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Gender and Growth: Empowering Women through Sustainability

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EDITORIAL BOARD EXCERPT

Initially at the Time of Submission (ToS) paper had a 10% plagiarism, which is an accepted percentage for publication. The editorial board is of an observation that paper had a successive close watch by the blind reviewer's which at the later stages had been rectified and amended by the authors (Rajnish & Neelu) in various phases as and when required to do so. The reviewers had in a preliminary stage remark with minor revisions which at a short span were restructured by the author. The comments related to this manuscript are tremendously noticeable related to **Optimization of Time of Mobile Robot Using Genetics Algorithm** both subject-wise and research wise. The authors have crafted the paper in a structured manner. As the sensor based mobile robot coverage path planning is exigent for robotics management. It mostly increases with the increase in a distance travelled by robot. The paper made an attempt to find such an optimal path for robot by which robot have to travel least distance. All the comments had been shared at a variety of dates by the author in due course of time and same had been integrated by the author in calculation. By and large all the editorial and reviewer's comments had been incorporated in paper at the end and further the manuscript had been earmarked and decided under "Empirical Research Paper" as in this work a new algorithm is designed which reduces the power consumption in the robots.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Sustainable development today may be augmented through a sustained development in the status of women in society. Equitable opportunities for women which result in their steady growth, may in turn benefit not just the economy but also the growth of the nation. This kind of development must not be limited to aiming at economic and material development of a country, but must focus on the intellectual and social development of the given country. For this, it is essential to first focus on the rights which must be granted to women in order for them to rise to an equal level as men, and be able to compete and co-work with them for the overall growth of the nation.

Findings: Indeed, women comprise of a major work-force and can contribute as a significant component of the overall labour force of a country. Thus, unless women are empowered and gain liberation of a kind that releases them of restrictions and other socio-political hurdles, they would not fully be capable of contributing to the economic development of a country.

Originality Value: This paper proposes that gender and growth are inextricably linked. Growth in the status of women, and the overall development of this gender in society, may lead to a kind of development that is sustained and has long-term benefits as well as longevity. Therefore, this paper suggests that empowering women through sustainability can in turn lead to sustainable development. In this, the paper shall make a study of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-5) 2015, which have released a set of 17 goals towards the attainment of sustainable development.

KEYWORDS Sustainability | Equitable growth | Empowerment and Liberation | Development | Equal Opportunities, Women's Rights | Labour Force

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Introduction

Sustainable development today may be augmented through a sustained development in the status of women in society. Equitable opportunities for women which result in their steady growth, may in turn benefit not just the economy but also the growth of the nation. This kind of development must not be limited to aiming at economic and material development of a country, but must focus on the intellectual and social development of the given country. For this, it is essential to first focus on the rights which must be granted to women in order for them to rise to an equal level as men, and be able to compete and co-work with them for the overall growth of the nation. Indeed, women comprise of a major work-force and can contribute as a significant component of the overall labour force of a country. Thus, unless women are empowered and gain liberation of a kind that releases them of restrictions and other socio-political hurdles, they would not fully be capable of contributing to the economic development of a country.

This paper proposes that gender and growth are inextricably linked. Growth in the status of women, and the overall development of this gender in society, may lead to a kind of development that is sustained and has long-term benefits as well as longevity. Therefore, this paper suggests that empowering women through sustainability can in turn lead to sustainable development. In this, the paper shall make a study of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-5) 2015, which have released a set of 17 goals towards the attainment of sustainable development.

Analysis of Available Facts

When it comes to women and sustainability, it must be stated that the way forward for India's economic and social growth, is through women's development. It is imperative that women gain equal opportunities, are aided in their development process, have protective rights and freedom from exploitation and abuse, as well as a life devoid of discrimination, bias, and violence.

There are seventeen SDGs that have been agreed on, and one of them — SDG 5 — is devoted to women empowerment that will be achieved through equality. It has nine targets such as:

1. Ending all discrimination faced by women
2. Eradicating exploitation and violence meted out to women in all spheres of life including public. Ensuring there is protection against sexual assault, trafficking, harassment etc.
3. Ending social evils such as child marriage, forced marriage of girls and women, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) etc.
4. Recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work as labour.

