

Research on the Challenges of Gender Equality in Real Life

Lixin Cao¹, Jiexin Li², Anna Piao^{3,*}

¹ Shanghai United International School Gubei Campus, Shanghai, 201100, China

² Labor Economy, Capital University of Economy and Business, Beijing, 100062, China

³ Canadian International School of Shenyang, Shenyang, Liaoning, 110000, China

* Corresponding Author Email: piaoanna@cisshenyang.com

Abstract. Nowadays, feminism is a very popular topic throughout the world, and a large number of people attach great importance to female's rights, even many universities set some course relating to it. But, there are still some problems through the protection of women. Nowadays, women face the discrimination in occupation, which has bad effect on choosing jobs. In order to promote and increase salary, a large number of women are refuse to get married and give birth to babies, which cause lack of labour and do damage to the development of economic. The challenge is that although women have several ally, some of them are "Pseudo-ally", promoting the legitimate needs of stigmatizing women. This article will discuss the current state of gender equality, the challenges, and the importance of advancing women's rights. a fascinating narrative unfolds in the intricate field of women's studies, a captivating narrative unfolds, encompassing historical shifts, psychological exploration, and a heightened understanding of domestic violence. The article's aim is that let people to have a better understanding of women, diminish the discrimination of female, and let more real ally to help women.

Keywords: Feminism, equality, health, society, gender.

1. Introduction

Gender equality and women's rights and interests are popular topics widely discussed in today's society. People are pursuing a just and inclusive society in which everyone has equal opportunities and rights. This article will discuss the current state of gender equality, the challenges, and the importance of advancing women's rights. In today's society, the promotion of women's status and gender equality issues are getting more and more attention. However, sexism and violence are still common in all aspects of our lives. Gender equality is still a process that needs long-term efforts and continuous development. The gender roles of modern men and women stem from the division of labor developed in early societies, which is based on gender differences. Women's ability to bear children determines their work roles. It is increasingly emphasized nowadays that how important to society of an intact family consisting of both spouses and children is. Historically, technological and physical deficiencies have led to a shift in gender roles, and as a ruling group, men can limit women's access to socio-economic and political power shared by men to reduce competition from women. The current state of gender equality is complex and varied. While some progress has been made over the past few decades, many challenges remain. Women still face gender discrimination and unequal treatment in some fields. The importance of promoting women's rights is self-evident. The rights and interests of women are not only related to the dignity and freedom of individuals but also to the progress and prosperity of the whole society. When women are given equal opportunities and resources, they can realize their full potential and make greater contributions to society. Gender equality and women's rights are key to the progress of the society. People should strive for a just and inclusive society that gives everyone equal opportunities and rights. Gender equality is at the heart of human rights and United Nations values. However, millions of women and sexual minorities around the world continue to experience discrimination in the enjoyment of their civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights. Through more people's awareness and discovery of gender equality issues, the elimination of gender discrimination, the promotion of gender equality, so that women can enjoy the same rights and opportunities as men will be realized. For women's groups, it can promote self-awareness and

self-realization. Thus, it can help people better understand the situation and needs of women and drive social change to make human societies more diverse, inclusive and equal.

2. Text History of Feminist Research: See Women's Power

In the long course of history, it is worth remembering the process of feminism "from scratch" - the issues related to it were discussed, written, and gradually developed to the present day. In modern society, although the related issues of gender equality are being perfected step by step and progress is obvious, feminism is still a global issue waiting for more attention and exploration. A hundred years ago, women had a low status and were considered to be more suitable for indoor work, so their main responsibilities were child rearing and housework activities, thus the "housewife" was developed. "The woman is mentally underdeveloped, stays only in the emotional stage, and does not rise to the rational stage, so she is childish, shallow, stupid." According to Aristotle, women are largely unworthy of love and self-worth, they are the reproductive machines and appendages of men [1]. The first turning point came with the publishing of women's literature, *The City of Women*. This is from the world's first feminist author, Cristina de Pisan. The book has been hailed as "the first masterpiece of the Renaissance to cry out for the rights and status of women bravely". Then, in 1791, during the French Revolution, the women's leader Olympe de Gouges published the Declaration of Women's Rights and Women's Citizenship, which declared that girls and boys were equal [2]. This text marks the official beginning of the feminist movement.

