

Gender inequality in politics and the workplace



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The 21st century has continued to witness numerous technological inventions that have enhanced the lives of people across the globe. In this respect, most of the social, political and economic challenges that were witnessed in the 20th century have been eliminated by the introduction of different inventions as well as societal structures that promote the existence of these inventions. However, irrespective of the fact that technological inventions and societal structures have enabled the world to eliminate or reduce major challenges and threats, there are other critical issues that need to be dealt with to enhance mutual existence of people in the society. Among these are gender issues and inequality.

To begin with, the gender divide between men and women in the society has existed for a very long period of time. In line with this, women have been perceived as the weaker gender and as a result, they have been met with discrimination thus denying them important human rights and privileges in the society. It is important to note that the gender divide that is seen between men and women begins at an early age: in most case, two to three years after a child is born. In reference to Goldenberg & Irene (2007, p. 56), men and women, beginning early in life, learn different problem-solving techniques, cultivate different communication styles, develop different perspectives on sexuality, and hold different expectations for relationships.

Importantly, whereas the approach that is utilized to bring up children from the two genders is different, one gender has an advantage over the other. In other words, the societal setup or rather structures promote the alleviation of one gender above the other, which therefore accounts for the disparities that have continued to be witnessed for many centuries now. In regard to

this, men have dominated in the society whereas women remain among the marginalized groups in the society. Following this point, there are different areas that have exhibited gender inequality in the society and need to be addressed as a way of reducing the gender gap between men and women in the society. These include education, politics, workplace and family and household.

Education

The educational sector remains among the leading area under which there has been a widespread gender divide. Firstly, most societies across the globe in the 20th century going backwards valued the education of the boy child as compared to that of the girl child. Essentially, men were valued more than women in the society and therefore, endowing them with knowledge and skills was an important step towards elevating their stature in the society. As it was mentioned earlier, whereas the introduction of different technological inventions in the 20th century improved greatly the lives of people in different societies across the globe, it has achieved little in the educational sector in terms of reducing gender divide. It was observed that increasing flows of resources into education have not been matched by increasing concerns for practices to develop gender equality in education (Unterhalter & Aikman 2007, p. 10).

The gender divide issue is worsened by the fact that whereas it is known in different countries across the globe that gender inequality in education exists, little has been done to address it. Unterhalter & Aikman (2007, p. 10) affirmed that while most countries collected some gender-disaggregated data and have objectives to improve girls' enrolment into the education

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system, only four countries had developed plans on the basis of broader concept of gender equality. Stated from a different perspective, there was little that was being done by nations across the globe to eradicate gender inequality in their educational system. This could be attributed to the fact that different societies across the globe still hold on to the fact or rather stereotypes that a woman is a weaker gender and therefore can only be assigned household chores which does not require a lot of thinking. This notion is strengthened by the fear that men have in that when women are more educated, they would refuse to submit to men. Such fears have contributed to adamant steps that are being taken to deal with gender inequality in education.

Irrespective of the situation in the educational system in most countries across the globe, there is still hope for policymakers who have been fighting to ensure that there is gender equality in school enrolment. Note that equality could be achieved under Education For All programs that promote an equitable distribution of learning resources between the genders.

According to Unterhalter & Aikman (2007, p. 27), to increase equality of access to education, and to sustain progress towards Education For All, it is necessary to develop teaching methods, new ways of learning and curricula that enable girls and boys to participate in learning as equals.

Furthermore, fertility and childbearing are among the issues that have contributed to low enrolment and early dropout of girls in different educational systems across the globe. Note that the level of fertility among most women have in often times contributed to early marriages, an issue that have increased the rate of school termination among girls. This can be

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cited as one of the reason why there are few women who have completed basic education, i. e. up to a high school level, and even fewer who have completed their higher education (Unterhalter & Aikman 2007). Therefore, to increase the level of enrolment and the rate of those who complete basic education, it is important for the government and policymakers to develop strategies that would deter early marriages as well as promote the importance of completing basic education and obtaining formal training among women.

