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Role of Feminist Theories in Addressing Issues of Gender Diversity

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Abstract

Women can get unequal treatment due to the issues regarding gender diversity. Feminist theories help mitigate issues regarding gender diversity by empowering women in society. The study aims to explore the way feminist theories can address the issues regarding gender diversity. Feminist Theories have analysed the social frameworks that help in promoting gender equality. The main purpose of the study is to explore the different ways feminist theories help in understanding and resolving the issues regarding gender diversity within society. Some previous research papers have been discussed here to get a better understanding of the research topic. The data analysis method of this study is secondary qualitative, and this study discusses various theories related to gender diversity. This study has shown that gender equality is concerned with equal rights to everyone irrespective of everything including race, gender or ethnicity. Along with this, this study has highlighted the importance of feminist theories in addressing the issues regarding gender diversity. The advantages and disadvantages of feminist theories have also been discussed here in this study. It can be seen from the study that Feminist Theories help in addressing the issues regarding gender diversity in the entire society. Furthermore, the way these theories can influence policy-making regarding this inequality within society for addressing the issue can be an area to investigate in future.

Keywords: *Inequality, Feminist Theory, Gender Diversity, Unequal*

1. Introduction

Gender Diversity refers to the different genders within the society. Every gender that exists within society should have equal rights. Despite several advancements within society, there is still the problem of gender diversity within the society. The issues regarding gender diversity start with the discrimination made on the basis of a particular gender to be prioritised over the other one. The basic human right can be violated as a result of this gender diversification. Gender inequalities towards women can be seen in different roles all across the world. This activity of gender inequality starts in childhood when boys and girls start facing unequal treatment from society. Feminist theories help in empowering women to eliminate the social norms regarding gender inequality. These theories aim to understand the main reason for gender inequality to eliminate these issues from society.

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1.1 Background of the Study

Despite the enormous progress throughout the world, the problem of gender inequality among different genders still exists within society. Inequalities against gender diversity can be observed in several places such as workplace discrimination between men and women, domestic violence, lack of access to education and many others. Feminist theories help to empower women against this discrimination. This can not only help in the well-being of women but also can bring a sustainable and prosperous future in society. The elimination of the issues regarding gender inequality can establish a society where men, women, boys and girls can get equal opportunities, resources, rights and protections from society. Feminist theories focus on protecting and providing equal rights to women. This can help in developing society as a whole (Jamil, 2020).

