

Feminist Movements and Women's Rights

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Darvy C. Sinugbohan

Teacher, City Central National High School, Cebu City, Philippines

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-6991-4677> | darvy.sinugbohan@deped.gov.ph

Meriam C. Angana

Teacher, Subangdaku Technical Vocational School, Banilad, Mandaue City, Philippines

meriam.angana@deped.gov.ph

Regina P. Galigao

Professor, Cebu Technological University-Main Campus

Abstract:

This study analyzes sexism, sexist exploitation, oppression, and gender equality in specific nations across Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. It indicates that although advancements have been achieved in fostering gender fairness, systemic obstacles continue to exist worldwide. Patriarchal standards prevail in Asia, although Taiwan stands out as a leader in progressive gender legislation. Africa confronts significant gender-based violence and cultural limitations, especially in South Sudan and Cameroon, whereas Botswana exhibits incremental progress in women's rights. Europe, notwithstanding its sophisticated legal frameworks, persists in confronting salary inequities, workplace harassment, and leadership inequalities. France spearheads feminist initiatives, but Germany and Austria implement gender quotas with modest efficacy. In North America and the Caribbean, Canada is distinguished by its extensive gender equity measures, but the Bahamas and Mexico contend with femicide and exploitation in the informal sector. The United States has progressed in anti-discrimination initiatives but still encounters issues of harassment and salary disparities. Feminist movements have been instrumental in promoting change across all regions, from grassroots activism in Africa and Mexico to institutional reforms in Europe and North America. The results underscore enduring trends of gender-based violence, economic inequalities, and insufficient representation in leadership positions globally. Confronting these difficulties necessitates ongoing legal reforms, societal transformations, and persistent advocacy to eradicate sexist frameworks and promote inclusive settings for women.

Keywords: *Sexism, Sexist exploitation, Oppression, and Gender Equality*

Introduction:

Gender inequality persists globally, exhibiting many manifestations such as sexism, exploitative practices, and oppression. Notwithstanding global initiatives to tackle these issues, women across various regions persistently encounter systemic obstacles that restrict their social, economic, and political prospects. This study examines gender dynamics in specific nations across Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America, emphasizing regional trends, ongoing challenges, and advancements toward gender equality.

Cultural traditions based on patriarchy in Asia persistently influence societal roles and workplace dynamics, frequently resulting in discriminatory behaviors and gender-based restrictions. African nations encounter distinct obstacles, since ingrained gender norms lead to significant discrimination, gender-based violence, and restricted political engagement for women. Despite its status as a global leader in gender rights, Europe continues to contend with wage disparities, insufficient representation in leadership roles, and incidents of workplace harassment.

North America and the Caribbean exhibit a varied landscape, with Canada spearheading progressive initiatives for gender parity, but nations such as Mexico and the Bahamas encounter issues like femicide and exploitation in the informal sector. In the United States, feminist movement has propelled advancements against harassment and discrimination, yet economic inequalities endure.

This study aims to examine the patterns of sexism, exploitation, oppression, and initiatives for gender equality in various places. This comparative research seeks to uncover shared obstacles and effective strategies, while highlighting the significance of continuous action, legal reforms, and societal change in advancing gender parity.

Literature Review

Gender disparity and the obstacles women encounter in attaining equality have been extensively examined in academic studies. The literature on this subject encompasses various fields, including sociology, political science, economics, and human rights. Feminist movements and women's rights efforts have been instrumental in promoting gender equality and confronting systemic obstacles to women's empowerment in diverse nations.

Acker (2006) examines the evolution of feminist movements in their efforts to confront gendered structures within institutions. Feminism, initially concentrated on legal rights and political representation, has progressively broadened to address other concerns such as reproductive rights, job discrimination, and gender-based violence. Bunch (2007) asserts that feminist groups worldwide have played a crucial role in advancing women's human rights and contesting patriarchal structures through lobbying, policy reform, and activism. Freedman (2002) offers a comprehensive examination of the influence of feminist movements on attaining gender equality, highlighting that although considerable progress has been achieved, numerous obstacles remain, especially in patriarchal nations. The literature highlights the increasing significance of intersectionality, emphasizing that gender equality must take into account race, class, and other types of social inequality. Kabeer (2015) emphasizes the necessity of inclusive feminism that confronts the complex dimensions of oppression, especially in underdeveloped countries.

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be a pervasive and enduring issue that feminist movements aim to confront. Gal and Kligman (2000) contend that the remnants of colonialism and entrenched patriarchal norms frequently intensify sexism and violence against women, especially in post-colonial contexts. Landman (2019) examines in Africa how systematic oppression results in elevated rates of gender-based violence, disproportionately impacting marginalized women, particularly those from rural regions and conflict zones. Molyneux (2002) further analyzes the efforts of feminist movements to mitigate gender-based violence by promoting enhanced legislation and support mechanisms for survivors. The international society, encompassing NGOs and global entities like the United Nations, has elevated gender-based violence as a critical human rights concern. Nonetheless, despite advancements, substantial opposition persists, especially in nations with deep-rooted patriarchal beliefs, as shown by Walby (2005).

