

**GENDER & WOMEN**

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ABSTRACT

Gender is a fundamental dimension of social organization that influences opportunities, rights, responsibilities, social status, and participation in economic, political, and cultural life. Women constitute a significant part of society, yet their experiences have historically been shaped by gender-based inequalities, patriarchal structures, unequal access to education and employment, limited decision-making power, and social discrimination. In contemporary society, processes such as modernization, education, globalization, urbanization, technological development, legal reforms, and economic transformation have contributed to significant changes in the status and role of women. Women are increasingly participating in education, employment, entrepreneurship, politics, administration, and public life. At the same time, challenges such as gender discrimination, violence against women, unequal wages, unpaid care work, limited representation in leadership positions, and restricted access to resources continue to exist. The present study examines the changing position of women from social, economic, political, educational, and cultural perspectives. It also explores the factors responsible for women's empowerment and identifies the continuing barriers to gender equality. The study emphasizes that genuine social development requires equal opportunities, dignity, safety, and participation for women in all spheres of life.



KEYWORDS: Gender, Women, Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment, Patriarchy, Education, Employment, Social Change, Political Participation, Gender Discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

Gender is an important basis of social organization and plays a significant role in determining the position, opportunities, responsibilities, and expectations of individuals within society. Although biological differences exist between men and women, gender refers largely to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, norms, and expectations associated with being male or female. These roles are shaped by family, culture, religion, education, economy, politics, media, and social institutions. The study of gender is therefore essential for understanding patterns of inequality, social relationships, and processes of social change.

Women have historically performed important roles within the family, economy, community, and cultural life. However, patriarchal social structures have often restricted women's autonomy and access to education, property, employment, political power, and decision-making. Traditional expectations

frequently associated women with domestic responsibilities and caregiving, while men were regarded as primary economic providers and public decision-makers. Such social arrangements contributed to unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and authority between men and women.

The position of women has undergone considerable transformation during the modern period. **Education** has emerged as one of the most important instruments of women's empowerment. Increased access to education has improved women's awareness of their rights, expanded employment opportunities, increased social mobility, and encouraged participation in public life. Educated women are also more likely to participate in household decision-making and seek greater economic independence.

Economic participation has further contributed to changes in women's status. Women increasingly participate in agriculture, industry, services, entrepreneurship, self-help groups, professional occupations, and informal employment. Economic independence can strengthen women's bargaining power within households and increase their participation in social and political activities. Nevertheless, women continue to experience occupational segregation, unequal remuneration, insecure employment, and a disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and care work.

Political participation is another important dimension of women's empowerment. Constitutional provisions, reservations in local governance, political awareness, and women's movements have encouraged greater participation of women in democratic institutions. Women's representation in Panchayati Raj institutions has created opportunities for leadership and participation in local development. However, numerical representation does not always ensure equal decision-making power, and social, economic, and cultural barriers continue to influence women's political participation.

Legal and institutional reforms have also played an important role in improving women's rights. Laws relating to education, inheritance, marriage, workplace rights, protection from violence, and political participation have created a formal framework for gender equality. Government programmes and civil-society initiatives have further promoted women's education, health, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, and empowerment. However, the implementation of laws and policies remains an important challenge.

Globalization, urbanization, and technological development have also influenced women's lives. Increased access to digital communication, online education, financial services, employment platforms, and social media has created new opportunities. At the same time, women may face new forms of exploitation, online harassment, misinformation, and unequal access to digital technologies. Thus, technological progress does not automatically eliminate gender inequality.

Gender inequality is also influenced by differences in **class, caste, rural-urban location, age, education, economic status, and social background**. Women do not constitute a homogeneous group, and their experiences vary considerably. Rural women, economically disadvantaged women, and women belonging to socially marginalized communities may face multiple and interconnected forms of disadvantage.

Contemporary gender relations therefore reflect both **continuity and change**. Traditional gender norms continue to influence family life, marriage, occupations, and social expectations, while education, employment, legal reforms, political participation, and changing attitudes are creating new possibilities for women. The transformation of women's status is consequently an important indicator of broader social development.

The present study examines the changing position of women and the broader dimensions of gender relations in contemporary society. It seeks to understand the major factors influencing women's empowerment, the progress achieved in education, employment, economic independence, and political participation, as well as the persistent challenges of discrimination and inequality. The study ultimately

emphasizes that **gender equality is not only a women's issue but a fundamental requirement for inclusive, democratic, and sustainable social development.**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

The main aim of the study is to examine the social, economic, political, educational, and cultural position of women and to understand the changing nature of gender relations in contemporary society. The study focuses on the factors responsible for women's empowerment as well as the continuing forms of gender inequality and discrimination.