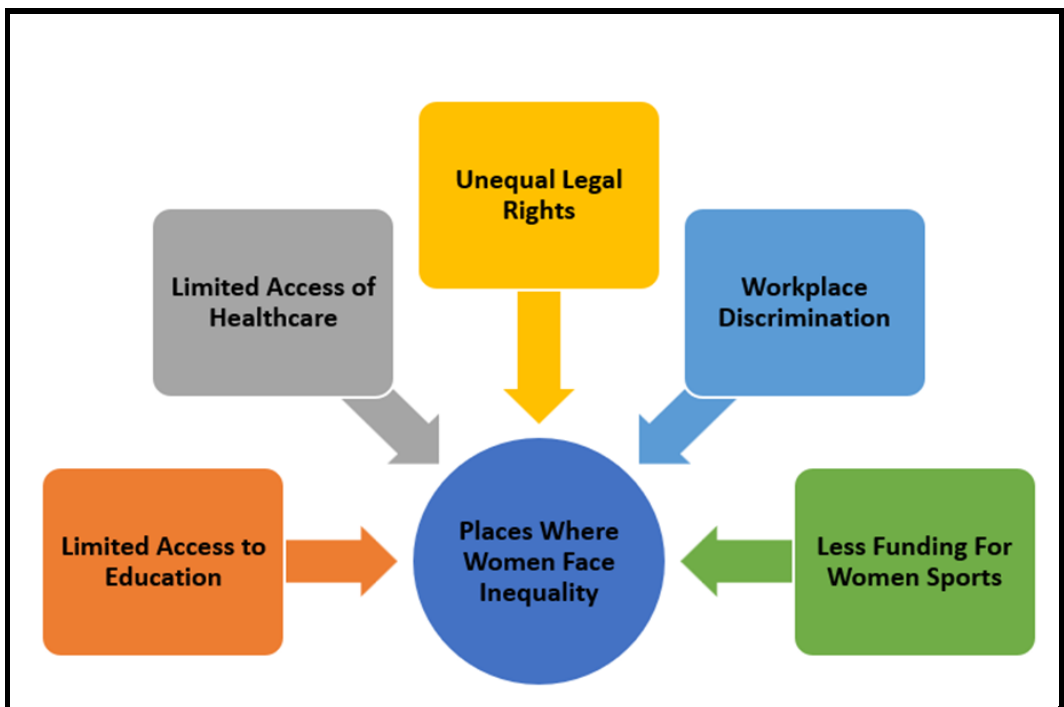


Figure 1: Places where Women Face Inequality.

(Source: Self-Developed).

1.2 Aim and Objectives

Aim

The study aims to explore the role of feminist theory and the different ways these theories help in understanding and addressing the issues regarding gender diversity and helps in promoting gender equality within the society.

Objectives

- To explore the way feminist theories, help to empower women
- To explore how feminist theories can eliminate workplace discrimination
- To explore the different challenges feminist theories face while addressing the issues regarding gender diversity

2. Literature Review

As per the opinion of Grosser & Tyler (2021), feminist theory helps to empower women by providing women with awareness about their basic rights. Feminist theories state the way women's empowerment can increase the well-being of women and can develop society as a whole. The empowerment of women is important for the development of families as well so that they can raise healthier and happier children. These theories help in providing the awareness of self-worth to women so that they can be aware of their basic right to determine their choices and to know that they have similar rights to utilise different resources and opportunities as men have.

According to the opinion of Aniefuna *et al.* (2020), feminist theories help to reduce the social injustice against women such as abuse, physical violence, and other injustices that women face in society. These theories help in enhancing the power of self-esteem in women. These theories state the importance regarding that women being financially stable to increase their self-esteem and to fight against the injustice they face in society. Along with this, these theories describe the role of power imbalances and gender. It describes the way unequal participation of women within the structural factors in the patriarchy exists. It states how men in society can get the advantage of domestic labour of women free of cost and engage in domestic violence to maintain their supremacy in society. These domestic violence traumas can affect the well-being and mental health of women. This as a result can decrease the quality of life of the women. Women empowerment can enhance the quality of life of the women by eliminating these issues from the society.

As per the opinion of Mohajan (2022), women face several unequal behaviours within their workplace. Low wages than men, lower positions than the male employees, harassment and so on. The social norms regarding that the highest paying works are meant to be for men and that women should choose the caregiving professions. This as a result can create huge obstacles in front of the success of the women. Feminist theories help in addressing these social norms by spreading awareness regarding this issue.

2.1 Theoretical Underpinning

Radical Theory

Radical feminism is a movement that believes patriarchy is the root cause of gender inequality and it seeks to fundamentally restructure society to eliminate it. This theory deeply impacts the role of feminist theory in addressing gender diversity as this theory helps to reform traditional structure and reinforce traditional norms. This theory criticizes exclusionary practice and its overlook of intersectionality, marginalizing certain groups such as women of color and transgender women. These theories maintain various strategies such as explanations for gender inequality and they maintain systemic reforms in areas like economics, politics, and culture (Perez Navarro, 2020). The gender diversity strategies of these theories develop programs and initiatives to drive sustained and meaningful change at the grassroots level. This theory helps the study to evaluate the aim of the study by discussing the issues of gender diversity in different environments.

Marxist Theory

The Marxist theory maintains social, political, and philosophical practice and it examines the effect of capitalism on gender diversity and helps in maintaining economic and social

development for the society. This theory ensures gender equality and implements equal opportunity for women in education and the workplace and evaluates social roles and standard of living as it helps in maintaining gender diversity (Øversveen, 2022). This study aims to understand the role and importance of feminist theories in addressing the Marxist theory on the issues regarding gender diversity. This theory is denoted as socialist feminism as it helps to develop a dual system approach to gender diversity.