5. Women must be guaranteed space in public roles and be given decision making power in social, political, economic levels.
6. Giving women access to biological and sexual rights through knowledge, awareness, and medical aid.
7. Giving women the economic privileges and rights so that they are at the same level as men. This can be made possible through reforms and political changes.
8. Improving the technology using abilities of women so that it leads to self-sufficiency and self-reliance.
9. Ensuring that there is enforceable legislation so as to augment overall women empowerment.

Now, it is true that the SDGs includes the upliftment of women's position in society, but the very achievement of all goals are greatly contingent upon gender equality and the improvement in women's lives. Indeed, it is crucial that equality and equitable growth is achieved for empowerment of women. The grim reality of increasing cases of violence against women world-wide, and particularly within the country, is alarming, and it is essential that laws are made more stringent and the legal systems be made more proactive. It is also important to ensure that there is a structural improvement in society so as to eliminate gender violence. Several sections of the society need to be made sensitive towards gender-related issues so that the nation can work as a whole to completely remove inequality and end injustice towards women. For this, the legislation, as well as other bodies of the state need to function together to adopt strategies for the protection of women. It is said that the data from around 87 countries, 1 out of 5 women and girls of under fifty years of age have experience sexual violence. Eliminating gender violence must become the prime objective, particularly in the case of India, if equality needs to be afforded to women at all.

While it is understood that gender equality is the need of the hour, it becomes complicated to address it, or find measures to counter it, given the patriarchal nature of socio-cultural exchanges in our country. Moreover, there are various layers to patriarchy and gender inequality/gender injustice. Sexism, misogyny and patriarchy have permeated to the very foundation of our social structure and it is extremely difficult to uproot it despite several government initiatives and philanthropic social work. This is because the problems faced by women are diverse and vary according to several factors such as age, caste, class, if they are urban or rural, if they are educated or uneducated, or employed or unemployed. The problems faced by a woman working as a labourer at a construction site in Delhi will be different from the problems faced by a homemaker in Delhi — or even from a working woman working in the corporate sector in Delhi. Now, the issues faced by the women may intersect at various levels and may vary as well. For instance, women are still



majorly responsible for domestic work which is unpaid in nature, irrespective of their public roles, careers, or working hours. Indeed, burdened by feminine roles and duties, and bound by work related to the domestic space for which they remain responsible, they are unable to invest entirely in remunerative public jobs/roles that would give them a secure space in society and enable them to be at an equal position with men. The unpaid house work therefore remains a burden for women to even if they are high paying jobs, and wifely duties or motherly duties decelerates their advancement in their economic development in many cases. It is imperative then that at the domestic level itself there is first some level of equitable division of labour so that women then focus on remunerative jobs outside.

What further complicates the matter is that there is a stigma associated with women working and participating in the public sphere or taking up jobs. Even today women are constrained from taking on jobs that will make them financially independent, simply due to patriarchal notions that women should be bound to the domestic space and prevented from earning. These notions stem from a deep-rooted patriarchal attitude that restrict women and render them subservient and dependent on their male counterparts. This not only causes a severe lack in women's ability to evolve and develop themselves, but also misbalances the gender ratio in the workforce as the participation of women remain low. This also then leads to a worldview that women need not be skilled or educated because ultimately they will manage the household.

It is also important that women gain biological rights and have full control over their bodies/biology. Women's inability to make decisions about their reproductive functions for instance may also hinder their development in other spheres like education or employment. Access to health care and knowledge about body and hygiene there also become essential aspects of women's growth and development.

