



‘Gender Equality and Democracy in Indian Sports Organisations’

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Abstract: *Gender equality refers to global rights, responsibilities and opportunities of all humans. This review study on the basis global gender gap, status on gender equality index and gender inequality index discusses the gender development index and the genders empower measure to improve gender equality. Despite fairly rapid rates of economic growth worldwide for example in the past decade, while Indian GDP has grown by around 6%, there has been a large decline in female labour force participation from 34% to 27%. Despite of the winning of only medals by India in Olympic Games are by women athlete the representation of women in sports governance is negligible. Women's empowerment and gender equality requires strategic interventions at all levels of programming and policy-making. These levels include reproductive health, economic empowerment, educational empowerment and political empowerment. This review study discusses need and ways to improve women participation, gender equality and democracy in sports organisations of India.*

Key Words: Gender Equality, Democracy, Sports Organisation in India

Introduction

Gender equality refers to the *equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men* and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both, women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the *diversity of different groups women and men* (for example: women belonging to ethnic minorities, lesbian women or women with disabilities). Gender equality is both, a human rights principle and a precondition for sustainable, people-centred development (adapted from UN Women). *After thousands of years of*

male dominance, we now stand at the beginning of the feminine era, when women will rise to their appropriate prominence, and the entire world will recognize the harmony between man and woman. – The Rebbe

Gender equality, also known as sexual equality, is the state of equal access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender. It is achieved through gender neutrality and gender equity. Gender neutrality (adjective form: gender-neutral), also known as gender-neutralism or the gender neutrality movement, describes the idea that policies, language, and other social institutions should avoid distinguishing roles according to people's sex or gender, in order to avoid discrimination arising from the impression that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than another.

"Gender equality, equality between men and women, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities."

UNICEF says gender equality "means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike."

Gender equality is achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of the women and men are valued and favoured. Empowering women and promoting gender equality is crucial to accelerating sustainable development. Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but it also has a multiplier effect across all other development areas.

Gender equality and women's empowerment have advanced in recent decades. Girls' access to education has improved the rate of child marriage declined and progress was made in the area of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including fewer maternal deaths.

Nevertheless, gender equality remains a persistent challenge for countries worldwide and the lack of such equality is a major obstacle to sustainable development.

In 2010, the European Union opened the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in Vilnius, Lithuania to promote gender equality and to fight sex discrimination. Gender equality is a part of the national curriculum in Great Britain and many other European countries. Personal, Social and Health Education, religious studies and Language acquisition curricula tend to address gender equality issues as a very serious topic for discussion and analysis of its effect in society.

A large and growing body of research has shown how gender inequality undermines health and development. To overcome gender inequality the United Nations Population Fund states that, *"Women's empowerment and gender equality requires strategic interventions at all levels of programming and policy-making. These levels include reproductive health, economic empowerment, educational empowerment and political empowerment."*

UNFPA says that "research has also demonstrated how working with men and boys as well as women and girls to promote gender equality contributes to achieving health and development outcomes."

Henceforth United Nations included it in Minimum Development Goals (MDG 2015) and reinforced in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2030)

[MDG 2015: Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women](#)

- Target 3A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015
- *Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education*
- *Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector*
- *Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament*^[12]

[SDG 2030: Goal 5: Gender Equality- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls](#)

- Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large

- While a record 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their Constitutions by 2014, another 52 had not taken this step. In many nations, gender discrimination is still woven through legal and social norms
- Though goal 5 is the gender equality stand-alone goal, the SDG's can only be successful if women are completely integrated into each and every goal

How to Measure Gender Equality?

The **Global Gender Gap Report** was first published in 2006 by the World Economic Forum. The 2016 report covers 144 major and emerging economies. The Global Gender Gap Index is an index designed to measure gender equality.

The **Gender Equality Index(GEI)** provides a comprehensive measure of gender equality, tailored to fit the EU policy context. Following the importance of cohesion across EU Member States, the Gender Equality Index ensures that higher gender equality scores can only be obtained in societies where there are small gender gaps and high levels of achievement.

The **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** is an index for measurement of gender disparity that was introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report 20th anniversary edition by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). According to the UNDP, this index is a composite measure which captures the loss of achievement within a country due to gender inequality. It uses three dimensions to do so: reproductive health, empowerment, and labor market participation.

The new index was introduced as an experimental measure to remedy the shortcomings of the previous indicators, the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), both of which were introduced in the 1995 Human Development Report.

Discrimination against women and girls is a pervasive and long-running phenomenon that characterises society at every level. Progress towards gender equality, measured by its position on rankings such as the **Gender Development Index (GDI)** has been disappointing, despite fairly rapid rates of economic growth worldwide for example in the past decade, while Indian GDP has grown by around 6%, there has been a large decline in female labour force participation from 34% to 27%. The male-female wage gap has been stagnant at 50% (a recent survey finds a 27% gender pay gap in white-collar jobs).