Therefore, there is a need to create awareness on the importance of gender balance in education among both men and women in the society. Note that most women in the society have resigned to the fact that they are a weak gender and therefore they do not need to acquire education or formal training to enable them to get formal employment. Women need to be enlightened and then empowered to rise in their level of education so as to bridge the gap between them and men (Unterhalter & Aikman 2007). On the other hand, the importance of women education should also be communicated to men and the society in general. Importantly, whereas the women have always been perceived as a weaker gender, their contribution towards building the economy and the society in general cannot be overlooked. This therefore calls for the bridging of the gender inequality gap in education.

Family and Household

The family and the household is another setup or rather societal structure that has continued to promote gender inequality. In this respect, the family and the household has continued to elevate the man above the woman.

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Whereas this may be perceived as an insignificant issue considering the fact that most family and households are provided for by the man, this has been a disadvantage to the woman since most decisions are made by the man (Lamanna & Riedmann 2008). Note that some of the decisions that are made by men are meant to discriminate against women and assist the man to maintain his position.

Essentially, the contribution of women towards the household has also been low as a result of the fact that most of them do not have adequate education, are discriminated at the workplace or are restricted from working by men. Therefore, the low income of women and their contribution in the household has often resulted in conflicts between men and women, especially in a family or household setup (Lamanna & Riedmann 2008). Following this, most of these women are raped, molested and beaten by men. It can be concluded that the family has acted as the discriminatory platform of women in the society and this can only be reversed by addressing the concerned issues from a family and household perspective.

Gender Inequality in the world Politics

As a matter of fact, gender inequality has been an issue which has existed since time in memorial. As such, women in the world have continually been faced by issues of inequality on all spheres of life. Needless to say, public life which entails both national and international decision making has marginalized women. As well, policy-making bodies have women being under-represented. Surprisingly enough, women in all countries of the world have been pointed out to have not achieved a right to vote. This point

suggests that men have been favored over women and as a result, women have been denied their opportunity to air their political views.

According to research records, there are only 24 women who have ever been elected to the position of heading the state. In consistent with this point, in the year 1994 there were 10 women who happened to be the heads of states (Hurrell & Woods 1999, p. 96). This was one of the remarkable points in history if it may be said. Taking the example of national decision making bodies such like legislative and economic bodies; it is evident that women are the minority represented. Agencies responsible for law and justice have as well reflected the issue of women being under-represented.

In line with this point, across the globe there has been an aspect of women being confined in their homes as housewives without taking part in the public issues. Due to this point, UN secretary general has never been a women yet the issue of gender inequality has been condemned by Article 8 of the charter (Hurrell & Woods 1999, p. 96). Article 8 of the charter provides that there should be no restriction whatsoever which should be placed on eligibility of both men and women to participate. So to speak, it has been argued that over 1 billion people supposedly living in poverty have the majority of them being women.

Arguably, gender inequality has been pointed out as to stem from world cultural patterns that put it that women have to remain as subordinate or rather the lower status is accorded to them as it is dictated by the family structure (Hurrell & Woods 1999, p. 98). Even so, this has brought about tremendous effects on the political participation of women whereby men

have treated them as subordinates and as such a group of people that do not have the voice even when they are oppressed. Given to this point, it seems that politics have been having very few women in participation due to gender issues which discriminate women.

The most prominent thing to note is that there has been a great discrimination against women as far as public life and decision making is concerned which makes up politics. Following this point, women's citizenship has been limited. Equally important, a research that was carried out in about 43 countries revealed that the political status of women as compared to that of men greatly differed in the sense that men outnumbered women. In most of the political parties, women have been under-represented due to the issues of family management which has been given to women through the dictates of culture (Hurrell & Woods 1999).

In particular, States in Asia have defined politics as a realm of corruption, bribery and violence if it may be said. As a result, the women are viewed as symbols of innocence and moral superiority. Due to this factor, women are then deemed dirty when they participate in the politics. As well, men have argued that women are ruled by emotion rather than reason and as a consequence, they are limited to play the role of a leader. This is the reason why in Asia women participate less in politics.

From a general point of view, women have been discriminated against in the world politics owing to the issues of gender. This is because politics have been pointed out as a dirty game that which is able to corrupt the good morals of women and thus defying their innocence. Again in this context,

cultural patterns in most part have contributed to the growth of the gender inequality given that they are seen as subordinates and not leaders or managers. As well, they have been associated with emotion rather than reason as the main factor that leads them.