Lack of access to health care and hygiene as well as medical aid to women or maternity support can trigger further depletion in women's participation the workforce. Educated and qualified women have been known to leave the workforce after marriage or motherhood. Oxfam India says, "The result is that while the global average of women's contribution to GDP hovers above 35%, India has a rate of less than half of that at 17%. It also means that when ranked on Labour Force Participation, India ranks 120th among 131 countries, despite having 42% of women who are graduates." Indeed, the dropout rate from workforce or labour force is extremely high. This is a problem which however is extremely tricky to tackle as it is caused by social structures that demand women's attention be directed towards the domestic space. The mentality needs to be changed before the workforce can have the equal participation of women. At the family

level, girls need to be raised in a way that they grow up to be independent, after marriage, they need to supported in a way that enables them to continue contributing to the workforce as before without burdening them with household work more than men are. Workspaces also need to be more sensitive towards women and sensitized so that harassment is avoided. Women's employment levels are therefore contingent upon a variety of reasons.

The following is a case study on women coal mine workers in India. The section attempts to explore the manner in which

Study of Women's Position in Public/Private Spaces

Always being marginalized, women have been the strugglers since millennia in all social spheres including private and public jobs and professions. They are the ones who collectively stand against all destructive and exploitative forces, and endeavour to pick bit-by-bit to construct the society. Equal opportunity to women is one of the major concerns to the nations. Why are women deprived of equal rights in private and public spheres? Fulfilling basic human needs is at the core of all the issues for the development of any country. One cannot deny the facts that - whether it is to save rivers or trees, women workforce comes together and puts up all efforts to salvage the situation apart from the household chores which are the key domain of all women kind in all developing countries if not those in the developed ones. E.g. the Chipko Movement and Save Narmada Dam are one of the best examples to highlight the issue of women coming out in the open to put up a strong front and rub shoulders with men.

Women's contribution to economic growth is significant and cannot be overlooked. We always mention women livelihood as an economy of the informal kind, but as Vandana Shiva says, women have been living under a system where power of men over women is not the organising principle¹. Women are not only the farmers in fields but they are seed-sowers which lead to economy strength. Women also work as labourers with men masons but are paid less as compared to the male labourers even though she might be transacting more work as compared to the male counterpart. Women workforce contributes in almost all sectors of work – be it construction labour, farm labour, road construction, or any other unorganised labour sector, but irony is that their contribution is either denied or is given a backseat resulting in complete overlooking their role in helping in building up a robust economy in countries like India as well other developing economies of the world and those belonging to the Third World. For women as a workforce leading towards growth of the nation Shiva and Maria Mies write

¹ Ibid.

that the women's movement has improved the expectations of development due to science and technology, especially when it comes to biological issues and reproductive rights, domestic work and so on.²

Despite the contributions, the women are subjected to all kinds of neglect, marginalization, and exploitation within the family and without. Exploitation not only at the hands of the males outside family but also at the hands of the men within the familial fold in the form of fathers, brothers, husbands and even sons for that matter. The challenges of recognition, respect, care, shelter, etc. remain to be surmounted and the problem stares straight into the eyes. For working and non-working women the exploitation, physical, mental and emotional abuses are not only posed by the males but also by the women of the family and the society. The women are seen to be subjected to all kinds of domestic violence. They have to bear the brunt of not giving birth to the male child in the family to carry the family tree forward. They are subjected to feticide, physically tortured for dowry, sexual abuse and molestation at workplace and even while commuting from one place to another. They are even deprived of education in orthodox families, even denied healthy food and nutrition, let alone the freedom to move outside without family escorts. Everyday struggle of women for their survival and to gain economic liberalization stands as a challenge to them.

India as a country was much ahead of its times during the Vedic and the Post-Vedic eras when women had equal rights. In the ancient times women used to participate in discourses alongside the men. *Gargi* and *Upala* are the examples to be quoted. In the later times Rani Laxmi Bai is one example not to be forgotten. However, the picture acquired a dull face following the attacks by foreign marauders. It was then the scenario metamorphosed in the opposite direction. The women were relegated to the background and got confined to the family and the four walls of the household.