Workplace equality has been a primary concern of feminist groups, as demonstrated by research on income disparities and leadership representation. Acker (2006) and McDowell (2011) examine the manifestations of gender inequality in the workplace, including reduced salaries, restricted career progression, and sexual harassment. Sen and Grown (1987) underscore the economic ramifications of gender inequality, asserting that the economic empowerment of women is essential for attaining comprehensive social equality. Ziegler (2017) emphasizes the significance of gender quotas and diversity initiatives in mitigating the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, especially within political and corporate domains. Despite advancements throughout Europe, especially in nations such as France and Germany, considerable disparities persist in numerous areas.

Reproductive rights represent a significant focus within the discourse on gender equality. Nussbaum (2000) contends that a woman's capacity to make independent decisions about her body, encompassing reproductive options, is crucial for attaining gender equality. McDowell (2011) asserts that access to reproductive healthcare, encompassing contraception and safe abortion services, is a fundamental human right that must be safeguarded to uphold women's autonomy. Kritz and Mary (2014) assert that reproductive rights are frequently infringed upon in developing nations, because prohibitive legislation and cultural norms intensify gender disparity. This is especially apparent in areas like Latin America and certain portions of Africa, where women persist in their fight for reproductive justice despite global initiatives aimed at enhancing access to reproductive health services.

Research conducted by Chow and Hung (2012) and Zippel (2006) illustrates the worldwide influence of feminist movements, highlighting the collaborative efforts to address issues such as sex trafficking, child marriage, and educational access. Although nations in North America and Western Europe have achieved considerable advancements in gender equality, obstacles persist in regions of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, where gender inequity is more profoundly ingrained.

Freedman (2002) asserts that international cooperation is crucial for surmounting obstacles to women's rights worldwide. Through the dissemination of best practices and the promotion of grassroots activism, feminist movements globally can collaborate to tackle shared difficulties and enhance women's rights within varied cultural and political frameworks.

The literature on gender inequality emphasizes the complex difficulties confronting women, particularly on sexism, exploitation, oppression, and the persistent pursuit of gender equality. Despite considerable advancements globally, issues such as gender-based violence, economic inequality, and political underrepresentation continue to endure. Feminist movements remain essential in tackling these concerns, spearheading both local and worldwide initiatives to reduce gender inequality through advocacy, legislative reforms, and activism. The necessity for ongoing collaboration and the deconstruction of patriarchal frameworks is essential for attaining enduring gender equality.

Objectives:

The main aim of this study is to examine and elucidate the status of gender dynamics in several nations across Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America regarding sexism, sexist exploitation, oppression, and gender equality. This encompasses:

1. Identifying Regional Patterns: Analyze the influence of cultural, economic, and political factors on sexism and gender-based discrimination in each location.
2. Evaluating Gender Disparities: Examine the degree of sexist exploitation and oppression, with special emphasis on income differentials, representation in leadership roles, and the incidence of gender-based violence.
3. Examining Feminist Advancements: Emphasize the initiatives of feminist movements and legislative reforms designed to address gender inequity and enhance women's empowerment.
4. Comparative Insights: Conduct a comparative analysis of the regions to discern shared difficulties and distinctive practices that either impede or facilitate gender equality.
5. Proposing Solutions: Provide insights and ideas for enduring legislative reforms, advocacy, and cultural transformations to promote global gender justice.

Methodology:

This study employs a comparative qualitative research approach to analyze sexism, sexist exploitation, oppression, and gender equality across selected countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. The methodology is designed to gather insights from multiple sources and provide a comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics in diverse cultural and socio-political contexts. The study follows these steps:

1. Literature Review:
A thorough review of existing academic literature, reports from international organizations (e.g., United Nations, World Economic Forum), and feminist movements' publications will provide a foundational understanding of gender issues. This includes examining reports on gender-based violence, economic disparities, political representation, and gender equality laws.
2. Qualitative Analysis of Secondary Data:
The study relies on secondary data collected from national and international databases, governmental and non-governmental organization (NGO) reports, and policy analysis documents. This data will be used to identify patterns of gender inequality in education, employment, political participation, and legal protections.
3. Case Studies:
In-depth case studies of selected countries (South Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, China, Taiwan, South Sudan, Cameroon, Botswana, France, Germany, Austria, Canada, Bahamas, Mexico, and USA) will be used to examine specific examples of sexism, exploitation, oppression, and efforts toward gender equality. Case studies will focus on historical and contemporary issues, including significant legal reforms and feminist movements.
4. Cross-Country Comparison:
The study will compare findings across regions to identify common patterns of gender discrimination, challenges, and progress made toward gender equality. A thematic analysis will be used to group countries based on similar characteristics or shared issues related to sexism and gender inequality.
5. Data Synthesis and Interpretation:
The collected data will be analyzed thematically, focusing on key sub-variables such as wage disparities, gender-based violence, political representation, and legal protections. The goal is to interpret how these variables contribute to systemic sexism and the degree to which efforts to combat gender inequality have succeeded or failed.
6. Recommendations and Solutions:
Based on the findings, the study will propose recommendations for policy reforms, feminist strategies, and international collaboration to improve gender equality across regions.

