

## Analysis of Gender Equality & Social Representation: A Bangladesh Perspective

Avijeet Paul<sup>1\*</sup>, Sohana Sultana<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Department of Accounting, Premier University, Chittagong, Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup>Department of Accounting, Premier University, Chittagong, Bangladesh

e-mail: [avijeet.112413@gmail.com](mailto:avijeet.112413@gmail.com), [sohana.sultanabd@gmail.com](mailto:sohana.sultanabd@gmail.com)

\*Corresponding Author: [avijeet.112413@gmail.com](mailto:avijeet.112413@gmail.com)

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### Abstract:-

Gender equality is considering the empowerment of a person while it should not be confined only to empowering someone. The main purposes of this study are to identify how gender equality is socially represented by both male & female perspective and do male and female support each other to build gender equality in Bangladesh. To formulate this basic research design we followed the survey through questionnaire and secondary analysis. Structured, Close-ended, and 3 points Likert scale has been used in the questionnaire. Data were collected from a total of 60 respondents equally both male and female. Goggle form was used to collect data and MS Excel was used to analyze data. The findings of this study say, maximum people do not show gender inequality socially. That means the social representation of gender equality is exists in maximum respondents. Both the male and female also support each other to build gender equality socially. Most of the study considers on gender perspective either gender equality or gender inequality but we consider how people represent gender equality socially so this study extends the previous study and which will help the academicians, rechargers, policymakers for similar socio-cultural nature or other countries.

**Keywords:** Gender, Social, Perspective, Equality, Representation

## 1. Introduction

Gender equality refers to the state of equal rights and opportunities in every domain including the economic sector and decision-making of a country as well as the whole world. This includes access to using the resources and gets valued for his/her contribution, it can be in the economy or their personal life. While talking about gender equality our society always try to portrait the economic contribution of a person especially women in any country and always try to hide the societal impact of any human being like how a

person is being treated in the society, for example, their mental health, social status, contribution in one's family and so on. Moreover, gender equality is not only the percentage of an educated person in one country or contribution to the economy. Our society does not recognize one's contribution towards family: which is a prominent part of building a good society even a well-organized nation. In today's world particularly in the South Asian subcontinent, gender equality is considering the empowerment of a person while it should not be confined only to empowering someone. On the other hand, Social representations consist of values, practices,

customs, ideas, and beliefs that are shared between individuals in a society or group. The researchers mostly focused on gender equality and its implication, where this paper builds interest to know about the social representation of gender equality from both male & female perspective. In this area, there are some research questions; which are: 1) How gender equality is socially represented in Bangladesh from both male & female perspectives? 2) Do male & female support each other to build gender equality in Bangladesh? The prime aim of this study is to explore the social representation of gender equality and finally, this study will try to depict some suggestions regarding the establishment of gender equality which will help academicians, researchers, policymakers for similar socio-cultural nature or other countries.

The entire paper is organized as follows, Section I contains the introduction, Section II contains the Literature Review, Section III contains the Methodology of the Study, Section IV Results and Discussion & Finally V describe Concluding Remarks & Further Scope of the Study.

## 2. Literature Review

In this empirical research, we have reviewed a few research papers. Therefore, nowadays in Asia people gives priority to gender equality. However, the practice is not remarkable in every sector of society. Hence, the discriminations are less than before as people become conscious about their rights. Public education, strict anti-discrimination legislation, enhancing women's capabilities to grab different opportunities are the focal elements of gender equality growth, which also dispel the cultural, social, or institutional barrier for women in developing Asia(1). In contrast Focusing on a face-to-face interview and different sampling methods Kostenko, Kuzmichev (2) conduct a study on the Arab world. Their empirical study shows only a small portion of people like about 17% of the population, who are highly educated support gender equality.

Earlier it is considered that woman is not capable to be a leader. Hence, the perception has changed though in Bangladesh some people do not like to have a female leader in work or even in any social sector. Inglehart, Norris (3) pointed out in their study that industrialized societies rather than less developed countries accept the idea that women can provide good leadership in the political area. Gender equality is also related to the cultural heritage and economic development of the country. People's behavior and perception are mostly distinct from culture. Hence, when a person belongs to a gender-friendly culture, he/she wants to inspire others towards gender equality. Kabeer (4) opines education, employment, and political participation are important exponent to achieve gender equality and women's

empowerment. She also says through these indicators a potential clear change can bring in women's life.