However, the picture is not so gloomy either. The womenkind have not left any stone unturned: they have left their footprints from land to the sky. What were once considered to be the male bastions are being conquered by women of the present era. Not an area or a sector is there which has been left untouched. There is no such work where they have not treaded.

Women are scientists, scientists, engineers, administrators, doctors, teachers and professors, entrepreneurs, sportspersons, athletes, politicians, social workers – just to highlight a few. Even the area which were purely male domains are being infiltrated by women. They are choosing professions like truck and taxi drivers, women masons (like the ones in the rural outskirts of Bikaner). Determination and hard work has paved the path of success to them.

² Retrieved from <https://womenjusticeecology.wordpress.com/2009/07/04/dr-vandana-shiva-and-feminist-theory/>

During the time of British ruling, women even worked in coal mines and stone quarries. However, the work and the labour were fraught with dangers and exploitation – physical, economic and sexual. Men and women labourers both belonged to rural and tribal areas. There illiteracy, ignorance, and lack of awareness played a pivotal role in this direction. Thus women were restricted from working in mines under The Mines Act (1952). But now the centre has given the permission to in the mines by imposing some conditions (underground, mines or above ground working) during night hours. Women could work in mines but with some riders. Written permission from women is mandatory, adequate facilities and safeguards must be provided. The women could only be deployed between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in the technical, supervisory and managerial work the night shift is not allowed and not allowing women to work in night shift in mines has become debatable. In 2016 the Union Govt. made a request to the states to allow women to work in factories. The effort of Labour Ministry by bringing amendments in rules is to create gender equity, equality and opportunities to them. Dr. Ambedkar also talked about the relevance of wages/payment which is made to male and female workers. He says there should be equal pay for both sexes. He said that even though the workers worked underground, the government should ensure that they should work in a gallery of a particular height for safety.³ An article in Savari, titled, “Women mining workers’ welfare and Babasaheb Ambedkar”, has said that women’s labour force participation in India is extremely low, and one of the lowest in the world. The problem with big economies is that it forgets the importance and role of women in the economy.

Conclusion

Thus, indeed, women’s contribution to the economic processes, as well as the development of the nation, cannot be overlooked. Women have engaged in public roles and duties, and become part of the labour and workforce despite countless hindrances of private and social kind. The hurdles range from biological, to cultural and even political. However they have consistently attempted to gain equitability as far as employment goes with their consistent efforts.

Ultimately, what needs to be stressed is that India is a nation that must deal with the problem of unequal participation of women in economy. There needs to be a kind of equilibrium that has to be achieved so that there are more and more women partaking of India’s development. Adequate protective rights, awareness, knowledge, incentives, as well as gender-sensitive policies in workplace can enable this.

³ Retrieved from <http://www.dalitweb.org/?p=3835>



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GJEIS Prevent Plagiarism in Publication

The Editorial Board had used the turnitin plagiarism [<http://www.turnitin.com>] tool to check the originality and further affixed the similarity index which is 1% in this case (See Annexure-I). Thus the reviewers and editors are of view to find it suitable to publish in this Volume-11, Issue-3, Jul-Sep, 2019

Annexure 1

Submission Date	Submission Id	Word Count	Character Count
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1%	0%	0%	0%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Brigham Young University Student Paper	<1%
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2	Robin A. Richardson. "Measuring Women's Empowerment: A Critical Review of Current Practices and Recommendations for Researchers", <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 2017 Publication	<1%
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Reviewers Comments



Reviewer's comment 1:

It is a well-structured, clear and understandable paper. The introduction portion is really strong but the references lack synonymity.

Reviewer's comment 2:

The title of the paper clearly defines the content. It is very well written manuscript. The author has designed a new algorithm which reduces the power consumption in the robots. This is remarkable and praiseworthy.

Reviewer's comment 3:

The quality of research work produced in this work is very good. The paper contains many interesting facts. To select an optimum and efficient path, number of turns must be minimum which has been achieved perfectly by the newly developed algorithm. Also all possible best cases has also been analysed by the researcher and the explanation of the test cases is good.

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