Presentation of Data, Interpretation, and Analysis:

The variables taken into consideration for analysis are presented in this section, with a focus on Sexism, Sexist exploitation, Oppression, and Gender equality. The study highlights how these factors support the field of Feminist movements and women's rights. By looking at these crucial elements, researchers can learn more about the intricacies. The researcher has provided a series of tables that depict countries with analogous factors for consideration.

The Importance of Feminist movements and women's rights

Feminist movements and women's rights efforts have been instrumental in promoting gender equality and confronting the systemic obstacles that women encounter worldwide. These movements confront entrenched patriarchal systems, promoting equitable access to education, work, healthcare, and political representation. Feminist movements have facilitated substantial legislative reforms, encompassing voting rights, reproductive rights, and anti-discrimination legislation, so empowering women to engage more comprehensively in society.

Women's rights movements have been essential in increasing awareness of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and various forms of exploitation, advocating for legislation that safeguards women and ensures accountability for offenders. In addition to legislative safeguards, these initiatives have catalyzed societal transformations in the perception of gender roles, promoting both men and women to adopt more egalitarian interactions in domestic, professional, and communal settings.

The significance of feminist movements encompasses global solidarity, linking conflicts across boundaries and emphasizing themes such as sex trafficking, reproductive justice, and educational access. These movements have established a platform for marginalized voices, including women of color, LGBTQ+ folks, and disabled women, ensuring that their distinct issues are acknowledged. Feminism advocates for autonomy and bodily integrity, empowering women to govern their own lives and decisions.

The efforts of feminist movements and women's rights advocates are crucial for combating gender inequality and fostering more equitable, inclusive society. Their ongoing endeavors are essential for dismantling oppressive systems and guaranteeing that women globally can exist freely, securely, and equally.

Table 1: Sexism

Continent (Asia)	Citations/Findings
SOUTH KOREA	The results indicated that both groups displayed high amounts of sexism, including both negative and seemingly kind attitudes. Turkish nursing students showed much more sexism than Korean students when comparing the two groups. In both countries, men scored higher on sexism, particularly aggressive sexism. Older students in Turkey showed less friendly sexism. We hope this study's results can help create tailored nursing education that considers different ethnic groups. It will also assist nurses and nursing students in understanding their own cultures better.
PHILIPPINES	Research shows that younger workers see gender roles differently and face less gender bias compared to older workers. The study points out important obstacles, like the gender pay gap and the glass ceiling, that make it hard for women to advance and affect the economy. These results are seen in the larger setting of Filipino society and women's rights movements.
MALAYSIA	The labor division within their respective families or communities was dominated by traditional gender roles. For instance, the vast majority of the respondents reported that the majority of the household chores were performed by the "mother" and that the family's responsibilities were primarily divided based on gender. Male family members were responsible for repairing, plumbing, and washing cars, while female family members were responsible for laundry, cleaning, and cooking. Nevertheless, this pilot study discovered a high reported incidence of gender equality practice in the form of pocket money provided to the respondents and their opposite-gender siblings.
CHINA AND TAIWAN	The piece says that democracy can help support ideas like feminism, but it struggles to remove hidden sexism. It argues that government policies are needed to reduce the negative impact of market capitalism on gender equality.

Interpretation and Analysis:

Sexism is unfair treatment or bias based on a person's gender, usually supporting men and sidelining women. Let's look at the different ways to understand and analyze societal sexism, workplace issues, and gender equality trends

for each country or region you stated.

South Korea

- Cultural Overview: South Korea has a long-standing Confucian culture that has traditionally focused on male dominance.
- Gender Roles: Women are often seen as needing to put family first instead of their jobs. But these standards are slowly changing.
- Sexism at Work: The "glass ceiling" is still a problem. Women often have trouble moving up to higher-level jobs.
Recent feminist groups like the #MeToo campaign have started more discussions about women's rights. Government programs now focus on promoting gender equality by increasing parental leave for both parents.

Philippines

- Cultural Background: Filipino culture is more matriarchal than in other Southeast Asian countries, emphasizing strong family values.
- Workplace and Politics: Women have often been in top positions, such as presidents like Corazon Aquino and Gloria Arroyo.
- Sexism: Even with progress, old gender stereotypes still exist. Challenges include unfair pay and the belief that women should take care of home duties.
- Progress: Laws that support gender equality, like the Magna Carta of Women, have helped strengthen women.