The World Economic Forum has developed System Initiatives to serve as platforms to bring together leaders and experts to tackle global issues that require public-private collaboration to

find viable solutions. Each initiative is comprised of bodies of work with results-oriented projects and activities that mobilize leadership, expertise and resources from business, government, civil society and international organizations. The World Economic Forum's System Initiative on Shaping the Future of Education, Gender and Work seeks to ensure that talent is developed and deployed for maximum benefit to the economy and society. This is achieved by mobilizing leaders from business, government, civil society and others through new insights, common agendas and collaborative action.

Relationship between Gender Equality and Democracy

Democracy means to give equal opportunity by equal participation of all stakeholders with equality in all spheres. Gender equality & democracy is a normative idea related to gender mainstreaming. Its aim is to achieve democratic conditions between men and women within society as a whole, as well as specifically within companies, bureaucracies, and other organizations. Among other things, this is realized by means of gender trainings that raise awareness of existing inequalities and develop methods to democratize relations between genders. The term gender democracy was first coined and developed by German sociologist Halina Bedkowska.

Speech delivered by Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, at the Democracy and Gender Equality Roundtable, UN Headquarters, New York, on 4 May 2011; said that some events remind us of how fundamentally democracy has changed since its inception. Once considered to be the sole domain of landowning male elites, it is now impossible to think of democracy as anything but full and equal political citizenship for all. Of course this must be driven by leadership and commitment at the highest levels to ensure women's full and equal participation in democratic processes.

First, we need to address the obstacles women face in participation in the electoral process and their ability to exercise a real choice in elections. Second, we must consider whether spaces are created for women to articulate policy preferences or voice. Third, democratic public institutions must be accountable to women.

Although democratic institutions existed long before gender equality, at this point in history, growing emphasis on gender equality is a central component of the process of democratization.

Support for gender equality is not just a *consequence* of democratization. It is part of a broad cultural change that is transforming industrialized societies and bringing growing mass demands for increasingly democratic institutions.

Describing the relationship between democracy and gender equality; in particular, it contrasts the impact of long-term stocks of democracy with the contemporary level of democracy and the participation of women in democracy. It contends that democracy should be thought of as a historical phenomenon with consequences that develop over many years and decades *and* that women's participation should be included as an important component of democracy. The main argument is that long-term democracy together with women's suffrage should provide new opportunities for women to promote their interests through mobilization and elections. A cross-national time-series statistical analysis finds that countries with greater stocks of democracy and longer experience of women's suffrage have a higher proportion of the population that is female, a greater ratio of female life expectancy to male life expectancy, lower fertility rates, and higher rates of female labor force participation

Contemporary society is just beginning to delve into the true distinctions between men and women. Besides the obvious physiological differences, there are also differences in the way men and women think, speak, and behave.

In order to understand the essential nature of man and woman, we must do away with human subjectivity and look through G-d's eyes. Every human being, man and woman, was created for the same purpose — to fuse body and soul in order to make themselves and their world a better and holier place. In their service of G-d, there is absolutely no difference between a man and a woman; the only difference is in the way that service manifests itself.

What are the differences between men and women?

Man and woman represent two forms of divine energy; they are the male and female elements of a single soul.

G-d is neither masculine nor feminine, but has two forms of emanation: the masculine form, which is more aggressive, and the feminine form, which is more subtle. For a human being to lead a total life, he or she must have both forms of energy: the power of strength and the power of subtlety; the power of giving and the power of receiving. Ideally, these energies are merged seamlessly.

Men are physically stronger. By nature, they are usually more aggressive and externally oriented. In contrast, a woman usually embodies the ideal of inner dignity. Some people confuse

such subtlety with weakness; in truth, it is stronger than the most aggressive physical force imaginable. True human dignity does not shout; it is a strong, steady voice that speaks from within. The nature of a woman, while subtle, is not weak. And the nature of a man, while aggressive, is not brutish. For man and woman to be complete, they must each possess both energies.

The answer is not for men and women to try to be alike. All men and women must be *themselves*, realizing that G-d has given each of us unique abilities with which to pursue our goals, and that our primary responsibility is to take full advantage of those abilities.

What is true liberation for both sexes?

Though feminism rightfully calls for the end of male domination and abuse and for equal rights for women, it is vital to get to the root of the distortion — that our focus in life, as man *or* woman, must not be simply to satisfy our own ego or needs, but to serve good. True women's liberation does not mean merely seeking equality within a masculine world, but liberating the divine feminine aspects of a woman's personality and using them for the benefit of humankind.