From about the second half of the 18th century to the 1920s, the first waves of women's liberation began to make waves - women's suffrage, the right to education, and the employment of married women began to be valued [3]. This period mainly emphasizes the equality of men and women in intelligence and ability and advocates jumping out of the original social thinking framework, calling for the elimination of social gender roles and prejudices. It is worth noting that around the 1960-70s, beauty pageants were seen as an integral part of women's subservient status, and women's pursuit of looks and bodies was devalued and turned into soulless sexual objects. To oppose beauty pageants is to reject the rules and physical standards that women must follow in a male-dominated society. Some feminists point out that "women are in a continuous beauty pageant in their daily life." By the 2010s, sexual assault was on the rise, and people still had a lot of work to do to combat misogyny and ensure equal rights for women. In October 2017, the #MeToo movement gained new attention to fight sexual harassment and provide help and protection for women who are afraid to speak out [4]. As more women came forward with allegations against powerful men, hundreds of thousands joined the Women's March on Washington, D.C., to demand full rights for all women around the world. Gender equality issues are at a high level of attention in today's society - in the field of advertising and marketing, more and more brands are seizing on these relevant points to participate in the army of women's voices and to further explain the value proposition of the brand. For example, Lilac Doctor and beauty brand ukiss launched the "red makeup is also armed" activity, sending 1,000 lipsticks to the upcoming period, calling on participants to smear the egg donation advertisement, so that lipstick is not only the "red makeup" to decorate the girl, but also the "armed" to protect the girl. In general, society should let more people pay attention to the issue of gender equality, create a more friendly and fair living environment for women, and empower women to be more authentic and confident in themselves.

3. Feminism in the Literature

Nowadays, feminism has become a hot topic in society, and many related literary works are constantly emerging. So how are women in literature?

In early myths, legends and historical stories, there is little mention of women, because the narrative is related to history and culture that promote the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. Since many myths and historical fables are depicted as male stories that have been passed

down from generation to generation, the image of women has been weakened by ancient authors, and their attention and social status have declined. Even when women are mentioned in later fairy tales, other female characters are devalued, such as Little Red Riding Hood's constant depiction of her grandmother as a wicked mother-in-law [5]. This systematic directing of hatred at the mother or grandmother and the destruction of the daughter's desire to identify with her female relatives is very sad for women. They need a lot of chances to get attention from society.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, more and more women began to pay attention to self social status and personality liberation, dare to face reality, and constantly pursue self-worth and goals. Feminism gained traction. Many women writers write about patriarchal persecution in their literature, calling for women's independence. For example, the heroine of one of the works of writer Margaret Derain, Helena [6]. She wants to be reborn through love to discover her husband's strong desire to control, but later she can't stand loveless marriage and her husband's oppression and mental torture. To break the oppression of men, she left her husband, reflecting her brave and rebellious and self-contained character. The writer Margaret Derain had a happy marriage, and she saw the sacred marriage as the basis of a woman's existence, and the husband as the object of dependence of the wife. Although she advocates for women's economic independence. But in the novel, she still portrays Helena as a wife who is far from her husband in life, but still financially dependent on men. The other female character of this work, Martha, did not get rid of the difficult shackles, and lost herself in the taciturn of her husband. The solidification of the family role made her give up her self-identification. Margaret Derain uses the contrast of two female characters to convey the idea that women can only enjoy high social status and voice when men begin to care, respect, or even submit to women. While this kind of thinking is very avant-garde, it is at odds with the real needs of women in modern society. What's more, the matching of men with women is also a gender inequality. This is not what women are looking up to these days.

