

## Gender Equality and Women Empowerment to Sustain Social Integrity

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### Abstract:

Moral standards, cultural values, honesty are the terms which are deep rooted in our society and when we combine these terms social integrity appears. Integration means to combine all those things which are not similar in nature or having various characteristics as a whole. Thus, social integration is a process in which members of a society having different religion, caste, culture, gender participate so that peaceful social relations can be maintained. The purpose of this article is to discuss in detail about social integrity, various problems that members of a society are facing due to disintegration and what steps should be taken by people to resolve this issue. This article will also discuss about how important is gender equality is in today's scenario. It is the view that there should not be any kind of discrimination on the basis of gender as both men and women should be treated equally. The various problems regarding gender discrimination and to find out the solutions so that social integrity should be sustained are included in this article. It further highlights the importance of women empowerment which refers that women must also be included in the society, in the decision making process, they should be treated equally and should be given equal important in every field as they also have right to progress in a society. The social, economic, political and legal strength should be increased so that the status of women can be improved and they should be educated enough so that they can know about their rights and can use them judiciously. This article will also discuss about various issues that are related to women empowerment and how these issues can be resolved by each and every member of the society so that we can sustain the social integrity.

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### I. SOCIAL INTEGRATION: A STRONG BOND

The existence of human beings is not possible without the society in which he takes birth, gets education and becomes a man or woman who further contributes in the society for his as well as the society's development. A society consists of group of people with different religions, culture, tradition, gender; caste and creed live together happily and share everything with each other without any kind of discrimination. Everyone work collaboratively due to which society gives them benefits in many ways but not only on individual basis. When all these people live together, share everything together and share all the benefits together is social integration. In other words social integration is a process or principle by which individuals that live in a society are related to each other. It is a dynamic process where all members participate together and maintain a peaceful environment which ultimately leads to peaceful social relations. But how can we maintain social integrity in society? How can we bring social integration in society? When social integration is not maintained in society by its members it results in social disintegration in which the social support system declines and there is a breakdown in the society. Due to disintegration the larger system starts getting reduced and gets weakened and gets divided into small sections. But society does not promote disintegration; it is designed in such a way which combines and integrates all its members. To bring and maintain social integration in our society we have to give equal importance to all the people.

Equal importance should be given to all the religions, traditions, castes without any kind of disintegration in terms of anything and **social inclusion** must be present in the society. When we talk about social inclusion it must include poor as well as the disabled as they also have equal rights to live in the society.

Dimension	Elements	
<b>Spatial</b>	Public spaces Private spaces Physical location	Geographic distance Economic distance
<b>Relational</b>	Social distance Emotional Connectedness	Recognition solidarity
<b>Functional</b>	Capabilities Developmental Capacities	Assets/liabilities/talents/ potential human capital
<b>Participation</b>	Freedom	Empowerment

Source: [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/meetings/egm6\\_social\\_integration/documents/Jeanotte\\_Concepts.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/meetings/egm6_social_integration/documents/Jeanotte_Concepts.pdf)

According to the above table social integration can be sustained only when every individual should be given spatial freedom to move anywhere without any fear. Everyone should be given recognition and emotional connectedness must be present. Each and every individual has some capabilities and must have developmental capacities and for this this must be given freedom to work anywhere they want.

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Another thing after social inclusion, **social cohesion** must be there to enhance the social integration in our society. Social cohesion is the willingness of all the members of a society to cooperate with each other so that they can survive and prosper. A society having cohesiveness is one:



- Which gives equal value and respect to all the diverse people
- Which has sense of belongingness, love and affection for each other
- Which consists of people of different backgrounds
- In which there does a strong relationship between each other and have mutual understand.

## II. GENDER EQUALITY TO SUSTAIN SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Gender equality is when across all the societies' equal rights and opportunities are given to both men and women whether it is the decision making process or participation in the society. To enable peaceful and prosperous world it is necessary to promote all these things. We must provide equal opportunities to girls and women so that they can access to education, work and health care. It also refers to the priorities; interests and needs of men and women, girls and boys should be taken into consideration and should not be differentiated on the basis of diversity of men and women. But in this modern time also there are certain societies or communities which still discriminate between men and women and there is an unequal treatment between them which leads to gender inequality. In those societies men are given more priority than women whether it is health, education, politics etc. this inequality is a major social cause which will effect and effecting India's sex ratio, the economic conditions, women's education and health. Gender inequality is also a major barrier of human development. From the past till now girls and women have made a major stride but still they are at the verge of finding their own identities thus looking for equality and have a negative impact for development of their capabilities and also looking for the freedom of choice.

There is an index which is used to measure the inequality in the society every year so that it can be abolished is the Gender Inequality Index (GII). GII used to measure the inequality in terms of three aspects:

- Reproductive health
- Empowerment
- Economic status

Indicator	India's Global Rank (year)	Source
<b>GII:</b> Gender Inequality Index	<b>132/148</b> (2012)	United Nations Development Program ( <b>UNDP</b> )
<b>GGI:</b> Gender Gap Index	<b>101/136</b> (2013)	World Economic Forum ( <b>WEF</b> )
<b>SIGI:</b> Social Institutions and Gender Index	<b>56/86</b> (2012)	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development ( <b>OECD</b> )

India's Global Rank on various Gender Inequality Indices.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender\\_inequality\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_inequality_in_India)

According to the Human Development Report 2015, India ranks 130 out of 155 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) for 2014 and amongst South-Asian countries it is better than only Afghanistan which is at 152. This index focuses on the gender indicators in terms of health which is recorded by the maternal mortality ratio, birth rates, education and various economic activities.

We have to develop such norms and standards nationally as well as internationally so that women's and girls' human rights should be enforced properly which will help us to strengthen the sustainable development. Sustainable development is a concept which includes economic, environmental and social development which ensures the well-being of all the individuals thus maintaining the dignity, integrity and social equality and promotes the social justice to all the human beings in present and future as well. Sustainable development provides opportunity to all the individuals so that they can lead the lives they want, with full freedom and by practicing their rights when they are required. In 2015 United Nations has launched a sustainable development portal which focuses on various issues including gender equality and sustainable development. According to the UN Millennium Development Goals while in many parts of the world has achieved the gender equality but still there are many parts in which still women and girls are suffering with such kind of discrimination and even violence. Gender inequality is a way to maintain a peaceful environment, a sustainable world and lay a foundation of peace but not only a fundamental human right that is to be applied.

### III. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As gender equality has started taking a place all over the world and to reduce the discrimination between men and women everyone has started supporting the women in the society so that they can also prove themselves and can establish their own identity. This support to the women is termed as women empowerment. It refers to the increasing and promoting social, economic, political and legal strength of the women so that they can feel confident to move on their own and can get to know about their rights which can be used when they require. They can claim their rights when:

- They want to live freely and lead a life with dignity
- Then can move out of their houses and can make them stand at workplaces.
- They can decide on their own and make choices freely
- They can gain equal rights to gain education
- They can have social status in the society.

### IV. REFERENCES

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