Malaysia

- Cultural Background: Malaysia has a diverse culture with many religions, including Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.
- Gender Roles: Traditional male-focused rules continue to exist, especially in conservative groups.
- Workplace Sexism: Women encounter major obstacles when trying to get top positions or start their businesses.
- Progress: The government has started programs, like requiring gender quotas on company boards, to increase the number of women in business and politics.

China

- Cultural Background: China has had a history of male dominance, but the communist government has encouraged gender equality since it began.
- Workplace Sexism: Discrimination is still common, especially in hiring and maternal leave policies.
- Gender Stereotypes: Women typically feel pressure to marry before a certain age, and the term "leftover women" (shengnu) is often seen as controversial.
- Progress: Activists and social media are effectively working to tackle gender imbalance.

Taiwan

- Cultural Background: Taiwanese culture mixes traditional Chinese beliefs with modern political ideas.
- Gender Equality: Taiwan is considered one of the leading places in Asia for women's rights. Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's first woman president, represents the increasing power of women in politics.
- Progress: Taiwan has made important improvements in laws and social issues, such as safety at work and rules about parental leave.

Overall Analysis

- Common Challenges: Issues like male-dominated beliefs, unfair treatment at work, and standard gender expectations are still present in different areas to different extents.
- Progressive Trends: Feminist movements, legal reforms, and education efforts are driving good changes.
- Cultural Influence: Confucianism, Islam, and the history of colonialism have affected how gender roles are viewed, resulting in different forms of sexism.

Table 2: Oppression

Continent (Africa)	Citations/Findings
South Sudan	Violence against women and girls is a widespread problem in South Sudan. Efforts to stop violence against women and girls are not significantly changing the statistics. Evidence from around the world shows that stopping violence against women and girls in areas affected by war is difficult in many ways. Our study points to the need for social and gender norm change approaches to be better contextualised within the political economy and through applying a nuanced critique of the role of culture in normalising many forms of VAWG. In addition, greater involvement of young people

	is important as a behavioural tipping point is starting to emerge in this group. At national level, a lack of political commitment appears as a key challenge in ending VAWG. Based on insights from 20 interviews with people from national civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the article suggests that we need to rethink how we address violence against women and girls (VAWG) in South Sudan and possibly in other places. This should be done by viewing it as a process of ongoing change. Activities must be supported at all levels from national through to the grassroots and be based in a complex picture of the values and beliefs that sustain VAWG.
Cameroon	The data, which is presented and analyzed sequentially through narrative analysis and analysis-of-narratives, indicates that the assumption of Cameroonian women's empowerment through higher education is a misconception. The higher education that these women are currently receiving is inadequately equipped to address their empowerment needs in the context of their multivariate oppressions. The study's results indicate that the potential for women's empowerment in higher education is conditional, the necessity of evaluating intersections in the context of African women's empowerment, and the ways in which Cameroon's higher education can be enhanced to more effectively facilitate the plural aspects of empowerment that Cameroonian women value.
Botswana	A fundamental component of the research process was the development of a decolonial feminist performance praxis, which is a manner of being and acting in the world that is aware of the ways in which the intersections of race, gender, colonization, and imperialism affect gender equity in Botswana as a post-colonial country. A consideration of the potential erasure of the history of women's leadership is necessary when examining Botswana culture from its own perspective. Therefore, the decolonial feminist performance praxis that is offered serves as a perspective through which to observe the manner in which culture is interwoven with colonial domination to eliminate women's spaces and leadership, thereby portraying women as perpetual victims in the post-colonial state.

Interpretation and Analysis:

In African contexts, feminism frequently encounters distinctive obstacles that are influenced by political instability, cultural norms, and socio-economic factors. Country-by-country analysis is provided below:

South Sudan

- Cultural Context: South Sudan's society is profoundly rooted in traditional gender roles, and it remains highly patriarchal. Women are frequently perceived as inferior to males.
- Oppression Indicators: Forced and early marriages are prevalent.
- Gender-based violence (GBV), which encompasses sexual violence during conflict, continues to be a significant concern.
- Economic constraints and cultural considerations have resulted in limited access to education for girls.
- Feminist Movements: Despite the presence of conflict and instability, feminist activism is gaining momentum. Organizations such as the EVE Organization for Women Development promote the rights of women and the establishment of harmony. Initiatives that advocate for gender equality have been made possible by international support.
- Advancement: Although there have been gradual advancements, such as the implementation of certain government-led gender equality policies, the implementation of these policies remains inadequate due to the ongoing conflict.