Liberal Theory

Liberal theory maintains a positive view on human nature and it indicates realism as this theory mostly dominates solutions to the collective problem. This theory indicates various issues regarding different places such as workplaces, educational fields, or any other public places and this theory maintains a relation with realism and liberalism based on the analysis of gender inequality which is required for a developed culture and society (Kurer, 2020). Neo-liberalism is a part of the feminist theories in addressing the issues regarding gender diversity and this theory believes that state cooperation of the gender diversity maintains the greatest obstacle to maintain the feminist theory. This theory evaluates different challenges feminist theories face while addressing the issues regarding gender diversity and it helps this study in maintaining the objectives of the study.

2.2 Literature Gap

This study discusses feminist theory based on gender diversity and discusses the influence of social norms and attitudes regarding gender diversity and its concerns with various complexities such as limited focus beyond binary data. These theories focus on gender diversity maintain limited exploration of the binary data of transgender and are less effective in indicating equal gender opportunity. This study discusses the Marxist theory as indicating social economic activities and it doesn't indicate capitalism as the work opportunity and gender diversity is the main focus of the capitalistic economy. Feminist theory has not incorporated a broader spectrum of gender identity based on various factors such as race, class, ability, and many more.

3. Method

3.1 Methods for Data Collection

The researcher of this study maintains a “Secondary Data Collection Process” in researching to fulfill the aim of the study. The secondary data collection process evaluates the data from various secondary sources such as journals, and previously conducted research papers based on these topics. This data is available in various formats and it helps in maintaining the credibility of the data secondary data is that while working with the secondary data set, the researcher might explore different insights from the earlier research. One of the major advantages of this data collection process is that this process of data collection saves time and energy of the researcher as the secondary data is already available in different resources and the researcher does not need to collect data from the scratch. Secondary data collection methods help in reducing the cost of the research as the primary data is already there so it is easily accessible. One of the important advantages of the secondary data collection process is that it helps to identify the proper problem and better define the problem.



Figure 3: Advantages of Secondary Data.
(Source: Self-Developed).

The secondary data collection process helps to formulate an appropriate research design as it brings an appropriate result for this research. This data collection process helps in answering certain research questions and maintaining the hypothesis of the study. This data collection process interprets the data more insightfully. Depending on the source, objective, and method this style of data collection maintains various limitations such as lack of relevance and shortage of accuracy in the data collection process. The researcher has not chosen the Primary Data Collection method as it has some disadvantages such as it takes much time to gather data and many others that can become an obstacle to getting appropriate results quickly. The data collection process of this study helps in reducing the cost of the research as the primary data is already there so it is easily accessible.

3.2 Methods for Data Analysis

This study evaluates the “Qualitative Data Analysis Method” for getting a significant outcome for this research as this style of data analysis method provides a deeper understanding of the research topics. This data analysis process maintains participants' experience, perspectives, and behavior and it helps the researcher to get an appropriate result for this research. The advantages of this data analysis process is reveals complexities and nuances of human behavior and it easily captures the changes in attitudes of the population that have been taken for the research such as attitudes of a group of people within a workplace (Mezmir, 2020). Flexible research design of the qualitative data and its design and method helps to reveal unexpected findings and it expresses things that are unable to be expressed with the help of quantitative methods.



Figure 4: Advantages of Qualitative Research.
(Source: Self-Developed).

This data analysis process helps to maintain and explore sensitive data based on complex topics and it easily captures the changes in attitudes of the population that have been taken for the research such as the attitudes of a group of people within a workplace. Qualitative data analysis processes maintain various disadvantages such as potential time and resource constraints due to detail and time-consuming nature. Subject to researcher bias leads to inaccurate and subjective conclusions and a lack of precision and findings in the data analysis (Dufour & Richard, 2019). The researchers prefer to do qualitative data analysis due to allowing the application of personalized approaches from the different individuals within their analysis. Moreover, this data analysis method is more speculative about the specific areas that need to be investigated in times of the research.