Furthermore, basic norms and attitude towards anything is a significant aspect to shape awareness and opinion. Hence, Ekvall (5) finds a significant relationship between norms and attitudes toward gender equality. There are people all over the world who think that it is a woman's responsibility to rear the children. Han, Kim (6) depict that decisions regarding the child-rearing methods or ways will be taken by the man. Therefore, the woman will take care of the child. Moreover, men will take the significant decision of the children for instance, where to study and what will be the subjects, etc. Nonetheless, opinions differ from person to person. Education plays a significant role to make people conscious of different phenomenon. Moreover, family income can be a dominant factor to determine people's thinking process. Gök, Aydın (7) discover women and educated males have a similar observation about gender equality. Therefore, the author further finds that education and dual-income family are the dominant facts in gender equality. Thus, the uneducated person does not give importance to gender equality. The aspects of discrimination vary from country to country. Many countries do not signify the importance of gender equality in every sector of society. Husu (8) conducts the research and finds, gender equality is being prioritized in Finland than any other country in the UK. Hence, the country focuses on equality and they have successfully implemented the theory in several areas. Kemper, Bader (9) research on Scandinavian subsidies in Japan on promoting gender equality in a challenging environment. Thus, their findings show that gender equality varies over the different perspectives of organizations such as nationality, subsidiary sizes, etc. Hence, it is to notify that, the research signifies gender equality in home and host country.

Besides this, in Bangladesh studies are conducted on gender equality like Gee (10), DeJaeghere and Wiger (11), Uraguchi (12) Khatun and Afroze (13), etc. This paper extends the previous study where we consider the social representation of gender equity from both female and men's perspectives i.e. how they represent gender equality socially. To fill the existing literature gap, this study helps to identify the social representation of gender equality in Bangladesh perspective.

## 3. Methodology

We followed a survey by the questionnaire and secondary analysis for our basic research design. In this research, we used a close-ended, structured questionnaire and 3-point Likert scale for data collection. We prepared two different questionnaires for male and female respondents. Our questionnaire had two parts; the first part was the demographical information of the respondents and the

second part was about the research objectives related to questions. We collected data as a sample because our total population size is large. We collected 60 data from respondents of Bangladesh. Due to maintain social distance in that pandemic situation we used Google form for data collection in this study. After collecting primary data from the respondents, MS Excel was used to analyze data for the findings and discussion part of this report.

## 4. Results and Discussion

Demographical information of respondents provides a brief description of the researcher's generalization of research findings (14). In this empirical study the respondent's demographical information is shown in (Table – 1)

Table 1: Respondents Demographical Information

Variables & Level	Frequency	(%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	30	50%
Female	30	50%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	41	68%
Married	19	32%
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 20 Years	2	3%
20 - 29 years	44	73%
30 - 39 years	13	22%
40 years or above	1	2%
<b>Educational Status</b>		
Higher Secondary	5	8%
Graduation	24	40%
Post-Graduation	27	45%
Other	4	7%
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Student	17	28%
Employed	29	49%
Unemployed	11	18%
Other	3	5%
<b>Lives in</b>		
Urban Area	55	92%
Rural Area	5	8%

Therefore, in the tables mentioned below, we have shown the responses from questionnaires as female and male statements. This is done for the easy convenience of this research paper.

Hence, FS= Female Statement, & MS= Male Statement.

Table 2: Percentage of Female Responses

FS No	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
FS-1	23%	17%	60%	100%
FS-2	20%	23%	57%	100%
FS-3	17%	0%	83%	100%
FS-4	3%	4%	93%	100%
FS-5	40%	17%	43%	100%
FS-6	43%	20%	37%	100%
FS-7	37%	10%	53%	100%
FS-8	3%	0%	97%	100%
FS-9	40%	20%	40%	100%
FS-10	30%	17%	53%	100%
FS-11	73%	14%	13%	100%
FS-12	7%	10%	83%	100%
FS-13	0%	0%	100%	100%
FS-14	23%	27%	50%	100%
FS-15	60%	7%	33%	100%

The outcomes of female respondents are present below-

“Man should not express their feelings (cry in public/ feel shy)” (FS-1); “Floral designs are not meant for man” (FS-2); “Earning money is a sole responsibility of man”(FS-3); “You feel embarrassed if your spouse does the household chores in front of others” (FS-4); where maximum respondents have disagreed with these statements.