Cameroon

- Cultural Context: The Francophone and Anglophone regions of Cameroon are characterized by patriarchal conventions, despite the country's diverse cultural landscape.
- Indicators of Oppression: Political unrest during the Anglophone crisis has contributed to elevated rates of domestic violence and gender-based violence.
- Women are underrepresented in leadership roles and politics.
- Land ownership restrictions for women are examples of legal inequalities.
- Feminist Movements: Organizations such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Cameroon are actively advocating for women's political engagement and against gender-based violence (GBV).

- Economic and social empowerment of rural women is the primary objective of grassroots initiatives.
- Progress: Although cultural barriers continue to exist, certain legal reforms have enhanced the rights of women.

Botswana

- Cultural Context: Botswana is relatively progressive in comparison to many other African nations, but it still experiences patriarchal influences.
- Indicators of Oppression: Gender-based violence continues to be a significant issue. Women are frequently discouraged from pursuing leadership positions due to societal norms. In certain communities, there are practices of discriminatory inheritance.
- Feminist Movements: Organizations such as Emang Basadi promote the legal rights and political empowerment of women.
- Public awareness has increased, and campaigns against gender-based violence (GBV) have gained momentum.
- Progress: Botswana has made significant progress in the implementation of legal reforms, such as legislation that addresses gender-based violence and promotes gender equality in the workforce. Enhanced representation of women in the professional and educational sectors.

Overall Analysis

- Patterns of Oppression: Persistent issues include cultural restrictions, limited political participation, and gender-based violence (GBV).
- Feminist Activism: Despite obstacles, feminist movements are acquiring momentum, frequently with the assistance of NGOs and international organizations.
- Progressive Trends: The gradual dismantling of patriarchal systems is being facilitated by education and advocacy initiatives; however, additional legal and cultural reforms are required.

Table 3: Sexist Exploitation

Continent (Europe)	Citations/Findings
AUSTRIA	This thesis examines the political representation of migrant women in Austria in order to examine the system of representative democracy. The issue of equitable representation will become increasingly important as societies are and will continue to be influenced by migration. The system of representative democracy is critically examined by examining the descriptive representation of migrant women in Austria and adopting a literature-based approach. Upon conducting a thorough examination of Austria's current political landscape, it is evident that migrant women are not adequately represented, which underscores systemic deficiencies. This underrepresentation raises critical concerns regarding the equity and inclusivity of the democratic process and the representative democracy system. The findings of this research emphasize the importance of alternative representations that can bridge this significant divide and guarantee a more comprehensive and equitable political participation for migrant women.
GERMANY	Our piece looks at the racist movements seen in the debate about refugees in Germany. There is a strong focus on talking about both real and alleged sexual violence by young male refugees against girls and women. We look at specific events like New Year's Eve in Cologne in 2015/16, the Women's March, and protests after the killings of migrant women to study how the far right is using racism in discussions about sexism. This viewpoint is gaining support from many people in society. To understand this situation, we look at Germany's history, including its time as a colonial power and the era of National Socialism.

FRANCE	This piece talks about Theses III and VIII from Marxist feminism. This idea comes from the work of French-speaking materialist feminists who developed their theories in the late 1970s. Key figures include Colette Guillaumin, who introduced the idea of "sexage," Monique Wittig, who talked about the "straight mind," and Nicole-Claude Mathieu and Christine Delphy, along with others from the <i>Nouvelles Questions Féministes</i> journal. The piece starts by introducing this idea, which is not well-known among many English-speaking theorists. It shows that the viewpoint of 'French-speaking materialist feminists' clearly illustrates that 'sex' is a social relationship, just like class is. In other words, gender relates to how we produce things in society. The piece looks at how this theory helps us focus closely on the issue of race. It seems to fill an important gap in two areas: first, it connects Marxist feminism and queer theory, and second, it connects Black feminism and Marxist feminism.
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Interpretation and Analysis:

In Europe, sexist exploitation often shows up as unequal pay, harassment at work, unfair portrayals in the media, and different standards for men and women in society. Even though these countries are advanced democracies, they still deal with ongoing problems.

France

- Cultural Context: France is committed to the principles of equality; however, traditional gender roles persist, particularly in the private sector.
- Indicators of Sexist Exploitation:
- Wage Gap: The average wage gap between men and women is approximately 15-20%.
- Workplace Harassment: The political and media sectors have been the subject of high-profile cases of harassment.
- Media Representation: In advertising and entertainment, women are frequently sexualized or stereotyped.
- Continuous Improvements:
In cases of harassment, the #BalanceTonPorc movement, which is comparable to #MeToo, advocated for increased accountability. The government implemented legislation that criminalized catcalling and strengthened safeguards against workplace harassment.