Gender inequality in the workplace

In the context of the nature of the workplace issues, gender inequality has been labeled as an issue of concern. Needless to speak, gender inequality in the workplace has been an issue that has been associated with unfair treatment towards a certain gender at the workplace. In connection to this point, this can also be termed as gender discrimination and as such it has been witnessed not only on women but men as well depending on the context where it takes place. Under this circumstance, issues of women being denied a position due to pregnancy or simply for the reason that they are women have been pointed as most of women are never raised in terms of ranks due to the fear that they may become pregnant. Workplace harassment and especially in regard to women has as well been cited. Accordingly, others have been denied holidays based on their sexual orientation.

In addition, there is a law in America which was adopted in 1979 known as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is abbreviated CEDAW which was adopted by UN General Assembly. Outstandingly, it is geared towards ending gender discrimination (Gottfried & Reese 2004, p. 307). Equally important, it has been presented as the international Bill of Rights for Women given that women are the most discriminated due to gender differences. Apart from this point, there is also <https://assignbuster.com/gender-inequality-in-politics-and-the-workplace/>

the U. S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which puts it that each and everyone despite the differences in gender is entitled to an equal opportunity in cases of employment. Even though women have been the most affected in terms of workplace gender inequality, men have as well been discriminated. For instance, jobs like nursing have limited men just because they are men.

In the same line of thought, high positions like the position of top managers have in most cases been given to men owing to the issues of women being viewed as the weaker sex. Given the many injustices that have been committed against women, it is imperative to point out that there has in the recent times an increase in the number of working women in workplace; some as employees and others as managers. In actuality, women have been pointed out as effective leaders in the contemporary corporate world. In a more practical point of view, gender inequality in workplace has been witnessed as an obvious practice in the case of payment. In line with this, U. K statistics reveal that women who happen to work full-time match the 82 percent of the hourly pay for men along with the fact that those that work part-time earn 61 percent (Gottfried & Reese 2004, p. 57).

Most of the times, women are left home to care for children, the elderly, the sick and the disabled. Due to this factor, women's labor market experience becomes limited and as a result this then limits their opportunity to be employed. Accordingly, men who receive both education and good training are more likely to access job opportunities as compared to women who have to spent time at home as caregivers. Again in this context, most of the jobs

that women access are poor paying and due to this point, most of them have to live in poor conditions.

Gender inequality in health

Arguably, gender inequality has been found in the context of health. In connection to this point, the health accessibility by women is limited as compared to that of men across the globe. Although there has been in the recent times step towards ensuring that health is accessible to all, some still limit women and thus it ends up that men are healthier than women. In essence, women being the caregivers have been marginalized and as such most of them do not have time to attend to their health needs. In fact, even when they have been given bed rest it becomes hard to do it since they have to care for their families. Following this point, employers may avoid employing women fearing that they may have to ask for a maternity leave (Gottfried & Reese 2004, p. 116).

Education however, has brought about an increase in the number of women able to access health care services due to increased girl child education. Another thing to note is that due to the place given to women in the society through the dictates of culture, their pay is so low that they cannot afford good health care. More to this point, most of the health care givers were men in the past and thus it became hard for the women to access health services (Gottfried & Reese 2004). As well, women were unable to get access of quality care due to their level of income and a lack of education. Nevertheless, in the recent times there has been a great improvement brought about by empowering of women education by means of girl child education.

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As well, Non-governmental organizations have come into the scene to fight for women health. In the same line of thought, movements have been formed to fight for women's rights and as such, this enables them to have equal access to health care services. Generally, there has been a gender inequality in health with women being the most affected. However, health reform is slowly lessening the gap between men and women in terms of health care accessibility.

Conclusion

Gender issues and inequality in the society has been skewed with women being the disadvantaged group in the society. Different institutions that have been formed in the society have denied women the rights and privileges that are accorded to men in these societies. Following this point, there are different facts that have been presented as a defense by men of their actions. To begin with, men and the society in general have continued to argue that women are a weaker gender and therefore, they can only serve better as housewives and in less influential positions. In addition, the society favors men as compared to women. In line with this, gender equality can only be achieved when the perception of men, women and the society in general towards women is changed.