

# Gender Blindness in Research: Necessity to Revamp

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## Abstract:

The main motive of research needs to be translational in nature and to fill the gaps of research translate the fruits to the society at large for public interest. Thus the researcher in performing his/her research must be accountable for the innovation or outcome of research which must be suggestive and useful to the community. It should not induce inequality and gender sensitivity. Research should shoulder a vital role in removing inequalities existing in the community, obligation to find solutions not creating issues the fruitful results must lead to sustainability. women and men are socialized differently by reinforcing stereotyped traits. There is a difference at every aspect of their life. In this context there is a need to revamp the gender blindness in the research. To enhance the quality of the research it is essential to promote gender dimension in research. The validity of the research outcomes can be measured with gender sensitivity but the same is missing in research. Gender blindness yields inappropriate results. Because of the failure to take the differences between men and women into account, it leads to an incomplete understanding of the problem/situation. Hence the Institutions and individuals should incorporate gender aspect in every research and promotion of women researchers will surely bring in-depth understanding of both genders' needs, behaviors, and attitudes. It also contributes to the production of goods and services better suited to potential markets. it is imperative of any researcher to wear unique human value lens to connect research and reality. Research should not merely produce degree holders; it should possess a human touch and fruits of it should reach the society and meet the needs of the day like understanding issues from gender perspective to promote gender equality. Research should address the fundamental knowledge gap by incorporating women's non-market contributions into the economy and feeding this knowledge back into policy making

**Keywords:** Gender blindness, Gender sensitivity, Gender Equality, gender perspective, Research

## Introduction:

The exclusive objective of research is to protect and promote the needs of the society. Whether it is the scientific or social science research, it should be to fulfill the needs of the society. Not just performing research, the researcher must be responsible for his/ her research or innovation. The researcher has an obligation for finding solutions for issues and challenges from local to global level. Research should be fully integrated with societal needs to fulfill the social desirability.

Knowledge along with social responsibility will help in building future of Nation. There are various International and National policies to promote innovation and research among students from KG to P G, but it is necessary to promote gender sensitivity among the researchers. Because it plays a major role in promoting sustainable world and gender balanced society.

In order to enhance the quality of the research in promoting gender equality, gender must be an important dimension. The validity of the research outcomes depends upon the extent of gender sensitivity. But gender sensitiveness is missing in research. Gender blindness yields inappropriate results. Because of the failure to take the differences between men and women into account leads to an incomplete understanding of the problem/situation.

Gender blindness means lack of awareness about how men and women are differently affected by a situation due to their different roles, needs, status and priorities in their societies. In other words, Gender-blindness is the ignoring of the socially determined gender roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of men and women. It is known fact that women and men are socialized differently by reinforcing stereotyped traits. There is a difference at every aspect of their life, say for example in their upbringing, roles, responsibilities, opportunities etc. Hence their progress or retreat depend on the opportunity that they have been given.

### **Objective:**

Majority of the research has been by the men of the men and for the men. Hardly any research understands issues from gender perspective. This is due to stereotyping that men are fitter for certain jobs and skills than women, and that women are more 'delicate,' 'tender' and thus unfit for 'hard' jobs. These wrong notions must be removed in order to achieve gender equality, which is possible only through responsible gender sensitive research. With this hypothesis researchers have formulated objectives to study the impact of gender blindness on the research and to analyze the quality of the research in promoting gender equality.

### **Methodology:**

Researchers has undertaken study with the previous research on the area. The methods of review of existing literature have been used to study the objective. Researchers have reviewed studies on the specific area for the past five years.

Nicole Torres in her research entitled Women Benefit When They Downplay Gender, she observed that women focusing on gender blindness had more confidence and power compared to that of women's distinctiveness when she asked to rate the statements on importance of gender differences in research.

The study on the Prevalence and Implications of Gender Blindness in Quantitative Political Science Research (Aliza Forman-Rabinovici and Hadas Mandel, 2022) found that in political science the prevalence of gender blindness impacts the results and outcomes.

The research on the Blind to Bias: Benefits of Gender-Blindness for STEM Stereotyping has observed that Women are being underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields (Ashley E.Martin, Katherine W.Phillips, 2019). With increase in women researchers there is chance to reduce bias against and in reducing stereotyping of women in STEM.

## Discussion:

Researchers can disclose the fact that women cultural disadvantages are being one of the reasons for women to be lagging behind, but it does not mean that they are intellectually weak. Women are denied their opportunities since their childhood hence obviously this makes difference between men and women in competing each other. When opportunities are given equally, performance would be equal or even more by women. Research needs to analyze these issues otherwise girls will really lose their confidence and country would lose half of its human resources as long as myth prevails.