Germany

- Cultural Context: Germany, despite being the largest economy in Europe, maintains conservative values, particularly in the context of gender roles in family life.
- Indicators of Sexist Exploitation:
- Gender Pay disparity: The average wage disparity between men and women is approximately 18%.
- Employment Disparities: Women are frequently employed in lower-paying positions or part-time positions, which is partially attributable to the scarcity of caregiving options.
- Harassment and discrimination: Serious allegations of sexual discrimination in educational institutions and workplaces persist.
- Progressive Initiatives: In an effort to augment the number of women on corporate boards, quotas were implemented. Gender equality is promoted through public campaigns and policies that encourage the reporting of harassment.

Austria

- Cultural Context: Austria is characterized by its strong traditional family values, particularly in rural regions where patriarchal norms are more deeply ingrained.
- Indicators of Sexist Exploitation:
- Wage Gap: Western Europe has one of the highest wage gaps in the world, with women earning approximately 20% less than males.
- Economic Exploitation: Women are overrepresented in low-paying sectors and unpaid caregiving roles.
- Discrimination in the Workplace: Maternity discrimination and inadequate support for women who are returning to the workforce are prevalent concerns.
- Progressive Initiatives: Parental leave policies and gender equality laws have been fortified. The primary objective of awareness campaigns is to provide assistance to victims of abuse and to combat harassment.

Overall Analysis

- Underrepresentation in leadership positions and persistent wage gaps are common patterns. Women are compelled to engage in part-time employment and caregiving due to societal expectations.

- Despite the existence of legal safeguards, gender discrimination and harassment persist.
- Progressive Trends: Public discourse is being transformed by feminist activism and social movements (such as #MeToo). The objective of legal reforms is to mitigate harassment and advance workplace equality.

Table 4: Gender Equality

Continent (North America)	Citations/Findings
CANADA	Higher education and study are important tools for empowerment and social change. Universities can play a big role in supporting female equality, diversity, and inclusion, both within their campuses and in the wider community.
BAHAMAS	The Caribbean often experiences people having to move away due to these events. People go through migration in different ways because of issues related to their gender, their vulnerabilities, and how much access they have to resources and chances. It's important to recognize how environmental migration and disaster displacement affect people differently based on gender. This understanding helps us avoid harm and protect the rights of women, girls, and individuals of all genders who face multiple forms of discrimination.
MEXICO	This background helps explain the roles and stereotypes about gender and how they relate to the emotional experiences of women in different spaces. From 2015 to 2018, 49 Mexican women were asked. Qualitative content analysis is used to study survey data by applying both inductive and deductive methods. Also, observing without participating, reviewing documents, and taking field notes support and add to the information gathered from interviews. Emotions play a key role in how women experience gendered work in rural tourism. These feelings can challenge social norms, helping women improve their less powerful status in rural areas and address inequalities. Women still face mixed messages and pressures from both their families and communities, even with advances in gender equality efforts. We suggest a plan to challenge traditional gender roles and enhance women's emotional experiences in rural areas.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Resistance is a common but unwanted reaction to attempts at making social progress. People often respond negatively to gender equality in several ways. These include denying the issue, refusing to take responsibility, not taking action, trying to please others instead of making real changes, using tactics to take control, and suppressing efforts for equality. Resistance can happen on a personal level or a group level, and it can be official or unofficial. Most opposition to gender equality measures comes from men, who are part of the favored group, rather than from women, who are the disadvantaged group. Resistance often comes from protecting established privileges, but it is also influenced by common ideas about gender roles and post-feminism. This includes the ways we work towards gender equality and the situations we are in. It's important to understand why pushback and backlash happen so we can stop and lessen them.

Interpretation and Analysis:

Gender equality in North America and the Caribbean changes a lot based on social, political, and economic conditions. Here is a summary of each country:

Canada

- Cultural Context: Canada is renowned for its progressive approach to social issues, which includes gender equality.
- Indicators of Gender Equality:
Women's rights are afforded robust legal safeguards in the areas of healthcare, employment, and education.
- Near-parity in educational attainment between men and women.
A persistent wage gap exists, with women earning approximately 87 cents for every dollar earned by males.
- Progressive Initiatives: The federal government of Canada has implemented gender-balanced administrations and has advocated for gender-based analysis in policymaking. Women's economic participation is facilitated by robust support systems, including affordable daycare initiatives and maternity leave.

Bahamas

- Cultural Context: Despite efforts to promote gender equality, the Bahamas continues to maintain a patriarchal social structure.
- Gender Equality Indicators: Education and healthcare are professional sectors in which women are highly represented.
- There are still legal anomalies, such as those concerning the citizenship rights of Bahamian women who are married to non-citizens.
- There is ongoing concern regarding the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV).
- Progressive Initiatives: In an effort to combat gender-based violence, the government has collaborated with civil society. The expansion of educational opportunities for women and girls has resulted in improved representation in a variety of fields.