Now there are many TV dramas or movies about the image of women in the work, adapted from the novel of the same name, which have been well received by many audiences. The images of women in these works that are truly popular with women are those that represent the majority of women. They are not tools to highlight the spirit of the times and promote the plot but reflect the real problems of the current society through the details of their behavior and life trajectories. It's also that they have a fuller image. They have distinct personalities and rich character plots and are highlighted by the author through multifacetedness [7]. They are neither attached to anyone nor trampled under anyone's feet but have earned the respect of others through their efforts. This is a true reflection of the needs of women nowadays who want to be seen.

The literary works of an era embody the ideological concepts and values of an era. The change of women's role under different times reflects the improvement of women's status and self-attention. Today, what modern women really hope for is not to carry forward feminism, but to hope for gender equality, and to hope that women, feminism, feminism and other related words will not be specifically proposed. In the future, literary works will further discover and think about social issues, objectively and truly show the plight of women and the spirit of women to the world and do their best to realize women's equality in society.

4. Research on Women's Mental Health

In today's society, research on women's mental health has become a prominent field of study. Psychologists, sociologists, medical experts, and scholars from various disciplines are actively involved in gaining a deeper understanding of the psychological well-being of women in contemporary society. Women's mental health issues encompass various aspects, including emotional disorders (such as depression and anxiety), body image concerns, social pressures, experiences of violence, and challenges related to physiological cycles. Psychological issues can also manifest as unhealthy behaviors like smoking and alcohol consumption.

Emotional disorders are common among women, with contributing factors including hormonal fluctuations, reproductive experiences, physiological cycles, and societal pressures. Body image concerns may arise from societal standards of female appearance, leading to decreased self-esteem and exacerbating mental health issues. Additionally, social pressures, stemming from expectations and stress in family, career, and social circles, negatively impact women's emotional and psychological well-being. Expectations related to family roles, work pressures, and societal expectations of female behavior can contribute to increased psychological burdens. Experiences of violence are also a profound factor in women's mental health issues. Violence within the home or society not only causes physical harm but poses a direct threat to mental health, potentially leading to severe conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

The combined impact of these factors makes women more susceptible to mental health issues. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive interventions at individual, societal, and systemic levels, including psychotherapy, mental health education, the establishment of social support networks, advocacy for positive body image, and the implementation of legal protections against violence. Through multifaceted efforts, people can better understand and address women's mental health issues, providing more comprehensive support and assistance.

In addition to these factors, it is essential to recognize the intersectionality of women's experiences, considering how factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and cultural background can further influence mental health. Moreover, promoting gender equality in all aspects of life, from education to the workplace, can contribute significantly to reducing the societal pressures that contribute to women's mental health challenges. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, society can create conditions for women to thrive emotionally and psychologically. Collaborative efforts between healthcare professionals, policymakers, and communities are crucial to implementing lasting solutions that empower women and prioritize their mental well-being. Addressing women's mental health comprehensively not only benefits individuals but also contributes to building a healthier and more resilient society as a whole.

5. Research on Domestic Violence

The issue of domestic violence against women is a profound and serious social phenomenon, characterized by physical, psychological, or economic violence occurring within the family environment. The root causes of this problem are diverse, encompassing factors at the societal, cultural, psychological, and individual levels.

Firstly, societal and cultural factors play a crucial role in the issue of domestic violence against women. Gender inequality and stereotyping within societal structures, as well as rigid gender role expectations, may lead to a lack of respect for the rights and dignity of women. Certain cultural beliefs, such as traditional notions of male superiority, can exacerbate the occurrence of domestic violence. These cultural perceptions may lead some individuals to view power dynamics within the family as unidirectional, potentially prompting the emergence of violent behavior. Additionally, psychological factors contribute to the issue of domestic violence. Violent behavior may be linked to mental health issues, desires for control, or improper anger management of the perpetrator. In some cases, individuals engaging in violent behavior may have experienced violence or abuse during their childhood, impacting their subsequent actions. Furthermore, the stress and tension within the family environment can trigger or escalate domestic violence. Economic pressure, unemployment, and family disputes can act as catalysts leading to the escalation of conflicts. The lack of effective communication and conflict resolution skills may also make tense situations more prone to evolving into violent behavior. Finally, individual factors must be considered. Some individuals may be more prone to displaying domestic violence due to personal psychological characteristics, a tendency towards aggression, and an excessive desire for power and control.

