Their argument that gender equality and women's empowerment have lost their transformative purpose now explains major issues with recent administrative management-driven development practices. Even though national development plans now mention gender they do not properly address how to implement these plans in a thorough and long-lasting manner. This research demonstrates that high-level gender policy backing did not fully transform traditional patriarchal cultural views.

Several scholars have pointed out the gaps and problems behind traditional measures of gender equality in research. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) and Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) help compare nations but may simplify sophisticated gender situations according to Bacchi (2009). Education systems that give equal opportunities to men and women do not necessarily lead to changes in how people view women in political life and protection against violence. This research design uses specific gender equality scales to show that gender equality exists as multiple aspects. University leaders Marco-Simó et al. (2023) showed that including gender perspectives in education and administrative rules helped change mindsets and systems in universities. Their work revealed that lasting university support plus faculty leadership and defined assessment standards help put gender fairness into everyday student and staff action. The research shows that individual educational institutions can gradually build new social norms which this study also verifies through its link between higher education and increased support for policies and gender equality perceptions.

Understanding gender stereotypes requires looking beyond national borders as countries absorb these norms from around the world. According to Kardam (2004) and Booth and Bennett (2002) the worldwide network of groups that work on gender equality helped produce an international framework that shapes national equality regimes. The two authors explain how local interpretation of global standards risks weakening their true transformative power. The study shows modifying gender equality standards in official policies leads to better results when researchers study if local communities adopt and adapt these norms.

Researchers now study the influence that environmental factors plus geographical differences have on gender equality results. According to Van de Vliert and Kluwer authors observed in 2024 the development of social gender norms adapt more flexibly when environments present variations between climate changes and agricultural ways of life. Their research brings a new element to explanations of gender equality while helping explain why certain regions uphold longstanding disparities despite economic or educational equality.

Syed and Ali (2018) advocate using a social framework at different levels plus an interdependent approach to make gender equality work better. Using a model with legal, institutional, organizational, and individual elements they offer essential guidelines to solve gender diversity challenges. Our research validates results when region intersects with educational level and gender pride to influence survey respondents' opinions. Gender reform plans need to fight issues throughout different systems than depending on separate programs for change to succeed.

Gender equality receives different viewpoints from different people when discussed. Nentwich (2006) shows that organizations have multiple ways of understanding gender equality including sameness, difference, bandwidth, and deconstruction. Different ways to think about gender equality exist together in institutions and lead to conflicts when put into action. The knowledge of these value tensions between groups makes us create superior programs of gender equality that suit the beliefs of all stakeholders.

Companies should be able to work out feasible solutions to evaluation challenges. According to Somerville (2020), the standard health indicators do not have capacity to demonstrate all the impacts of gender on relationships in the world. The design of the study is supported by the fact that intersectionality is their recommendation that gender should be studied, and that helps other researchers to make their research take into account both real-world knowledge and scientific analysis.

The 2024 view offered by Dilli makes the reader mix the economic history with the current discourse about gender balance today. Our understanding of today's gender gap needs to start with how European nations colonized and industrialized plus built their governments. This analysis

helps prove that modern gender norms grow from two forces: current laws and past development patterns.

Our research aligns with worldwide studies that explain how gender equality operates in multiple systems dependent on the local cultural environment. Creating long-lasting equality in gender needs more than coordinating policy frameworks because it needs both deep system transformations and open discussions that include everyone. Many worldwide platforms have created progress, but full gender equality demands worldwide unity with practical steps based on evidence-driven learning.

CONCLUSION

The research examined worldwide gender equality thoughts through a planned survey process across eight global regions and 1,200 participants. Gender identity together with educational level income and geographic location strongly determines how people view gender equality programs and cultural norms. Study participants who identify as female and non-binary held more progressive views than male respondents (3.01), as confirmed by their scores (3.24 and 3.35 respectively). Additionally, individuals with postgraduate degrees showed the highest scores for both gender equality perception (3.28) and cultural belief standards (3.54). Getting an advanced education develops a deeper support for gender equality.

People in Europe (M = 3.57) came first in accepting modern gender attitudes among regions while North America (M = 3.50) ranked second. South Asia (M = 3.15) and Middle East and North Africa (M = 3.06) scored below these areas showing stronger gender traditional perspectives. Individuals that earned above 50,000 displayed good social attitudes towards inclusivity with a 3.32 point on the scale depending on financial stability.