Mexico

- **Cultural Context:** Mexico struggles with a strong machismo society but has also seen important feminist movements and advancements in laws.
- **Gender Equality Indicators:** Women hold fewer leadership roles, but new rules to increase their numbers in politics have helped. The high numbers of femicide and violence against women are serious problems that need immediate attention.
- There are still economic differences, with many women working in low-paying, unofficial jobs.
- **Progressive Efforts:** New laws require equal participation of genders in politics. Social groups like Ni Una Menos fight against violence towards women and work for changes in the justice system.

United States (U.S.)

- Cultural Context: Views on gender equality differ across regions and cultures in the USA.
- Gender Equality Indicators: Women have almost the same access to schooling and jobs, but they still earn less than men, making about 83 cents for every dollar a man makes. There is still a lack of diversity in top leadership roles. Gender discrimination and abuse, brought to light by the #MeToo movement, continue to exist in many areas.
- Progressive Efforts:
- Laws like the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act help fix pay differences between people. Efforts to promote paid parental leave and childcare help are ongoing at both state and federal levels.

Overall Analysis

- Frequent Challenges: Persistent wage gaps, underrepresentation in leadership roles, and GBV are frequent concerns. Cultural standards and systemic obstacles often keep gender discrimination going.
- Progressive Trends: Feminist movements have gained traction, especially in Mexico and the USA. Changes in laws and social awareness efforts are aiming for more equality between genders. Canada is the leader in the area for promoting gender equality through effective policies.

Findings**Asia (South Korea, Philippines, Malaysia, China, Taiwan)**

- Sexism: Strong cultural beliefs, mainly from Confucian and male-dominated traditions, continue to support gender inequity.
- Sexist Exploitation: Women in these countries struggle in the workplace, facing lower pay and difficulties in getting leading roles. Sexual abuse and discrimination happen often, especially in fields where men hold most of the positions.
- In places like South Korea and China, social pressures (like demands to get married) and few job opportunities make gender inequality a common issue.
- Gender Equality: Taiwan is a star in the region for its advanced laws that protect women and support female leaders in politics. The Philippines has made important progress, but old customs still remain. Feminist groups in South Korea and Malaysia are slowly taking on male-dominated systems.

Africa (South Sudan, Cameroon, Botswana)

- Sexism: Traditional beliefs about men and women affect society, often putting women in lesser roles.
- Sexist exploitation is common, as women often work in low-paying jobs or do free caregiving work.
- Oppression: South Sudan and Cameroon experience high levels of violence against women, including sexual abuse during conflicts. In many areas, women have limited rights when it comes to participating in politics and owning land.
- Gender equality in Botswana is making progress, thanks to better laws and increasing support for women's rights. Patriarchal attitudes still exist in rural places. Feminist groups in South Sudan and Cameroon are working to secure basic rights and guard against violence.

Europe (France, Germany, Austria)

- Sexism: Traditional gender roles and ideals still exist, especially in families and how the media shows people. Women experience unfair treatment at work, including lower pay (about 15% less in France, 18% in Germany, and 20% in Austria), fewer chances to be in leadership roles, and abuse at their jobs.
- In Germany and Austria, social norms often pressure women to work part-time or take care of others, which restricts their financial freedom.
- France is ahead in promoting gender equality with strong laws against harassment and active feminist groups like BalanceTonPorc. Germany and Austria have set rules for having more women on business boards, but these rules are not being followed quickly.

North America and the Caribbean (Canada, Bahamas, Mexico, USA)

- Sexism: Cultural norms and systemic barriers perpetuate unequal treatment, especially in leadership roles and economic possibilities.
- Sexist Exploitation: Wage gaps persist across all countries (Canada: 13%, USA: 17%, Bahamas and Mexico show informal sector exploitation). Gender-based abuse is still a serious issue.
- In Mexico and the Bahamas, women face serious dangers like murder and abuse. In the USA, society often expects women to juggle work and family responsibilities without strong support from family policies.
- Gender Equality: Canada is a leader with strong laws for gender fairness and a balanced government team. Mexico's gender quotas in politics are encouraging, and female activism (Ni Una Menos) is still pushing for change. The US has laws against some types of discrimination, but problems like abuse and differences in pay continue to exist.

Conclusions

Gender equality and feminist groups encounter different challenges around the world because of differences in culture, economy, and politics. In **Asia**, traditional male-dominated methods are still a major obstacle. Countries like South Korea and China still face significant sexism in the workplace and society. In contrast, Taiwan has made notable progress with its gender policies. Feminist groups in Malaysia and South Korea are making progress in breaking down long-standing stereotypes.

In Africa, sexism is strongly shaped by deep-rooted male-dominated beliefs, especially in rural areas and places affected by war, like South Sudan and Cameroon. Gender-based violence, including sexual violence, is still common, limiting women's chances in both the economy and politics. Botswana is making good progress with laws that support women's rights.