After so many years of male dominance, we are standing at the threshold of a true feminine era. It is time now for the woman to rise to her true prominence, when the subtle power of the feminine energy is truly allowed to nourish the overt power of the masculine energy. We have already proven that we can use our strength to slay the demons around us; let us now learn to nurture the Godliness within.

Men and women must realize their respective equal roles and strive to complement each other in their shared struggle to improve life. In order to correct the abuse of male dominance, men must concentrate on using their dominant qualities for the good. They must use their strength to protect and preserve the feminine character, helping women realize their true potential in revealing Godliness, which the world so desperately needs today.

Learn about what it means to be a man or a woman, about masculine and feminine energy. Learn to live up to your potential, to balance these energies to lead a productive and meaningful life, a Godly life and finally, learn to appreciate and respect your male or female counterpart.

Why Gender Equality in Indian Sports?

India is facing a gender problem. The World Economic Forum recently ranked India 108 out of 144 on the Global Gender Gap Index, a multidisciplinary benchmarking framework that measures political, social, economic, and health-based disparities. The 2011 United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report ranked India 132 out of 187 in terms of gender inequality. The Thomson Reuters Foundation recently dubbed India the most dangerous country for women, ahead of Afghanistan and Syria. India ranks 169 in terms of women's life expectancy, and 38 out of 51 in terms of women's literacy in developing countries. Political discourse is dominated by episodes of gendered and sexual violence, from the Nirbhaya Rape case in 2012 to 2016 recorded 38,947 rape cases in India. It's much harder to understand - and talk about - the underlying causes of such dramatic disparity. India ranks low partly because of its skewed ratio, with only 914 females for every 1000 males, according to Indian government data. As per UNDP report, only 29% of Indian women above the age of 15 in 2011 were part of labour force, as compared to 80.7% men. In parliament, only 10.9% of law makers are women, while in Pakistan it is 21%. In India, 200 women died for every 100,000 child births and 80% of Indian women didn't have bank account in 2016 as per UNDP report Every day 39000 girls are forced for early marriage i.e. 27 girls are married a minute. A recent initiative by Indian government '*Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*' means save girl child and educate girls child is a progressive step toward gender equality. Equality does mean justice to provide and achieve equality.

There is no clearer lens to understand the hidden and pervasive gender inequity in India than in the field of amateur and professional sports. Sports achievement has been linked with increased academic acuity, physical well-being, and earning potential; furthermore, it has been repeatedly and convincingly argued that gendered international sporting success is positively correlated with labor force participation per country (both at the Olympics and Football World Cup). Till date, India has won five Olympic medals in Women's sports, making it - at the Rio Olympics - the worst performing medal winning country on earth.

Why Gender Equality and Democracy in Sports Organisation in India?

The objective to Gender Equality for Good Governance is to strengthen the democratic peace process, particularly through activities aimed at women. Using of rights-based approach which is inclusive in nature and fits into Nepal's new constitutional framework. Through extensive programmes spanning 75 districts in country like Nepal, they have been able to enhance the

knowledge and skills of local female political leaders. A wonderful initiative taken by University Grants Commission (UGC) in India “Capacity Building of Women Managers in Higher Education” a gender positive initiative by conducting over 450 workshops held all over India and over 7000 women academicians were trained. Many of those have risen to a position of leadership and decision making like University Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Deans, Directors, Principals, Board / Governing Body Member / Chairpersons etc. also at international level. Unfortunately the programme has died its death due to unknown reasons of bureaucracy. Such initiatives need to be revived and expanded to sports organisations and much larger way. The need of such initiative is justified when we study data of 39 National Sports Federations (NSFs) affiliated to Indian Olympic Association and 75 key posts of President and secretary out of which 70 positions are lead by men and only 5 positions are held by women; where as in 35 State Olympic Associations (SOAs) out of 70 key posts of President and Secretaries NOT EVEN A SINGLE WOMEN is holding any post, all are controlled by men. Its comes out to be 3.4% Women’s representation in decision making positions in NSFs and SOAs of India. State Sports Association and further DOAs and DSAs have not been calculated here. The data of IFs is not very motivating as far as gender equality is concern. This is when International Olympic Committee (IOC) has a Women Commission to Promote Women’s participation in all spheres.

Barriers to Gender Equality:

Institutional, socioeconomic and cultural barriers limit women’s effective participation in democratic way. Governance is often viewed, by both men and women, as a male domain where women will struggle to make a contribution. In addition, governance and decision making yet tends to be dominated by men, making it more difficult for women to get on lists for sports administrators. Women’s representation and leadership therefore tend to be more at the grassroots level.

Even where women have been able to secure office, they continue to face additional challenges compared to their male counterparts. These include both male and female opposition, inexperience of the governance and low confidence. In addition, many women managers / administrators find that it can be difficult to balance their public responsibilities with their domestic roles.