“You will not accept if your spouse is less educated than you” (FS-5) only 43% of respondents have disagreed with this statement. Therefore, this statement demonstrates 40% of females do not want a less educated spouse. Hence, these responses do not support gender equality. “Father’s Day is not celebrated as Mother’s Day” (FS-6) where only 37% of female respondents have disagreed with this statement.

“Man should not be emotionally vulnerable as a woman” (FS-7); “Fashion designing is not a suitable career for man” (FS-8) maximum respondents have disagreed with these statements.

“Man cannot express their feelings about molestation like the woman does” (FS-9) where only 20% of respondents are in the neutral position and the rest of the respondents are equally agreed and disagreed with this statement.

Maximum respondents have disagreed with this statement “Homosexual son/daughter will make you ashamed” (FS-10). “Paternity leaves are equally important as maternity leave” (FS-11) maximum respondents support this statement. “Restaurant bill should be paid by a man” (FS-12) the maximum number of respondents have disagreed with this statement. “Man should not take care of his

skin/health" (FS-13) every respondent has disagreed with this statement.

"A man should be sporty/macho to look good" (FS-14) only half of the total respondents have disagreed with this statement.

"Men usually don't get the privilege of quota like a woman" (FS-15) maximum respondents are agreed with this statement.

Therefore, to sum up, the above questionnaire is prepared to identify how female respondents represent the gender equality of our country. We have found that the maximum number of respondents represent gender equality socially. However, we have also find gender-neutral responses as well.

The outcomes of male respondents are present below-

"Parenting & housekeeping are the responsibility of woman" (MS-1); "Women should quit their job after having a child" (MS-2); "Women are not capable of taking decisions (Regarding family or profession)" (MS-3); "Rights for a woman means that man lose out" (MS-4); "In most of the sector gender equality has been achieved" (MS-5); "Man feels insecure to work under woman" (MS-6) maximum respondents have disagreed with these statements.

"Woman easily gets a job than man" (MS-7) only 47% of respondents have disagreed but 20% are agreed and 33% are neutral with this statement.

"It is easy for a woman to take legal actions against domestic violence" (MS-8) only 33% of respondents disagreed with this statement and maximum respondents think that it's easy for women.

"Woman should not pay higher than a man for her job" (MS-9); "Earning money is not a woman's job" (MS-10); "Women should not participate in defense" (MS-11); "Married Woman should not be allowed to go abroad alone for higher studies/ jobs" (MS-12); "Woman should take permission from her husband/father/brother for everything" (MS-13); "Man feels insecure/ embarrass if his spouse is more educated" (MS-14); "Teaching profession is the only best career option for the woman" (MS-15) maximum respondents have disagreed with these above statements

Table 3: Percentage of Male Responses

MS No	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
MS-1	13%	20%	67%	100%
MS-2	10%	17%	73%	100%
MS-3	0%	7%	93%	100%
MS-4	0%	3%	97%	100%
MS-5	30%	17%	53%	100%
MS-6	27%	20%	53%	100%

MS-7	20%	33%	47%	100%
MS-8	40%	27%	33%	100%
MS-9	7%	6%	87%	100%
MS-10	3%	4%	93%	100%
MS-11	10%	3%	87%	100%
MS-12	13%	14%	73%	100%
MS-13	20%	23%	57%	100%
MS-14	23%	24%	53%	100%
MS-15	13%	14%	73%	100%

Therefore, to sum up, the outcome of male respondents is that men represent gender equality socially in our country.

From our empirical study, it can be said that the FS-5 does not support the reality of our society. Hence, females do not agree to marry someone less educated than them. On the other hand, the MS-8 does not represent gender equality socially in Bangladesh. However, there is a question that lies, is it easy for a woman to take legal actions without any harassment? Again our result shows that males and females equally support building gender equality in Bangladesh.

## 5. Conclusion and Future Scope

Gender equality is the most debatable phenomenon in the world. Therefore, In Bangladesh, people tend to think that gender equality has been achieved in most of the sectors. Sometimes we consider the portion of females who have been a victim of gender inequalities of our society and do not focus on the injustice or inequalities faced by a male. Moreover, if we talk about Bangladesh females are lacking behind males in the case of gender equality.