3.3 Instruments

- Google Scholar: It is an important tool used in maintaining the secondary data collection process as it helps the researcher to indicate the thesis of the previous study. This tool works with the secondary data set, the researcher might explore different insights from the earlier research.
- MS Word: This tool helps to maintain the formation of the study and this tool maintains a better presentation of the study.
- Internet: It helps to collect the resources of the study and helps in gathering data and many others that can become an obstacle to getting appropriate results quickly.

4. Results

Theme 1: Gender Equality is Concerned with the Rights of Everyone Irrespective of any Gender

The study also looks into the role of feminist theory in encouraging gender equality from the society and it provides insight into concrete results and the effects of these programs on the entire society. Feminist Theories concentrates in promoting equal rights for everyone irrespective of any gender. It also helps in addressing the inequality issues that women in the society face in their daily lives. These theories have helped to expand the understanding of gender diversity and to create a more inclusive society for everyone that helps in developing the entire economy as a whole (Leal et al. 2023). Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for both women and men. To close this gap, women must have access to education and skill-building opportunities that will allow them to pursue careers in a variety of fields and question conventional gender norms. It implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both men and women are taken into consideration.

Gender equality is the social concern of the pervasive preconceptions and patriarchal systems and it fuels discriminatory behaviours that hinder women's progress in a variety of fields. Gender-based violence persists as a widespread problem, generating an antagonistic atmosphere that hinders women's complete involvement in society. Gender equality also indicates the right to equality of everyone irrespective of caste, gender, or sex sheds light on the complex ways that discourses of participation and power are performed, ignored, and expressed. According to (Shannon et al. 2019) mixed gains and persistent challenges and gender equality in science, medicine, and global health have the potential to lead to substantial health. It describes the number of women entering and excelling in scientific fields is rising increasingly and it fosters innovation and unlocks solutions that might have otherwise been missed.

Feminist researchers include feminist poststructuralism, intersectionality, and stance epistemologies, even if they commonly collaborate across feminist theoretical thought. Feminist qualitative research in education employs a wide range of methodologies and strategies, but all of the initiatives follow feminist ethics and philosophy (LeMoncheck, 2020). Feminist theories help to reduce the social injustice against women such as abuse, physical violence, and other injustices that women face in society and they ensure gender equality and implement equal opportunity for women in education and the workplace and evaluate social roles and standard of living as it helps in maintaining gender diversity. The goals of feminist educational research are to expose gender-based inequity, dismantle repressive systems, and investigate cutting-edge methods of knowledge creation. The gender-equal scientific community is better equipped to tackle diversity, foster innovation, and unlock solutions that might have otherwise been missed (Okelo et al. 2022). The marginal status of 'race' within the equality's agenda suggests that racial factors are frequently ignored or given insufficient attention, despite the overarching purpose of increasing inclusion.

Gender equality is concerned with the rights of everyone irrespective of everyone ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities and is treated with the same respect. According to (Lau et al. 2021) powerful influence on people's experience provides a clear illustration of the gender disparity that has persisted throughout Pakistan throughout the years. Equal rights and opportunities include access to education, healthcare, employment, political participation, and economic security and its analysis probably highlights situations in which conversations, laws, and practices about equality unintentionally overlook the unique difficulties and subtleties

connected to race in favor of gender or other considerations (Arifeen & Syed, 2020). The main focus of the feminist theory is to fight against the injustice they face in society. Along with this, these theories describe the role of power imbalances and gender.