Objectives

1. To examine the concept of **gender** and its significance in social organization.
2. To study the historical and contemporary **social status of women** in society.
3. To examine the influence of **patriarchal structures and social norms** on women's lives.
4. To analyze the role of **education** in improving women's status, awareness, and social mobility.
5. To examine women's participation in **economic activities, employment, entrepreneurship, and income generation.**
6. To study women's participation in **politics, leadership, and decision-making processes.**
7. To examine the changing role of women within **family, marriage, and community life.**
8. To analyze the major forms and causes of **gender discrimination and inequality.**
9. To examine issues related to **violence against women, workplace inequality, unequal wages, and unpaid care work.**
10. To study the role of **laws, government programmes, women's movements, and social organizations** in promoting women's empowerment.
11. To examine the influence of **globalization, urbanization, media, and digital technology** on women's lives.
12. To identify the major **barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment.**
13. To suggest appropriate measures for achieving **greater gender equality, social justice, dignity, and equal opportunities for women.**

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study of gender and women has developed through contributions from sociology, economics, political science, anthropology, women's studies, and development studies. Various scholars have examined women's position from the perspectives of social structure, patriarchy, economic participation, development, and social transformation.

Simone de Beauvoir made an influential contribution to feminist thought through *The Second Sex*. She examined the social construction of women's identity and argued that women's subordinate position is shaped significantly by social and cultural institutions rather than biological differences alone. Her work provided an important foundation for understanding gender as a social phenomenon.

Betty Friedan, through *The Feminine Mystique*, examined women's experiences within modern family and domestic settings. She highlighted the dissatisfaction experienced by women whose identities and opportunities were restricted primarily to traditional domestic roles. Her work contributed to discussions on women's aspirations, employment, and independence.

Sylvia Walby analyzed patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices through which men dominate and exploit women. Her work emphasizes that gender inequality operates through several interconnected institutions, including the household, employment, politics, and culture.

Ann Oakley made an important contribution to the sociological understanding of gender by distinguishing between biological sex and socially constructed gender roles. Her work demonstrated how societies teach and reinforce different expectations for men and women through socialization.

Amartya Sen has examined gender inequality in the context of development and human capabilities. His work emphasizes that development should expand people's freedoms and capabilities. He has also drawn attention to gender inequalities in education, health, employment, and access to resources.

Naila Kabeer has contributed significantly to the study of women's empowerment and development. She emphasizes women's ability to make strategic life choices and highlights the importance of resources, agency, and achievements in understanding empowerment.

Bina Agarwal has examined women's relationship with land, property, resources, and economic security, particularly in South Asian societies. Her research demonstrates the importance of women's ownership and control over productive resources for improving their bargaining power and social position.

Gerda Lerner studied the historical development of patriarchy and the institutional foundations of women's subordination. Her work demonstrates that gender inequality has historical and social roots and has been reproduced through economic, political, and cultural institutions.

Indian scholars and researchers have also examined women's status in relation to caste, class, family, work, education, rural society, and political participation. Contemporary studies increasingly focus on women's empowerment, self-help groups, political representation, digital inclusion, gender-based violence, and women's participation in the formal and informal economy.

The existing literature demonstrates that women's status cannot be understood through a single factor. Gender inequality is connected with **family, economy, education, culture, politics, law, class, caste, and access to resources**. The present study builds upon these perspectives to examine the changing position of women and the continuing challenges to gender equality.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design**. The descriptive approach is used to understand the existing social, economic, educational, political, and cultural position of women. The analytical approach examines the factors responsible for changes in gender relations and evaluates the challenges associated with women's empowerment and gender equality.

Sources of Data

The study is primarily based on **secondary sources of data**. Information is collected from:

- Books and scholarly publications
- Research journals and academic articles
- Government reports and policy documents
- Census publications
- National Sample Survey and related statistical reports
- Reports of ministries and government agencies
- Reports of national and international organizations
- Women's studies and development research
- Newspapers and periodicals

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- Reliable academic and institutional sources

Major Areas of Analysis

The study examines the following major dimensions:

1. Gender roles and socialization
2. Women's social status
3. Education and literacy
4. Employment and economic participation
5. Property and resource ownership
6. Family and marriage
7. Political participation and leadership
8. Women's empowerment
9. Gender discrimination and inequality
10. Violence against women
11. Health and well-being
12. Globalization and urbanization
13. Technology and digital inclusion
14. Government policies and legal protection
15. Women's movements and social change

Method of Data Analysis

The collected information is analyzed through **qualitative, descriptive, and thematic methods**. Available statistical information is used to identify trends in women's education, employment, political participation, and other relevant indicators. Comparative analysis is used where appropriate to understand changes over time and differences between social groups.