Furthermore, from the findings of this report, we can say that our research objectives are satisfied. Maximum people do not support gender inequality and they represent gender equality socially. However, society always does not provide the necessary facilities to enhance gender equality. Hence, there are still scopes to improve the situation. For instance, a woman should be aware of their rights. Moreover, the government should strictly punish the culprits who suppress other's rights. No matter which gender it is. Justice shall be the priority. Furthermore, social factors like religion, responsibilities, and systems should not create a barrier to enhance gender equality.

Therefore, this research study is prepared with all the precautions. However, there are a few limitations to this research. For instance, the data has collected through Google form during the pandemic. Hence, many people are not willing to give their opinions. Moreover, face to face interview can be used by the researcher to get the data. Therefore, a large number of populations, less educated

people, and responses from rural areas can be effective for this study in the future.

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## Authors Profile

**Avijeet Paul** has completed his B.B.A & M.B.A specialized in Accounting from Premier University, Chittagong, Bangladesh. He has a research interest in Social Science related subjects besides Accounting and Information Systems.

**Sohana Sultana** has obtained her B.B.A & M.B.A specialized in Accounting from Premier University, Chittagong, Bangladesh. She has 1.5 years of professional experience after completing her graduation. Now she is working as a 'Student Support Executive' for South Communication, Bangladesh.

**Appendix:**

Questionnaire on Analysis of Gender Equality & Social Representation – A Bangladesh Perspective

**Instructions:**

- 1. The estimated time to complete this questionnaire is about 15 minutes.
- 2. Please be as **honest** as possible with your answers. Please be known that there is no right or wrong answer.
- 3. Your participation in this study is **confidential** and your responses will remain **secret**.
- 4. **Thank you for your participation.**

Respondent's Name:-----

Respondent's Email Id:-----

**Part – 01**

**Gender:** 1.  Male      2.  Female

**Marital Status:** 1.  Married      2.  Single

**Age:**  Less than 20 years  
 20 years to 29 years  
 30 years to 39 years  
 40 years to 49 years  
 50 years or above

**Educational Qualification:**  
 Higher Secondary Level  
 Graduation Completed  
 Post-Graduation Completed  
 Other

**Employment Status:**  
 Student  
 Employed  
 Unemployed  
 Other

**Lives in:**  
 Urban Area  
 Rural Area

**Part -2**

**For Female Respondents**

- FS1: Man should not express their feelings (cry in public/ feel shy)  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS2: Floral designs are not meant for man  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS3: Earning money is a sole responsibility of man  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree

- FS4: You feel embarrassed if your spouse does the household chores in front of others  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS5: You will not accept if your spouse is less educated than you  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS6: Father's Day is not celebrated as Mother's Day  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS7: Man should not be emotionally vulnerable as a woman  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS8: Fashion designing is not a suitable career for man  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS9: Man cannot express their feelings about molestation like the woman does  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS10: Homosexual son/daughter will make you ashamed  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS11: Paternity leaves are equally important as maternity leave  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS12: Restaurant bill should be paid by a man  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS13: Man should not take care of his skin/health  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS14: A man should be sporty/macho to look good  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- FS15: Men usually don't get the privilege of quota like a woman  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree

**For Male Respondents**

- MS1: Parenting & housekeeping are the responsibility of woman  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS2: Women should quit their job after having a child  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS3: Women are not capable of taking decisions (Regarding family or profession)  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS4: Rights for a woman means that man lose out  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS5: In most of the sector gender equality has been achieved  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS6: Man feels insecure to work under woman  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS7: Woman easily gets a job than man  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS8: It is easy for a woman to take legal actions against domestic violence  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS9: Woman should not pay higher than a man for her job  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree
- MS10: Earning money is not a woman's job  
 Agree  Neutral  Disagree

MS11: Women should not participate in defense

Agree  Neutral  Disagree

MS12: Married Woman should not be allowed to go abroad alone for higher studies/ jobs

Agree  Neutral  Disagree

MS13: Woman should take permission from her husband/father/brother for everything

Agree  Neutral  Disagree

MS14: Man feels insecure/ embarrass if his spouse is more educated

Agree  Neutral  Disagree

MS15: Teaching profession is the only best career option for the woman

Agree  Neutral  Disagree