The research shows that the existence of equality institutions at the global level is accompanied by cultural and social hindrances. Our results require holistic solutions that are cross-gender and cross-cultural but aimed at education and community building. Creating progress by mere regulations will never suffice; the change in the social system needs a revolution. The research has factual findings that ought to inform improved data-driven policies in the quest to promote gender equality in the global scene.

REFERENCES

- Atobrah, D. (2020). Gender and global health education, what is it about the Global South. *European Journal of Public Health*, 30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaa165.612>
- Bacchi, C. (2009). Problematizing “gender equality”. *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 17(4), 304–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740903257483>
- Booth, C., & Bennett, C. (2002). Gender mainstreaming in the European Union. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 9(4), 430–446. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505068020090040401>
- Chary, S. N. (2017). Gender equality. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 26(1), 108–111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492616664853>

- Cornwall, A., & Rivas, A. (2015). From ‘gender equality and ‘women’s empowerment’ to global justice: reclaiming a transformative agenda for gender and development. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(2), 396–415. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1013341>
- Dhuli, B., Dharmo, A., & Dharmo, I. (2023). Gender equality as a necessary approach for the country’s development process and for gender integration. *Migration Letters*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.59670/ml.v21i2.6433>
- Dilli, S. (2024). Synthesizing explanations behind global gender (in)equality: Identifying the gaps and moving forward with more economic history. *Journal of Economic Surveys*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joes.12620>
- Fors Connolly, F., Goossen, M., & Hjerm, M. (2020). Does gender equality cause gender differences in values? Reassessing the gender-equality-personality paradox. *Sex Roles*, 83, 101–113. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-019-01097-x>
- García, M. F., Ahmed, R., Flores, G., & Halliday, C. S. (2023). Gender equality and comparative HRM: A 40-year review. *Human Resource Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2023.100972>
- Kardam, N. (2002). The emergence of a global gender equity regime. *International Journal*, 57(3), 411–438. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002070200205700307>
- Kardam, N. (2004). The emerging global gender equality regime from neoliberal and constructivist perspectives in international relations. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 6(1), 85–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461674032000165941>
- Kennett, P., & Payne, S. (2014). Gender justice and global policy paradigms. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 30(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21699763.2014.887027>
- Marco-Simó, J. M., Marco-Galindo, M., Planas Hortal, E., & García García, M. J. (2023). Alignment of the institutional strategy with the teaching action in the implementation of the gender perspective: Design and implementation in the case of the UOC. *IEEE Revista Iberoamericana de Tecnologías del Aprendizaje*, 18(4), 374–383. <https://doi.org/10.1109/RITA.2023.3324059>
- Nentwich, J. (2006). Changing gender: The discursive construction of equal opportunities. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 13(5), 499–521. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2006.00320.x>
- Prügl, E., & True, J. (2014). Equality means business? Governing gender through transnational public–private partnerships. *Review of International Political Economy*, 21(6), 1137–1169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2013.849277>
- Razavi, S. (2019). Indicators as substitute for policy contestation and accountability? Some reflections on the 2030 Agenda from the perspective of gender equality and women's rights. *Global Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12633>
- Shah, S. (2020). Gender equality and situated constructions: Perspectives of women educational leaders in a Muslim society. *Educational Studies*, 56(1), 37–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2019.1607739>
- Shannon, G. D., Jansen, M., Williams, K., Cáceres, C., Motta, A., Odhiambo, A., Eleveld, A., & Mannell, J. (2019). Gender equality in science, medicine, and global health: Where are we at and why does it matter? *The Lancet*, 393(10171), 560–569. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)33135-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)33135-0)

- Smith, S. G., & Sinkford, J. (2022). Gender equality in the 21st century: Overcoming barriers to women's leadership in global health. *Journal of Dental Education*, 86(9), 1144–1173. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jdd.13059>
- Somerville, C. (2020). Why global health can offer more on gender. *BMJ Global Health*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2020-002328>
- Syed, J., & Ali, F. (2018). A relational perspective on gender equality and mainstreaming. *Human Resource Development International*, 22(1), 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2018.1495406>
- Syed, J., & Ali, F. (2018). A relational perspective on gender equality and mainstreaming. *Human Resource Development International*, 22(1), 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2018.1495406>
- True, J. (2003). Mainstreaming gender in global public policy. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5(3), 368–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461674032000122740>
- Van de Vliert, E., & Kluwer, E. (2024). Global ecology and geography of gender equality. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672241237383>
- Xu, C., Mussagulova, A., & Zhou, Q. (2024). The role of gender equality in advancing development. *Public Administration and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2042>