According to social role theory (Eagly, 1997) the historic division of labor between men and women placed them into different social roles, where men took on autonomous tasks (e.g., hunting) and women took on communal tasks (e.g., child-rearing). These roles created divergent stereotypes about men and women, where men were associated with agency (e.g., assertive, competitive) and women with communality. Although these roles are no longer necessary for the functioning of society, these stereotypes continue to be pervasive, persistent, and resistant to change.

Paradoxically many researchers just come to stereotyped conclusions. Say for example ‘women in high positions are very scanty, it is men who always shoulder the key positions’; ‘Women are lagging behind’ etc. But the responsible research should explore the factors that are preventing women from reaching the higher rungs of the ladder. As it is already discussed, stereotyped traits are reinforced on women to take care of their kith and kin for which she has to devote much time. High-level jobs require extremely long hours, women’s devotion to family makes it impossible for them to put in those many hours, and their careers suffer as a result. In a 2012 survey of more than 6,500 Harvard Business School alumni from many different industries, 73% of men and 85% of women invoked it to explain women’s stalled advancement.

Another important where research fails to realize or recognize women’s contribution to the family and society is unpaid work at home. Unpaid domestic work is an important aspect of productive activities and an indispensable factor that contributes to the well-being of household and economy. However, the predominance of women in domestic work and keeping them out of ‘economic activities’ put unpaid domestic work under the shadow of invisibility, outside the production boundaries, and further outside the purview of economic policy.

It is known fact that majority of Indian women confined to their homes and do most of all household chores. However, their labour not counted as work because it is unpaid. It must be understood that if the same job is done outside, it would be remunerated. Even Census also considers home makers as non-worker. According to a report published on Republic World in January 2018, the research by the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** suggests that India's GDP can grow by 27 per cent if women's participation in the economy is raised to the same level as those of men. According to a 2018 World Bank report, the labour force participation rate (LFPR) among females in India was 26.97 in 2018 in India. This invisibility of female labour in national income accounting eventually provoked a backlash. While pushing for female domestic labour to be economically quantified, scholar-activists like the Italian-born philosopher Silvia Federici, argued that male “economic” production was impossible without women’s uncompensated “non-economic” labour. This is very much true. When women do not work in social reproduction, besides performing reproductive role, how can a man go out and involve in productive work. This needs to be realized. All these required a separate methodologies and tools to understand the hidden facts behind scanty number of women in mainstream. Hence research should bring the facts in to limelight.

Research should address the fundamental knowledge gap by incorporating women's non-market contributions into the economy and feeding this knowledge back into policy making.

Work participation ratio is yet another example where women's work is not valued and taken into national accounts because of absence of gender sensitive research and proper scientific tools to calculate their labour. Worldwide, women carry out twice as much unpaid domestic and care work, including raising children, caring for sick or elderly family members, and managing the household. This "gender chore gap" limits women's choices, as it impedes their ability to obtain formal education, secure good jobs, and achieve equal pay. Indeed, though women around the world actually work more than men in total (including both paid and unpaid work), they earn one quarter less, on average, hold only one quarter of executive positions in the private sector, and occupy less than one quarter of all seats in national parliaments. Only half of working-age women worldwide are in the paid labour force, compared to more than three quarters of men.

Responsible research should not be simply collecting and analyzing data but understanding the factors behind such results. Hence, it is imperative of any researcher to wear unique human value lens to connect research and reality. Research should not merely produce degree holders; it should possess a human touch and fruits of it should reach the society and meet the needs of the day like understanding issues from gender perspective to promote gender equality. So, policy makers and educational institutions must take utmost care to impart gender sensitivity among researcher's students to promote responsible sustainable research and innovation useful to society both locally and globally.

Unless urgent action is taken to remove these constraints and change these attitudes, there can be no hope of achieving gender equality in near future

## Conclusion

Institutions and individuals should incorporate gender aspect in every research and promotion of women researchers will surely bring in-depth understanding of both genders' needs, behaviors, and attitudes. It also contributes to the production of goods and services better suited to potential markets. Research is not simply for gradation; it should bring a human touch and innovations of research must fulfil the desirability of community and meet the needs of the day like understanding issues through gender lens to promote gender equality. Policy makers and educational institutions pay greatest attention to impart gender sensitive education among students and to promote responsible researcher's with more sustainable research and innovation useful to society universally.

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