Theme 2: Importance of Feminist Theory in Gender Diversity

Feminist theory plays an important role in gender diversity as it helps expose the power structure that shapes gender roles and expectations and structural obstacles and inequalities that women encounter in several domains, including health, political empowerment, economic engagement, and education. The poor ranking highlights how urgently focused initiatives and legislative changes are needed to overcome ingrained gender disparities. Cultural traditions, hurdles to economic engagement, and women's limited access to healthcare and education are some of the factors that may be causing this predicament. The importance of this theory indicates women's subordination in the domestic labor force and the diversion of child labor. It states how men in society can get the advantage of domestic labor of women free of cost and engage in domestic violence to maintain their supremacy in society. These domestic violence traumas can affect the well-being and mental health of women.

Core issues of these theories indicate enhancing the power of self-esteem in women and these theories state the importance of women being financially stable to increase their self-esteem and to fight against the injustice they face in society. Along with this, these theories describe the role of power imbalances and gender. Gender and other social identity elements have a complex impact on the dynamics of cooperation in the operating room (OR), which shapes the experiences and perceptions of healthcare personnel. Stereotypes and gender roles can lead to different expectations and actions, which affect how people are seen on the team. Feminist theory doesn't shy away from questioning various gender norms and stereotypes as this theory encourages society to critically examine assumptions about masculinity, femininity, and the binary itself, paving the way for a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of gender identities and expressions. On the other hand, males could struggle with cultural norms surrounding emotional expressiveness and vulnerability.

This theory is essential to comprehend these dynamics to build an inclusive and productive social activities team and it generates an antagonistic atmosphere that hinders women's complete involvement in society. Feminist theory evaluated that gender identity interpret with various social identities, such as race, class, and sexual orientation, and it helps to maintain a better understanding for fostering genuine gender diversity. This theory helps to acknowledge the unique experiences and challenges faced by different groups within the broader spectrum of genders. To maintain the gap in cultural inequality among women, women must have access to education and skill-building opportunities that will allow them to pursue careers in a variety of fields and question conventional gender norms. The application of gender equality policies is also influenced by gender relations and cultural norms. It helps to describe the number of women entering and excelling in scientific fields is rising increasingly and it fosters innovation and unlocks solutions related to gender inequality.

Feminist theory helps to empower society to implement their gender orientation and challenge any internalized biases they may hold and self-awareness maintains a crucial role in fostering empathy, understanding, and allyship in the journey towards gender diversity. discriminatory behaviors that hinder women's progress in a variety of fields. Gender-based violence persists as a widespread problem, generating an antagonistic atmosphere that hinders women's complete involvement in society (Wen et al. 2020). The study also looks into situations in which

discourses are disregarded or ignored, which may lead to gaps in knowledge and application. Furthermore, the materialization of these discourses is examined, providing insight into concrete results and the effects of these programs on educational knowledge. Feminist theories discussed in this study help to reduce the social injustice against women such as abuse, physical violence, and other injustices that women face in society and it ensures gender equality and implements equal opportunity for women in education and the workplace and evaluates social roles and standard of living as it helps in maintaining gender diversity.

Theme 3: Advantages and Disadvantages of Feminist Theory in Gender Diversity

Feminist theory maintains a significant role in advancing gender diversity as it indicates the rights to equality of everyone irrespective of caste, gender, and sex and sheds light on the complex ways that discourses of participation and power are performed, ignored, and expressed. One of the important advantages of the feminist theory is that it helps eliminate the patriarchal nature of society that brings different obstacles towards women in society. The elimination of the social norms of patriarchy helps to reduce the problems regarding gender inequality. This as a result helps in the growth of the economy as a whole. These theories challenge gender norms and shine a light on the power dynamics that shape gender roles and expectations. It describes the way unequal participation of women within the structural factors in the patriarchy exists (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly, 2020). This theory challenges the idea that there is only one way to be a woman and feminist theorists argue that womanhood is diverse and that there is no single definition of what it means to be a woman. Feminist theory doesn't shy away from questioning traditional gender norms and the study also looks into situations in which discourses are disregarded or ignored, which may lead to gaps in knowledge and application.



Figure 5: Advantages of Feminist Theories in Gender Diversity.
(Source: Self-Developed).

