

History of gender inequality in the world creative writing

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Historically, the fundamental differences between sexes have been used as the basis of an argument against equality. Globally, there are various measures that have been used in measuring the disparities between men and women. The most common measures as adopted by the UN are health, empowerment and the labor market as they are the social and economic perspectives affecting inequality. The existence of inequality disparity on the basis of gender has been a major factor behind the loss of human development leading to inequality between female and male achievements (Kamrany and Robinson para 5). In most global societies, men and women face unequal laws in their private and public lives. However, the inequality disparities vary across different regions and countries around the globe.

The gender inequality index as adopted by the UN is comprised of reproductive health, which entails adolescent fertility and maternal mortality, empowerment, which entails educational achievements and parliamentary representation and lastly labor market participation. The index provides the basis upon which organizations, government and civil society understand the disparity between men and women. Gender inequality index provides revelation of the extent in which national achievements are eroded by gender inequality in human development. The application of unequal rules for women and men in their private and public lives creates restrictions on their civil liberties and economic prosperity (World Bank 82). In addition, numerous forms of informal discrimination exacerbate man-made gender inequalities across different societies in the globe.

For example, recently King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia announced that women would be allowed to vote and vie for the local leadership posts for the first

time in 2015. However, there were no announcements about other restrictions on Saudi's women. For example, women in Saudi are not allowed to drive and defiance to such bans results in harsh punishments and sentence. In addition, the participation of women in the labor force is only 22%. This has been due to informal restriction on women such that a woman must obtain permission from a male guardian to leave the country or work outside the home (ERDİLEK para 6). These restrictions severely and negatively restrict and limit women's participation in economic activities and social status, hence preventing them from realizing their full potential.

Although the restrictions and limitations on women's civil and economic liberties in most of the global economies are not as severe as those of Saudi Arabia, there still exist disparities between men and women. For example, a comparative analysis on the global labor force participation established that, although women account for 49.6 percent of the global population only 40.8 percent account in the formal sector. The disparity in the participation of women in economic activities is attributed to various factors, such as legal differentiation of women and men among other factors (Ridgeway 76). In addition, there are numerous social constructs and informal forms of inequality propagated in different societies across the globe. This limits and hinders the participation of women in their economic, social and political participation.

The UN formulated the millennium development goals (MDGs) focusing on the development of underdeveloped and developing economies. Among the millennium development goals is enhancing gender equality. However, as the millennium development goals expire in 2015, key players have

recognized there is a lack of focus on inequality. This has been a major limitation in the achievement of millennium development goals (World Bank 101). However, the trends in dealing with gender inequality have been worrying due to diversion from the initial objective. Various players have proposed that gender inequality should be replaced by a general and undefined inequality goal, which should embrace disadvantaged people in the society such as disabled and disadvantaged ethnic groups.

In the current global economy characterized with increased globalization and competitiveness, inequality against women act as an impediment of the country's participation. It has been observed that countries with huge inequality disparities remain behind in terms of participation in the global market. Additionally, they are characterized by poor access to basic services and backwardness in terms of social structures and economic progress.

Women play an imperative role in their contribution to economic progress and social status elevation in terms of providing modern social services (Kamrany and Robinson para 7). Therefore, countries that treat women unequally lose in terms of economic progress and social development.

The causes as well as degree of gender inequality vary across different countries across the globe. The most prevalent crimes against women across the globe comprise of violence, femicide, rape and honor killing. The majority of Islamic countries in the Middle East and northern Africa is notably recognized with high degrees of gender inequality. In India, there have been numerous cases of gender inequality as many females suffer infanticide due to lack of sufficient dowries. These actions can be termed as violence not only against women, but also against humanity (ERDİLEK para 8). Gender

inequality has highly been attributed to people's conceptions and perceptions of masculinity and femininity.

The ideologies concerning differential treatment and expectations of women and men evoke different judgment in regard to women and men behaviors. For example, in countries such as Lesotho and Chile women are being restricted from the right of land ownership, where all title deeds must bear the name of a man. Women are not given any legal claim to land and widows are left landless and homeless, since the deceased family can throw the women out of their homes. The inability to hold land is an important economic factor especially in rural areas of underdeveloped countries where agriculture is the basic source of income.

In the universal Declaration of human rights, the UN was categorical that everyone irrespective of their sex was entitled to equal rights and freedoms. However, it has been noted that countries globally fall short of the overall goal. However, the severity of the variance differs from one country to the other with developed countries being characterized by low levels of gender inequality. For example, the Nordic countries have been characterized with the lowest levels of gender inequality globally and they include Sweden, Norway and Iceland. On the other hand, in developing countries, women face gender inequality which can be hard to fathom. For example, in 2008, Ban Ki-moon, the UN secretary general reported that in every three women one is likely to be coerced into sex or beaten at one point of their lifetime. There are various forms of violence against women in both developed and developing countries.

Feminization of Poverty

The increased propagation of gender inequality in the globe has led economic, social and political disparities between men and women. For example, in Saudi Arabia where women must obtain authorization from men to engage in an economic activity has led to a concept referred to as the feminization of poverty. In this concept, an acknowledgement is made that more than 1.5 billion globally live on less than a dollar a day and the majority in this group are women. There are various social, political and economic limitations that hinder the participation of women in economic activities in numerous societies. In addition, social constructs and perceptions about women have limited the participation of women in productive activities.