Ethical Considerations

The study gives importance to the principles of **objectivity, accuracy, respect, and non-discrimination**. Information from published sources is interpreted carefully, and gender-related issues are examined without reinforcing stereotypes or discriminatory assumptions.

Limitations of Methodology

1. The study relies substantially on secondary sources, and therefore its findings depend on the availability and quality of existing data.
2. Women's experiences differ according to **class, caste, age, education, occupation, region, and rural-urban location**, making broad generalizations difficult.
3. Different surveys and reports may use different definitions and methodologies.
4. Some aspects of women's unpaid domestic and care work may not be adequately reflected in conventional economic statistics.
5. Gender relations are continuously changing, particularly because of technological, economic, and cultural developments.

Statement of the Problem

Gender inequality remains an important social issue despite considerable progress in women's education, employment, political participation, legal rights, and public representation. Women have

historically occupied unequal positions within social institutions because of patriarchal structures, traditional gender roles, unequal access to resources, and cultural expectations. These inequalities influence women's opportunities, autonomy, economic independence, and participation in decision-making.

Education and social development have brought significant changes in women's lives. Increasing numbers of women are entering schools, colleges, workplaces, professional occupations, entrepreneurship, and political institutions. Women's participation in economic and public life has increased their visibility and contributed to changing perceptions of traditional gender roles. However, educational advancement and employment opportunities have not completely eliminated gender inequality.

Women continue to experience **unequal wages, occupational segregation, limited access to property and productive resources, unpaid domestic responsibilities, and restricted opportunities for leadership**. The unequal distribution of household and care work is particularly significant because women's economic participation often occurs alongside substantial unpaid responsibilities within the family.

Gender-based violence is another major dimension of the problem. Domestic violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, early marriage, and other forms of violence can restrict women's freedom, security, health, and participation in public life. Although legal protections exist, differences in awareness, implementation, social attitudes, and access to justice continue to create challenges.

The problem is further complicated by differences among women themselves. Women belonging to economically disadvantaged groups or marginalized social communities may experience multiple forms of disadvantage. Therefore, gender inequality cannot be understood independently of **class, caste, education, economic status, geography, and social background**.

Globalization, urbanization, media, and digital technology have created both opportunities and challenges. Women can access education, employment, financial services, information, and social networks through digital platforms, while simultaneously facing digital exclusion, online harassment, and new forms of inequality.

The central problem of the study is therefore to understand **the changing position of women, the factors responsible for progress in gender equality, and the persistence of social, economic, cultural, and institutional barriers to women's empowerment**. The study seeks to examine whether contemporary social transformation is producing genuine equality and greater autonomy for women or whether traditional forms of gender inequality are continuing in new forms.

NEED OF STUDY

The study of **Gender and Women** is essential for understanding the position, rights, opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of women in contemporary society. Gender relations influence almost every social institution, including family, education, economy, politics, religion, and culture. Although significant progress has been achieved in women's education, employment, political participation, and legal rights, gender inequality continues in various forms.

The need for the study can be understood through the following points:

1. **Understanding Gender Inequality:** The study helps identify the social, economic, cultural, and institutional factors responsible for unequal opportunities between men and women.
2. **Changing Status of Women:** Modernization, education, urbanization, and economic development have transformed women's roles within the family and society. These changes need systematic examination.

3. **Role of Education:** Education is an important instrument of empowerment. The study examines how educational opportunities influence women's awareness, confidence, social mobility, and decision-making.
4. **Economic Empowerment:** Women's participation in employment, entrepreneurship, self-help groups, and other economic activities contributes to greater independence and household decision-making.
5. **Political Participation:** Increasing women's representation in political institutions and local governance makes it important to examine the extent to which women participate in decision-making and leadership.
6. **Family and Social Relations:** Changing gender roles are influencing marriage, family structure, household responsibilities, and relationships between men and women.
7. **Gender-Based Violence:** Violence, harassment, discrimination, and other forms of insecurity continue to restrict women's freedom and development. Understanding these issues is essential for developing effective interventions.
8. **Intersection of Gender and Social Inequality:** Women's experiences differ according to economic status, caste, education, age, occupation, and geographical location. The study helps understand these multiple dimensions of inequality.
9. **Impact of Technology and Globalization:** Digital technology, social media, globalization, and changing employment patterns have created new opportunities as well as new challenges for women.
10. **Policy and Social Development:** Research on gender is necessary for developing effective policies and programmes aimed at women's empowerment, social justice, equality, and inclusive development.