Europe has made progress in laws and accepting gender equality, but it still has ongoing problems with sexism and abuse. Countries such as France, Germany, and Austria face issues like unequal pay, fewer women in top positions, and problems with harassment at work. Feminist action and legal changes, especially in France, are helping to advance the discussion.

In North America and the Caribbean, Canada is a leader in gender equality because it has strong laws to protect rights, balanced government representation for men and women, and modern family policies. On the other hand, Mexico and the Bahamas deal with serious problems like violence against women and abuse in unregulated jobs. The United States still faces issues with harassment and pay gaps, even though groups like #MeToo have made some improvements.

Gender-based violence is a common problem in all areas, and issues like pay inequality and a lack of women in politics continue to be important worries. Feminist organizations come in many forms, but they all help create change. This includes local activism in places like Africa and Mexico, as well as significant legal changes in Europe and North America.

The global landscape shows that while significant strides have been made toward gender equality, a unified effort to combat sexist exploitation and oppression is still important. Laws, public awareness efforts, and action will be essential for ensuring fair treatment of women everywhere.

Recommendations and Solutions:**1. Enhance Legal Safeguards and Policy Implementation:**

Governments globally must implement and enforce more stringent legislation to safeguard women from discrimination, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. Policies that advocate for equitable remuneration, maternity leave, and familial support must be executed proficiently. Gender quotas in political representation and business leadership can facilitate more equitable involvement across sectors.

2. Address Gender-Based Violence:

There must be augmented investment in initiatives designed to mitigate gender-based violence (GBV) worldwide. This encompasses enhanced law enforcement, accessible support systems (such as shelters and hotlines), and educational initiatives. Legislation must guarantee that women subjected to gender-based violence have access to justice and appropriate restitution for their suffering.

3. Advocate for Education and Empowerment:

Instructing both men and women on gender equality, gender rights, and feminist concepts is crucial for deconstructing detrimental prejudices. Governments and NGOs must allocate resources to initiatives that empower girls and women, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas, guaranteeing their access to education and skills training. Particular attention must be directed on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education for women to bridge gender disparities in lucrative professions.

4. Promote Economic Engagement and Workplace Equity:

Nations ought to implement policies that tackle the gender wage disparity, foster female entrepreneurship, and provide equitable access to work opportunities. Anti-discrimination legislation must be rigorously implemented to safeguard women in the workplace from exploitation and sexual harassment. Organizations ought to establish diversity and inclusion initiatives that promote equitable opportunities for all genders in recruitment, advancement, and remuneration.

5. Augment Reproductive Rights and Healthcare Services:

Priority should be given to access to reproductive health services and overall healthcare. Governments must guarantee that women possess the autonomy to make decisions for their reproductive health, encompassing access to contraception, safe abortions, and maternal care. Public health initiatives must enhance knowledge on the significance of gender-sensitive health care.

6. Advocate for Feminist Movements and Grassroots Activism:

Feminist movements, non-governmental organizations, and women's rights entities are essential in championing women's rights. Governments ought to collaborate with these organizations to enhance grassroots action, endorse awareness initiatives, and advocate for the significance of gender equality. Empowering local women's organizations to spearhead and lobby for policy reforms is essential for enduring societal transformation.

7. Transform Societal Norms and Cultural Perceptions:

Cultural norms and practices that sustain gender stereotypes must be confronted through public education and media portrayal. The media and entertainment sectors must assume accountability for advancing gender equality in their representations of women and men. Public awareness campaigns can inform society about the detrimental effects of patriarchy and promote a more equitable distribution of household and caregiving duties.

8. Advocate for Gender Equality in Education and Political Leadership:

Gender parity in political engagement and leadership roles must be prioritized. Governments ought to implement more initiatives that promote women's candidacy for office, engagement in political dialogue, and assumption of leadership positions. Educational systems ought to incorporate curricula that educate on the historical battles of women for equality and the significance of gender parity in leadership roles.

9. Global Collaboration and Advocacy:

International collaboration is crucial in addressing transnational challenges such as sex trafficking, child marriage, and gender-based violence. International organizations, including the United Nations (UN), ought to persist in promoting global frameworks that support women's rights. Countries ought to exchange exemplary practices and assist each other in promoting global gender equality.

10. Accountability and Monitoring:

Governments must implement systems for evaluating and tracking advancements in gender equality. Consistent reporting on gender equity metrics (e.g., pay disparities, political representation, statistics on gender-based violence) might facilitate accountability for nations in advancing gender equality. Independent gender equality assessments and reporting by non-governmental organizations should be promoted.

By implementing these measures, societies can strive to eradicate sexism, exploitation, and oppression while promoting gender equality in all sectors. The collaborative endeavor of governments, international organizations, grassroots groups, and people is crucial for dismantling gender-based obstacles and attaining genuine global gender parity.

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