This theory recognizes that gender identity intersects and it maintains advantages of the understanding is crucial for fostering genuine gender diversity, as it acknowledges the unique experiences and challenges faced by different groups. Feminist theories also challenge the idea that there is only one way to be a woman. Feminist theorists argue that womanhood is diverse and that there is no single definition of what it means to be a woman. Feminist theory isn't just about understanding the problem, moreover, it helps fuel activism and social movements that work towards dismantling oppressive structures and advocating for policies and practices that promote gender equality and inclusivity. The degree to which students actively participate in or reject these educational initiatives may be discovered by looking at how these discourses are put into reality. Another major advantage of this theory is that it helps in bringing new policy changes to encourage women and address the challenges that women in society face. That as a result helps to reduce gender inequality in society.

Feminist theory indicates various disadvantages based on gender equality such as misconceptions and stigmas as a social movement, can be subject to misinterpretations and negative stereotypes. Along with this, these theories describe the role of power imbalances and gender. Gender and other social identity elements have a complex impact on the dynamics of cooperation in the operating room (OR), which shapes the experiences and perceptions of healthcare personnel (Okoro et al. 2020). This is important because it allows women to express their gender in ways that are authentic to them, without feeling like they have to conform to society's expectations in the political and social sectors of the society. It states that women can bring change in the community, in their own families, and the entire country. The participation of women is essential in building a developed nation and achieving a society that is peaceful, equitable, and prosperous.

Women face discrimination within the workplace. Empowerment of women can only help women achieve control and access over the economy, resources, and social and political sectors so that women can present themselves by raising their self-confidence. It describes the way unequal participation of women within the structural factors in the patriarchy exists and theories of feminism involve interdisciplinarity, intersectionality, justice, social activism, and collaboration so that all women across the world can experience equal treatment and inclusion. Various programs that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion are critical; these include leadership training, educating people about unconscious prejudices, and fostering an atmosphere that recognizes each person's unique contributions regardless of gender or other social identification issues. Economic empowerment is essential in the perspective of reducing the gender gap. To close this gap, women must have access to education and skill-building opportunities that will allow them to pursue careers in a variety of fields and question conventional gender norms.

5. Discussion

It can be observed from the results that; gender equality is concerned with the rights of everyone irrespective of everything. Gender equality focuses on providing equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities to every gender within the society (Gupta *et al.*, 2019). Feminist theories can address the gender gap that exists between men and women, which can be observed within society. These theories help women to have equal access to educational fields and different skill-building opportunities as education has an important role in spreading the concept of gender equality. It is essential to empower women by breaking down the gender stereotypes that exist within the society (Pasque & Nicholson, 2023). Gender stereotypes

restrict the opportunities and aspirations of women. Quality education for women can help them to achieve their full potential. This as a result can help women to excel in their careers in different fields and can have the ability to address traditional gender norms. Along with this, this helps to decrease the rate of poverty within the society and can enhance the growth of the economy.

Feminist theories help to reduce violence against women by providing education to both men and women about building healthy relationships (Leung *et al.*, 2019). This can help in enhancing a safer environment for women within the society. In addition to this, Gender equality helps increase the skilled-worker ratio within the workforce. This facilitates innovation and higher productivity within the workforce. This can also be a major reason for the economic growth of the society. Moreover, it can be seen that the performance of working sectors can be enhanced where the women are in leadership positions as they help in encouraging better decision-making within the workplace. Feminist theories help in promoting the idea of investing in the education of women. It can be seen that the investment in the education of women has a positive impact on society as women who have an education have the intention to educate their family and children which leads to breaking the inequality and poverty cycle of the society.