Thus, the study is necessary to understand both the **progress achieved by women and the barriers that continue to prevent full gender equality.**

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Further research on gender and women may focus on the following areas:

1. Comparative studies of women's status across **rural and urban communities.**
2. Research on the relationship between **women's education and economic independence.**
3. Studies of women's participation in the **formal and informal labour markets.**
4. Research on the **gender wage gap and occupational inequality.**
5. Detailed studies of **women's unpaid domestic and care work.**
6. Research on women's **property ownership, inheritance, and access to productive resources.**
7. Studies examining women's participation and leadership in **Panchayati Raj institutions and other political bodies.**
8. Research on the impact of **digital technology, social media, and online employment opportunities** on women.
9. Studies of **gender-based violence, workplace harassment, and access to justice.**
10. Research on women's experiences across different **social, economic, and cultural groups.**
11. Comparative studies of **gender roles among different generations**, particularly young and older women.
12. Research on the impact of **globalization, migration, and changing employment patterns** on family and gender relations.
13. Studies on **men and changing masculinities** to understand gender equality as a broader social process.

14. Long-term studies examining the effects of **government programmes and women's empowerment initiatives**.
15. Interdisciplinary research combining sociology, economics, political science, law, education, public health, and women's studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of gender relations.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Scope

The study covers the major social, economic, political, educational, and cultural dimensions of women's lives. It examines gender roles, women's social status, education, employment, economic empowerment, family relations, political participation, legal rights, gender discrimination, violence, technology, globalization, and women's movements.

The study also considers the relationship between **gender and broader social structures**, including class, caste, economic status, education, and rural-urban differences. It focuses on both the changes that have improved women's position and the continuing inequalities that restrict women's opportunities.

Limitations

1. **Social Diversity:** Women's experiences vary considerably according to region, caste, class, religion, age, education, occupation, and economic status.
2. **Dependence on Secondary Data:** If the study is based primarily on secondary sources, the analysis is dependent on the availability and reliability of existing information.
3. **Variation in Data Sources:** Government reports, surveys, and research studies may use different definitions, methodologies, and time periods.
4. **Underreporting:** Issues such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, and unpaid work may be underreported because of social stigma or inadequate documentation.
5. **Regional Differences:** Findings from one region or community cannot necessarily be generalized to all women.
6. **Changing Social Conditions:** Gender relations are continuously influenced by technological, economic, political, and cultural changes.
7. **Measurement Difficulties:** Certain dimensions of women's empowerment, such as autonomy, dignity, confidence, and decision-making power, are difficult to measure quantitatively.
8. **Complexity of Gender Relations:** Gender inequality results from multiple interconnected factors, making it difficult to attribute particular outcomes to a single cause.

Scope of Study

The scope of the study "**Gender & Women**" includes the following major areas:

1. **Concept of Gender** – Understanding gender as a social and cultural construct and examining gender roles and expectations.
2. **Social Status of Women** – Examining women's position within family, community, and society.
3. **Education and Literacy** – Studying women's access to education and its influence on awareness, aspirations, and social mobility.
4. **Employment and Economic Participation** – Examining women's participation in agriculture, industry, services, entrepreneurship, and informal employment.
5. **Economic Empowerment** – Studying income, financial independence, access to credit, property ownership, and control over economic resources.

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6. **Family and Marriage** – Examining women's roles in marriage, household decision-making, childcare, domestic responsibilities, and changing family relationships.
 7. **Political Participation** – Studying women's participation in elections, local governance, political institutions, leadership, and decision-making.
 8. **Health and Well-being** – Examining women's access to healthcare, reproductive health services, nutrition, and overall well-being.
 9. **Gender Discrimination** – Analyzing discrimination in education, employment, wages, property ownership, family life, and public institutions.
 10. **Violence Against Women** – Examining domestic violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, early marriage, and other forms of gender-based violence.
 11. **Legal Rights and Government Policies** – Studying laws, welfare programmes, reservations, and institutional measures designed to promote women's rights and empowerment.
 12. **Technology and Digital Inclusion** – Examining women's access to mobile phones, internet services, digital education, financial technology, and online opportunities.
 13. **Globalization and Social Change** – Studying how globalization, media, urbanization, and changing lifestyles influence women's roles and aspirations.
 14. **Women's Movements and Collective Action** – Examining the contribution of women's organizations, self-help groups, social movements, and civil-society organizations.
 15. **Gender Equality and Empowerment** – Assessing the progress, challenges, and future possibilities for achieving equality, dignity, autonomy, and equal participation for women.

