

The Relationship Between Women's Rights and National Development

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Abstract. At present, the issue of women's rights and interests has received extensive attention from social and academic circles. Based on this, this paper explores the relationship between the protection of women's rights and interests and national development. This paper argues that the protection of women's rights and interests has a positive impact on national development. This is mainly reflected in the fact that the improvement of the safeguard policy is conducive to the country's economic growth, promotes the development of society as a whole, and stabilizes the development of the political system. At present, however, there are still some problems in terms of gender equality and women's protection. First, the stereotype that cultural context makes women have a lower status persists. In addition, policies and laws to protect women in some countries are still inadequate. Therefore, the following recommendations are made in this paper. First of all, it is necessary to strengthen the legal protection of women. The social and political status of women can be improved by encouraging women's participation in politics. In addition, increasing women's education rate and level of education and ensuring women's economic status are also solutions.

Keywords: Women's rights; national development; gender inequality.

1. Introduction

In most societies, women's rights protection is an indicator of a country's progress and development. Nowadays, movements for gender equality and feminism have showcased the importance of women's rights in affecting national economies, social structures, and political fields. Recognizing and protecting women's rights, namely through legal protections, influences a country's development heavily.

The research will explore the relationship between the protection of women's rights and the overall development of nations by analyzing the economic, political, and social dimensions. In addition, this research will compare women's rights and national development in different countries and address gender inequality and its negative impact by offering insights for improvements in policy that would help to sustain long-term development.

2. Status of Women's Rights Protection and National Development

2.1. Economic Growth and Gender Equality

Studies have shown a positive relationship between gender equality and economic growth. Leghorn and Parker investigated the negative effects of the undervaluation of women's unpaid labor, which has not been counted in national productivity measurements [1]. The researchers argue that by recognizing this group of labor, countries can improve overall economic productivity. Similarly, the data from India indicates that gender equality in education directly contributes to economic growth by expanding the labor force and encouraging innovation [2].

In addition, Duflo found that female empowerment through increased participation in the workforce leads to an increase in family income and gross domestic product (GDP) [3]. The positive correlation between gender equality and economic growth is further supported by Seguino as he finds that countries with higher levels of gender inequality, especially in education and employment, tend to experience reduced productivity [4]. The American Economic Association also demonstrates that

nations with greater gender equality in the workforce tend to have faster economic growth with an increase in innovation and efficiency [5].

2.2. Social Progress and Gender Equality

The advancement of women's rights not only benefits a country economically but also benefits it. By promoting social progress. When women are empowered, social norms are challenged and changed, leading to improvements in education, healthcare, and overall social cohesion. Increased political representation of women leads to greater investment in these areas, which are crucial for societal development [6]. The overall status of women is improved, and the conservative social norms like traditional patriarchal systems will be abandoned as women are empowered.

Education plays an important role in changing societal conceptions of gender roles. As more women gain access to education, gender norms gradually evolve, and the acceptance of women having power is improved, which would lead to further improvement in the social hierarchy. Female political leaders tend to implement inclusive policies that address poverty and inequality [7]. This would provide an environment where social progress becomes attainable, as women's rights are protected, and promote more disobedience and progress.

2.3. Political Representation and Development

By including women in political leadership positions, national development will be fostered. Female political leaders tend to allocate resources more equitably, especially in developing nations, resulting in improvements in economic growth and societal welfare. Krook and Childs claim that when women have political power, they are more likely to enact gender-sensitive policies that address issues such as unequal salaries, domestic violence, and childcare [8]. These policies would enhance gender equity and also improve national productivity by bringing more women into the labor force. Women's empowerment is like a cycle where when they have political representations, they will implement policies that benefit minority groups and women, but starting the cycle is hard. Women's political participation will result in policies that consider women's needs. This helps to create an environment for holistic national development, supporting both economic and social advancement [9].

Moreover, women political leaders are generally focused on anti-corruption measures more, which stabilizes political systems and increases trust between governments and citizens. A stable political system is essential for promoting long-term development, as it reduces risks and encourages domestic and foreign investment. Additionally, women in politics tend to focus on transparency and accountability of the governing system, which would promote a cohesive governing structure [10].

3. Analysis of the Phenomenon of Gender Inequality

Although the importance of women's rights and interests and the significance of women's development have been confirmed, there are still gender inequalities due to the influence of traditional concepts and social environment.

3.1. Cultural Norms and Gender Inequality

Cultural backgrounds play a significant role in perpetuating gender inequality, which negatively affects a country's development. In many regions, patriarchal traditions and conservative beliefs about gender roles limit women's access to information, education, employment, and political participation. Social expectations around gender roles including women should prioritize family over work, are accepted and reinforced by families and communities [11]. In addition, people's attitudes about "appropriate" work for women induce an invisible ceiling that holds women from fully participating in business [12]. These norms often prevent women from fully participating in the economy, which would reduce national productivity and hinder social progress [1]. Cultural norms affect women's opportunities and global developments. The UNDP's Gender Social Norms Index reports that gender

biases in many societies restrict women's participation in many areas, including the political arena and business, which limits national progress. Also, women are undervalued as nearly half of the respondents worldwide perceive men as better political leaders, hindering national progress [12].