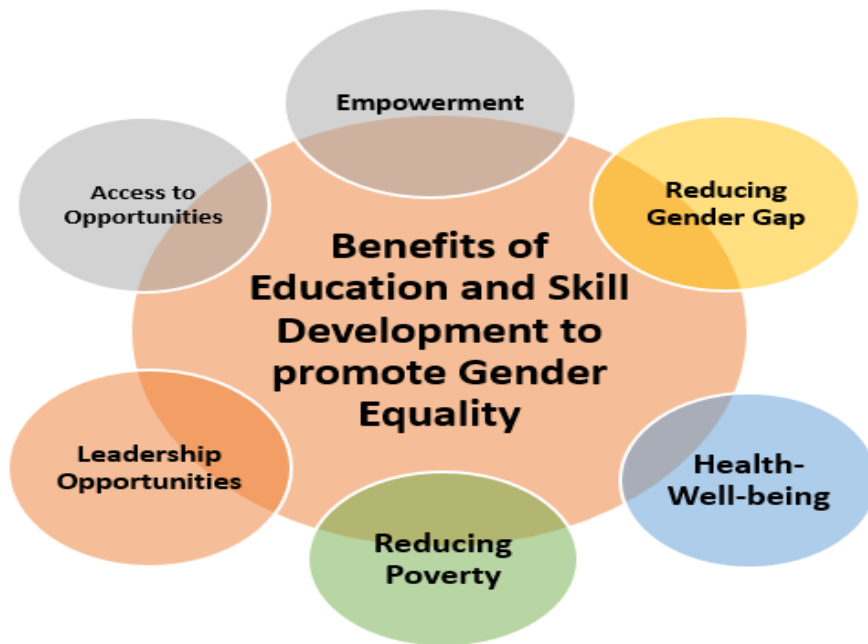


Figure 6: Benefits of Education and Skill Development to Promote Gender Equality. (Source: Self-Development).

Women in society face discrimination in different areas within the workplace due to several gender norms that are present within society. Feminist theories aim to bring gender equality within the workplace by gaining equal opportunities and rights to women by providing them access to equal resources to the women (Núñez *et al.*, 2020). Workplace gender equality is essential as it has the ability to enhance the economic growth of the entire nation. It helps in

enhancing the organisational performance within an organisation. Feminist theories help to ensure equality in workplaces by providing the idea of equal pay, job opportunities and promotions irrespective of the gender identity of the employees. However, this activity of the feminist theories to promote gender equality is not an easy job. The theories need to shift the conventional gender view of people and the gender biases from society by providing awareness and education to the people to have healthy relations between men and women and by spreading the different advantages that can be achieved with the help of the incorporation of women within the workforce.

The involvement of women in the workforce can bring diverse perspectives to a specific job that as a result helps in increasing the productivity of the organisation (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). In addition to this, it can also be seen that the incorporation of women in leadership positions within the workforce can improve the decision-making ability of the organisation and can bring different innovation and creativity within the organisational performance. Along with this, gender diversity within the workforce of an organisation helps in attracting consumers, investors and employees. The incorporation of different stakeholders into the company helps in boosting the financial performance of an organisation. The reduction of gender inequality within an organisation has the ability to attract new talent and retain employees to the organisation. Moreover, it can also be seen that the incorporation of women in the workforce can enhance the overall reputation of an organisation as women in the workplace are more empathetic and collaborative than men.