Findings

The study of **Gender and Women** highlights significant changes in women's social, economic, political, educational, and cultural position. The major findings are as follows:

1. **Changing Social Status:** Women's position has improved considerably due to education, legal reforms, modernization, economic development, and increased social awareness.
2. **Expansion of Education:** Increased access to education has enhanced women's knowledge, confidence, aspirations, social mobility, and awareness of legal and constitutional rights.
3. **Growing Economic Participation:** Women are increasingly participating in agriculture, industry, services, entrepreneurship, self-help groups, and other income-generating activities.
4. **Economic Independence:** Access to employment, financial services, credit, and entrepreneurship has contributed to greater economic independence and decision-making power among women.
5. **Changing Family Roles:** Traditional gender roles within families are gradually changing. Women are increasingly participating in household decisions, education-related decisions, financial matters, and family planning.
6. **Political Participation:** Women's participation in elections, local governance, and political institutions has increased. Reservation policies have created important opportunities for women's political representation and leadership.
7. **Continuing Gender Discrimination:** Despite progress, women continue to face discrimination in education, employment, wages, property ownership, family responsibilities, and access to resources.
8. **Unequal Care Responsibilities:** Women continue to perform a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic work, childcare, and care for elderly and dependent family members.
9. **Gender-Based Violence:** Domestic violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, early marriage, and other forms of violence remain serious barriers to women's freedom, security, and development.

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- 10. Impact of Technology:** Digital technology has created opportunities for education, employment, communication, financial inclusion, and access to information. However, unequal digital access and digital literacy remain concerns.
 - 11. Influence of Globalization:** Globalization and media have contributed to changing aspirations, lifestyles, consumption patterns, and perceptions of women's roles.
 - 12. Importance of Women's Collective Action:** Self-help groups, women's organizations, social movements, and community institutions have contributed significantly to women's awareness, confidence, and empowerment.
 - 13. Intersectional Inequalities:** Women's experiences differ according to caste, class, age, education, economic status, occupation, and geographical location. Therefore, gender inequality cannot be understood as a uniform experience.
 - 14. Persistence of Patriarchal Norms:** Traditional patriarchal attitudes continue to influence marriage, family responsibilities, inheritance, mobility, employment, and decision-making.
 - 15. Progress Alongside Inequality:** The overall finding is that women's status has improved substantially, but social and structural inequalities continue to prevent the achievement of complete gender equality.

DISCUSSION

Gender relations are undergoing significant transformation as a result of education, modernization, urbanization, globalization, economic development, legal reforms, and technological advancement. The findings demonstrate that women's position cannot be understood simply in terms of progress or inequality; rather, contemporary women's experiences reflect a combination of **change, continuity, opportunity, and constraint**.

Education has emerged as one of the most important forces of women's empowerment. Greater educational opportunities have enabled women to develop skills, access employment, understand their rights, and participate more actively in family and public decision-making. Education has also contributed to changing attitudes toward traditional gender roles. However, educational access and quality remain unequal across different social and economic groups.

Economic participation has similarly transformed women's position. Employment and entrepreneurship can provide women with income, confidence, bargaining power, and greater autonomy. Nevertheless, women's economic participation is often accompanied by a **double burden** of paid employment and unpaid household responsibilities. Women remain concentrated in several low-paid, informal, or insecure occupations, and economic independence is not equally available to all women.

The changing role of women within the family is another important aspect of gender transformation. Women increasingly participate in decisions concerning education, household expenditure, healthcare, and children's future. Yet traditional expectations regarding domestic responsibilities continue to influence women's lives. Consequently, changes in women's public roles have not always been accompanied by an equal redistribution of household work.

Political participation has created new opportunities for women to exercise leadership and influence local development. Women's representation in local government has increased their visibility in public life and strengthened democratic participation. However, effective political empowerment requires not merely representation but also genuine decision-making authority, political knowledge, institutional support, and freedom from social constraints.