3.2. Legal and Institutional Barriers

Legal structures and institutions in many countries are still disadvantaging women. Women have unequal access to property rights, education, healthcare, and political representation which hinders women's ability to contribute to national development. Goetz argues that strong legal protections for women, such as equal pay and equal political representation, are essential for fostering national development [10]. In countries where such protections are weak or non-existent, women can't participate in the workforce or change the policy, which negatively impacts economic growth and social improvement. Moreover, many countries still lack rigid legal frameworks to support gender equality. For example, unequal inheritance laws and property rights decelerate women's financial independence, hindering them from investing in the economy. Institutional biases in healthcare and education resources create further inequality, which negatively affects women's lives and empowerment [11,12].

3.3. Political Will and Policy Implementation

Although some countries have formal legal protections for women, the will to implement and enforce these policies is lacking due to traditional social norms. Thus, having women political leaders or political leaders that promote gender equity is essential. Those political leaders tend to create more inclusive and transparent governance structures, which promote economic and social progress. However, in countries where gender equality is not considered a priority, policies that aim to improve women's rights are often poorly enforced or ignored, which would result in slower development. It's shown that in countries where leaders champion women's rights, the policies are often more inclusive and have stronger implementation. Leaders who prioritize gender equality are more likely to design transparent, inclusive governance structures that support holistic national development. On the contrary, in regions where gender equality is not considered a determining factor, policies often lack enforcement. This gap of gender inequality could be alleviated by promoting political representation for women, as their leadership advocates for policies that close gaps in inequalities and support national progress [11,12].

4. Implications and Recommendations

4.1. Strengthening Legal Protections for Women

Legal structures promoting gender equality are essential for economic and social development [10]. The improvement in legal systems can't be done by simply enacting laws. Governments must ensure that legal protections for women are implemented and enforced by the officials. Strong monitoring systems are needed to track adherence to laws related to equal pay, property rights, and access to education. In addition, community-based programs that teach legal knowledge could be introduced to help women understand and protect their rights themselves. Governments should also consider the gender aspect when allocating resources, so they can invest in gender-responsive budgeting, which ensures that public resources are allocated equally instead of one group being more privileged. By linking gender equality to measurable resource distribution, governments can create accountability among people and stimulate progress.

4.2. Encouraging Female Political Participation

One way to ensure female participation in governments is to set quotas, a specific number of female leaders needed in a government. But beyond quotas, governments should focus on stimulating female political leadership development programs at a rudimentary level. These programs would

motivate women to participate in the government as other female leaders share their stories with enthusiasm. Mentorship programs led by experienced female politicians could inspire other women to enter the political arena as they get agitated to promote women's and their rights.

Moreover, it is important to remove institutional barriers that discourage women from running for government, such as setting financial limitations and having discriminatory practices. A public awareness campaign that challenges the social taboos could help to shift cultural perceptions about women in leadership, encouraging men and women to accept and embrace female representation.

Furthermore, the government can create all-women political spaces, where women can openly discuss, and share their ideas and perspectives, and develop policies without male dominance. This space is a platform for ideas that prioritize women's issues and societal changes as it gives women the courage to speak. After the discussion among female leaders, they could share their conclusions and suggested solutions with male leaders, and finally agree on the implementation and design of the policies.

The programs that challenge established norms would also result in better opportunities for ordinary women who are not political leaders. As stated before, female leaders are more inclusive in terms of policy making, which means that they would pay attention to minority groups and underprivileged groups including women. When they design policies that target to get women employed and have equal treatment as men in the workplace, ordinary women also benefit from this move as they have access to jobs and similar treatment as males.

4.3. Investing in Education and Economic Empowerment

Education and economic empowerment of women are crucial to a country's growth [3,6]. Investments in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education are needed for women to be able to participate in the economy. Governments should provide scholarships and financial incentives targeted at getting more girls into STEM fields, as these are the sectors that are driving global innovation and economic growth. By obtaining this kind of knowledge, girls can get into the workforce and achieve higher contributions to the country's economy. Policies that ensure girls go to school need to be incorporated with equal education resources. By making education more accessible to females, they can have better future development and therefore contribute to the country's economic development economically as there's more innovation. The government should make sure that females get the same opportunities as males in terms of education.

Furthermore, literacy-improving programs for women, especially in rural areas, would allow them to manage resources, start businesses, apply for jobs in big industries, and contribute to economic growth. Governments should also provide microfinance initiatives that focus on female entrepreneurship, as women in developing countries often struggle to access traditional banking services. With this loan from microfinance, women themselves can start their businesses and make their income in rural areas. This would create opportunities for women to participate in the economy and become financially independent, which is an imperative step in closing the gender gap from an economic perspective.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the positive correlation between the protection of women's rights and national development. Perpetuated gender inequality regarding employment, education, political representation, and perceptions is addressed. Through a comparative analysis of different countries, it is evident that advancements in women's rights are impacting economic growth, social progress, and political stability positively. This research suggests that by ensuring women have equal opportunities and legal protections, countries could sustain long-term development and create more inclusive societies. Governments should design programs that target to alleviate gender inequality in the fields addressed. These programs mainly strengthen legal protection for women, encourage political participation by creating an equal environment, and ensure women's education levels and

their accessibility to job opportunities. Although such recommendations are achievable and effective, continuous efforts need to be made to change social perceptions of gender equality in the long term to change the social structure. As these policies help women to gain status, the idea of gender equality and women's empowerment will penetrate society. Further investigations are necessary for designing policies and programs according to gender equality. Future investigations could use longitudinal studies that collect data for a long time and compare the results from different implementations. In addition, researchers could conduct experiments that survey/observes a randomly selected group of women's real experience in the workplace, etc. before and after certain policies are made. As the concept of gender inequality changes, later research should also focus on how newly developed industries like technology impact women's rights, and how to make those tools for empowering women.

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