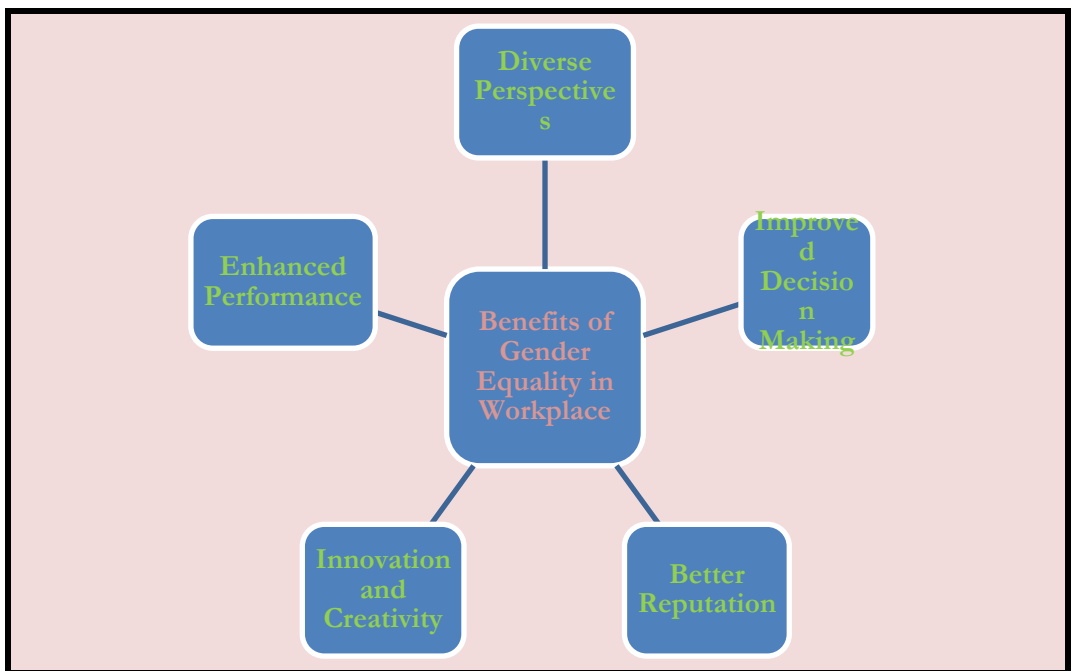


Figure 7: Benefits of Gender Equality in the Workplace. (Source: Self-Developed).

Discrimination towards women can be a major obstacle to the progress of women in different areas of society. The awareness of gender orientation and the challenges of different biases can be addressed with the help of feminist theory as it helps in fostering understanding and empathy towards the importance of gender diversity. Women within the society face obstacles

while establishing new business as an entrepreneur as society has a belief on that the women have less ability in handling a business or management of power can be better done by the men of the society. Feminists theories come with the awareness for the society to address this issue by providing knowledge to the society that, some sectors of the society can be better handled by the women entrepreneurs (Collins, 2022). The feminist theory states the importance of entrepreneur training for women to reduce the gender gap as well.

Feminist theory provides different strategies to promote gender equality with the society and to address the social issue regarding gender diversity. One of the major strategies is to incorporate gender-responsive learning programmes within the education system by including the use of gender-sensitive images or languages among boys and girls. This helps in building healthy relationship among girls and boys. Along with this, scholarship programs and availability of education in rural areas can also help in promoting women education that as a result help in reducing gender gap. Moreover, the creation of an environment where men and women equally feel respected and value irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or race are important for reducing the existing gender gap from the society.

Despite of different advantages of feminist theories to address the problems regarding gender diversity, it can also be seen that several disadvantages of feminist theories are there as well. In some places, these theories can be a major reason for negative stereotypes and misinterpretations. One of the main disadvantages of feminist theories is that they are completely from a viewpoint that is entirely women-centred although, these theories are not only for the inequality towards women, it is also for addressing different social issues irrespective of gender (Tsakmakis *et al.*, 2023). This as a result a major cause of creating a different perspective where women and men see the world differently. The main aim of feminist theories is to promote equal rights to all human beings irrespective of their gender. However, other disadvantages of these theories are with the help of the encouragement of these theories women try to put themselves over men and this as a result creates inequality in society.

6. Conclusion

This study has shown the role of feminist theories in addressing the issues regarding gender diversity. It can be seen that women face inequality in different areas of society such as unequal legal rights for women, workplace discrimination, limited access to healthcare services, limited access to education, and many more areas. The way feminist theory helps to empower women to achieve their basic rights by providing proper awareness has been described here in this study. In addition to this, the social injustice that women face in society such as abuse or violence can also be addressed with the help of these theories as feminist theory helps in enhancing the power of self-esteem of women. The secondary qualitative method of data analysis has been chosen to get accurate outcomes for this study. The importance of feminist theory to address the issues of gender diversity and the advantages and disadvantages of feminist theory have also been highlighted in this study.

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