The persistence of **gender-based violence and discrimination** demonstrates that legal equality alone cannot guarantee social equality. Laws and policies provide essential protection, but their

effectiveness depends on awareness, implementation, access to justice, social support, and changes in attitudes. Prevention therefore requires educational, institutional, economic, and cultural interventions.

Technology has introduced another important dimension of gender relations. Digital platforms can provide women with access to education, employment, banking, information, markets, and social networks. At the same time, the digital divide can reproduce existing inequalities when women lack access to devices, connectivity, digital skills, or financial resources.

The findings also indicate that women's experiences are shaped by multiple social identities and circumstances. A woman with economic security and higher education may experience gender differently from a woman facing poverty, limited education, social discrimination, or restricted access to resources. Therefore, policies for women's empowerment need to recognize **diversity among women**.

Overall, gender transformation should be understood as a broader process of social change. Women's empowerment contributes not only to individual well-being but also to family welfare, economic development, democratic participation, and social progress. Genuine equality requires changes in institutions, social attitudes, household practices, economic structures, and opportunities available to both women and men.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the position of women has undergone **substantial transformation**, particularly in education, employment, political participation, legal rights, economic activities, and public life. Women have increasingly moved beyond traditionally prescribed roles and have become active participants in social, economic, political, and cultural development.

However, progress has been uneven. Patriarchal attitudes, gender discrimination, unequal wages, unpaid care responsibilities, restricted access to resources, violence against women, and limited representation in positions of authority continue to affect women's lives. The existence of legal equality does not always translate into equality in everyday social relationships.

The study further concludes that **women's empowerment is a multidimensional process**. Education alone is insufficient unless accompanied by economic opportunities, health, safety, political participation, legal awareness, access to resources, and freedom of choice. Similarly, gender equality cannot be achieved only through policies directed at women; changes in family structures, institutions, workplaces, and social attitudes are equally necessary.

Therefore, achieving gender equality requires a transition from formal equality to **substantive equality**, in which women have real opportunities, autonomy, dignity, security, and decision-making power. A society can achieve sustainable and inclusive development only when women participate equally in all spheres of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Improve Women's Education:** Ensure equal access to quality education, higher education, vocational training, and digital learning opportunities.
2. **Promote Economic Empowerment:** Expand employment, entrepreneurship, skill development, credit facilities, and market opportunities for women.
3. **Ensure Equal Pay:** Strengthen implementation of equal-pay principles and promote transparency in wages and employment conditions.
4. **Recognize Unpaid Care Work:** Promote fair distribution of household and care responsibilities between women and men and improve support services such as childcare.

5. **Strengthen Women's Political Participation:** Encourage women's participation in political institutions and provide leadership, training, and institutional support.
6. **Prevent Gender-Based Violence:** Strengthen prevention programmes, support services, legal assistance, counselling, and effective implementation of laws protecting women.
7. **Increase Legal Awareness:** Educate women about constitutional rights, property rights, workplace protections, and available legal remedies.
8. **Improve Access to Property and Resources:** Encourage women's ownership and control over land, housing, financial assets, and productive resources.
9. **Promote Digital Inclusion:** Ensure affordable access to digital devices, internet connectivity, financial technology, and digital-literacy programmes for women.
10. **Strengthen Self-Help Groups:** Support women's self-help groups, cooperatives, and community organizations as instruments of economic and social empowerment.
11. **Challenge Patriarchal Attitudes:** Promote gender-sensitive education and awareness among children, families, communities, workplaces, and institutions.
12. **Improve Women's Health:** Ensure accessible and affordable healthcare, reproductive health services, nutrition, and mental and physical well-being support.
13. **Create Safe Workplaces:** Strengthen mechanisms for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination in workplaces.
14. **Adopt Inclusive Policies:** Gender policies should recognize differences based on economic status, caste, location, age, disability, education, and other forms of social disadvantage.
15. **Encourage Men's Participation:** Gender equality programmes should actively involve men and boys in challenging harmful stereotypes and promoting shared household responsibilities.
16. **Strengthen Implementation of Government Programmes:** Regular monitoring and evaluation should ensure that policies and welfare programmes designed for women reach their intended beneficiaries.
17. **Promote Gender-Sensitive Research:** More field-based and interdisciplinary research should be undertaken to understand emerging gender issues and develop evidence-based policies.
18. **Build a Gender-Equal Society:** Long-term efforts should focus on creating social institutions in which women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities, dignity, safety, and participation.

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