The issue of domestic violence against women is a result of the interaction of multiple factors, including societal and cultural beliefs, psychological factors, and family stress. Addressing this

problem requires collective efforts across various societal levels, including comprehensive measures such as advocacy and education, legal safeguards, and psychological support, to create a more just, equal, and harmonious family environment.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, a fascinating narrative unfolds in the intricate field of women's studies, a captivating narrative unfolds, encompassing historical shifts, psychological exploration, and a heightened understanding of domestic violence. Feminist research, as outlined in the introduction, constitutes a resilient chronicle of resistance, retracing the trajectory from early societal forms to contemporary struggles against discrimination and violence. Delving into the realm of women's mental health, this research explores the profound intersection between individual psychology and societal expectations, acknowledging both strengths and vulnerabilities within women's experiences. The application of the women's studies framework to domestic violence not only reveals the heartbreaking realities endured behind closed doors but also underscores the urgency of breaking silence and establishing supportive structures for victims.

Furthermore, the diversity in women's experiences, encompassing factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status, highlights the imperative need to respect each woman as an individual and create inclusive spaces that empower and recognize their agency. The multifaceted exploration of women's studies extends beyond the academic realm, triggering a compelling call for societal transformation. Amid the pandemic, diversity is not only celebrated but actively challenged, as every woman finds her voice, agency, and rightful place in the evolving narrative of human progress.

As people grapple with complex gender dynamics, historical legacies, and contemporary challenges, women's studies emerge not only as an academic pursuit but also as a transformative force shaping the future. In this envisioned future, equality transcends wishful thinking; it becomes a vibrant reality aggregated within a just, inclusive societal structure. In this utopian future, every individual, irrespective of gender, not only enjoys equal opportunities but is also encouraged to thrive and make meaningful contributions, thereby enriching the collective tapestry of humanity.

The panorama of women's studies serves as a compass guiding us toward a future where gender equality is not merely an aspiration but a dynamic reality. This academic pursuit becomes a catalyst for societal metamorphosis, fostering a world where the echoes of each woman's story reverberate, and the empowerment of one becomes the empowerment of all. In conclusion, women's studies stand at the nexus of knowledge and activism, propelling us toward a future where the vibrant hues of equality, justice, and inclusivity paint the canvas of human existence.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

References

- [1] Pinhonglou, pingshan. Review of Aristotle: Women's mental underdevelopment, Dream of the Red Chamber: Happiness comes from women. Baidu. March 1, 2021.
- [2] Sex Edu. Review of Hardcore Popular Science: The development history of feminism abroad. Zhihu. January 19, 2022.
- [3] Li Jinchao. The emergence of feminist thought. Social Sciences Academic Press, 2017.
- [4] Mahdavi, Pardis. How #MeToo Became a Global Movement. Foreign Affairs, 2018.
- [5] Griselda Pollock & Zhai Jing. Is Feminism Trauma, Bad Memory, or Virtual Reality? World fine arts, 2023, (02), 2-18.

- [6] Zhou Yan. From "Superego" obedience to "ego" resistance: The awakening of female self-consciousness from the perspective of psychoanalytic feminism. *Journal of Harbin University*, 2023, (09), 88-91.
- [7] Qi Jianing. The realistic creation of Urban female group Plays -- Based on the theory of "Shakespeareization". *Audiovisual*, 2023, (11), 42-45.