For example, there are numerous societies where women are perceived as home keepers and their duties constrained to child bearing and house chores. It has been noted that countries with high index of gender inequality lag behind in economic development and social progress. For example, in some countries women are not allowed to own land, in which they live or work inhibiting their productivity since they easily fall prey to forceful evictions. In addition, such restrictions expose women to abusive marriages and unfair treatment in the case their husbands die. The UN cites statistics where it has been found that women do two thirds of the world's work, but receive only 10 percent of the world's income and own only 1 percent of global means of production.

In many instances, women have been left destitute due to denial of the means of production such as land. This has been among the major factors

hindering women from owning the means of production. For example, in the current global economies, people have been looking for sources of finances, which facilitate business operations and the purchase of the means of productions. Land has been used as a major factor used in securing debt from financial institutions, which means that women do not have access to funds for business startups and operations. Without sufficient funds women cannot expand their means of production and hence they are left to dwell in poverty. In addition, there has been numerous cases where the legal rights of women are restricted exacerbating the inability of women to own the means of production.

Gender inequality has also been propagated in access to health care, where in most developing countries access to quality health care seems like a luxury especially to expectant women. According to statistics from world health organization (WHO) one woman in every minute around the globe dies, which cumulatively amounts to 500, 000 deaths in a year, which could have been averted if timely treatment was received. In addition, the number of women infected with HIV/AIDS has been increasing especially in the sub-Saharan Africa owing to the propagation of inequality in access to health care. One of the reasons attributed to the increasing number of infections are the cultural factors that force women to stay in marriages when their husbands are adulterous. In many sub-Saharan countries, young girls are forced into marriages irrespective of their own will. These underage girls forced into marriage experience difficulties during childbirth and have higher risks of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Political participations of women globally have been very low despite their

composition of half of the global population. It is approximated that only 15.6 percent of women are elected in parliamentary positions in the world and they miss in all levels and positions of government. Research has found that women can play an imperative role in shaping social spending priorities investing in family and community resources, which would improve health, eradicate poverty and improve education more than men.

Women have faced numerous cases of inequality inhibiting their ability to socially politically and economically progress. For example, in Egypt women are denied full rights of travel where if a husband files an official complaint to the airport he can forbid her wife from travelling. The same case is also experienced in Syria. In other countries such as Iraq, Libya, Jordan, Oman and Yemen husbands must provide written authorization when their wives are travelling out of the country. This makes women vulnerable and at the mercies of their husbands when they want to engage in activities that improve their lives.

History of Gender Inequality in the US

Despite the plethora of changes and measures against gender inequality in advanced societies such as America, it has continued to prevail. The countervailing forces of gender inequality include economic rationality, political participation, changes in the legal systems and women ' s success in achieving equal opportunities. The concept of gender inequality in the US was dated back in the 17th century since when the essay " A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" was published by Mary Wollstonecraft, in 1792. This was considered when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was passed

by the UN, in 1948.

In addition, the UN, in 1979 also passed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women where all countries signatory to CEDAW were required to promote gender equality in law and practice.

However, US were among the countries that declined to sign onto the agreement. There have been sociological studies indicating that the US has a high degree of gender inequality as compared to other major industrialized countries. For example, out of 188 countries of the highly industrialized countries eight of them do not offer paid maternity leave and US are among them. The Medical Leave Act of 1993 offers only two weeks of unpaid leave to men and women after childbirth, child adoption or illness cases in the family. However, the unpaid leave is only available for half of the US workforce as the majority of them cannot take the leave.

The views regarding gender inequality have changed radically since the rise of women's liberation movement in the 1970's. Significant achievements have been made in fighting inequality in the US, and a recent research by the Pew Research Center indicates that 66 percent of women are being more successful at work. The division of feminine waves also presents the phases over which women have fought inequality globally (Ferro para 9). Although women have been able to achieve significant equality in terms of political, social and economic participation, the fight is not yet over as they are far off from being equal to men.

Capitalism, which is the basis of the US economy, has also been attributed to propagating gender inequality in the country. This is due to the fact that capitalism is based on a class society and relies on inequality in yielding

profits and the creation of white male privilege. Capitalism is based on the oppression of people of color, women, working class and the minority groups in the society (Davis para 8). Even in the modern America, women have been treated unequally in terms of remunerations for similar jobs and tasks among other perspectives of equality.

In the early 1960's, the majority of Americans believed that gender equality was not desirable and was impossible. The conventional knowledge and wisdom compelled the American society to think that a woman would not pursue a career and fulfils her duties as a wife and a mother. A research carried out in early 1962, established that the majority of women believed that important family decisions could only be made by men of the houses. Therefore, the feminists' movements have not only been changing the perception of society and social institution towards women, but also women's attitude. They challenged women to change their assumption and perceptions about work and house chores as well as decision making. These feminist movements have played an imperative role in changing and revolutionary transforming American attitudes towards women.

In conclusion, gender inequality has been a historical global phenomenon in all global societies. However, the degree of inequality varies across different societies in the globe. For example, the majority of Islamic countries experience high degrees of gender inequality especially in the Middle East and North African countries. Gender inequality in the sub-Saharan Africa has also been high due to lack of education characterized with early marriages and inequalities in access to health care. Gender inequality in the US has also been an imperative perspective and women have fought the inequalities

for decades. Although significant strides in achieving gender equality have been made, there exist numerous changes that can be made in achieving an equal society.

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