In order to get chance, many female candidates choose to downplay the fact that they are concerned with ‘women’s issues’, for fear this may alienate male supports. It has been argued

that, in order to reverse this negative cycle, there must be a significant number of women in positions of power before these issues will feature on the agenda.

In some cases, particularly in fragile contexts, women may face intimidation or threats in running for office. This is primarily due to the fact that men or local customary authorities may feel that this threatens the traditional male hierarchy or patriarchal order.

Affirmative Action

There is clearly a need for policy initiatives to empower women as gender disparities persist even against the backdrop of economic growth. Literature provides pointers from policy changes that have worked so far. One unique policy experiment in root-level governance that mandated one-third representation for women in positions of local leadership has shown promising results. Evaluations of this affirmative action policy have found that in villages led by women in India, the preferences of female residents are better represented, and women are more confident in reporting crimes that earlier they may have considered too stigmatising to bring to attention.

Female leaders also serve as role models and raise educational and career aspirations for adolescent girls and their parents. Behavioural studies find that while in the short run there is backlash by men as traditional gender roles are being challenged, the negative stereotype eventually disappears. This underscores the importance of sustained affirmative action as a way to reduce gender bias.

Improvements in labour market prospects also have the potential to empower women. An influential randomisation study found that job recruiter visits to villages to provide information to young women led to positive effects on their labour market participation and enrolment in professional training. This also led to an increase in age at marriage and childbearing, a drop in desired number of children, and an increase in school enrolment of younger girls not exposed to the programme.

Recent initiatives on training and recruiting young women from rural areas for factory-based jobs in cities provide economic independence and social autonomy that they were unaccustomed to in their parental homes.

All these are examples of policy in wider sphere whereas gender equality in democratic working of sports organisation, women participation in sports governance is still in vain. Though the two medal won by India in Rio Olympics were by women athlete Sakshi Malik and S.V. Sindhu have triggered to initiate gender parity in Sports Governance in India.

Any country to maintain its position as a global growth leader, more concerted efforts at local and national levels, and by the private sector are needed to bring women to parity with men. While increasing representation of women in the public spheres is important and can potentially be attained through some form of affirmative action, an attitudinal shift is essential for women to be considered as equal within their homes and in broader society.

Educating children from an early age about the importance of gender equality could be a meaningful start in that direction. Also mandate to have one third women representation in any decision making body, organisation, institution etc. will bring results.

Work Plan to Achieve Gender Equality and Democracy in Sports Organisation:

IOC launched bold initiative on Gender Equality. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board approved a major review project regarding gender equality in the Olympic Movement on 16th March, 2017. With the help of its partners, the summer and winter International Sports Federations (IFs) and National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the IOC is undertaking a comprehensive review of the current state of gender equality in the Olympic Games with a mandate to produce action-oriented recommendations for change.

“The IOC is taking a leadership role in the world of sport to push gender equality globally and effect real change,” said IOC President Thomas Bach. “The outcomes from this Gender Equality Review Project will benefit the IOC, all International Sports Federations and National Olympic Committees, as well as all the athletes of the Olympic Games. It will also be a further tangible outcome of Olympic Agenda 2020.”

The IOC Gender Equality Review Project is a joint initiative of the IOC’s Women in Sport and Athletes’ Commissions, and aims to raise continued awareness of the importance of gender equality within the Olympic Movement, share best practices and present initiatives to further advance gender equality both on and off the field of play.

Five essential themes will be assessed: Sport; Portrayal; Funding; Governance; and Human Resources. The work will be conducted by a Working Group chaired by IOC Member and President of the International Triathlon Union Marisol Casado, and comprising IOC Members and NOC and summer and winter IF representatives.

Steps to be followed:

1. Address the obstacle women face in participation in the electoral process and their ability to exercise a real choice in elections
2. We must consider whether the spaces are created
3. Democratic Public Institutions must be accountable to women

Conclusion:

This is a universally accepted fact established by various surveys time to time that gender equal organisation specially women leading organisations have less corruption, more discipline, more commitment, delivering target achievement with positive outcomes. If we really want sports to raise its graph in world of equality and universal participation we must ensure gender equality and democracy in sports organisations. It can be initiated by small steps by ensuring gender equality in every committee of decision making in said arena.

The first is to achieve **4Cs** for developing Gender Equality and Democracy in Sports Organisation resulting good governance. The first C stands for the need to be **conscious** about gender issues. The second C is to have **concern** for these issues, the third C is to be **committed** to do something for gender equality and the fourth C is to develop the **competence** of women, so that they acquire senior positions on the basis of their merit.

Through various programmes we must ensure to provide access to microfinance to women, empower women and elected women representatives, promote community leadership roles for women and last but not the least celebrate and empower girl child.

LETS BE MORE GENDER RESPONSIVE

'YatrNaryestuPujiyante, RamanteTatrDevata'

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