

Promoting Gender Equality through International Law: Advancements and Challenges

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Abstract

The liberties and safeguards for women and girls are laid forth in international human rights accords like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). States who ratify these agreements are legally required to put policies into site to restrict harassment opposed to women and promote women's equality in a range of social contexts, including governance, labor, health care, and academia. To encourage gender equality through international law, this literature review analyses both the successes and failures. As stated in numerous international agreements and treaties, gender equality is a vital human right. The study looks at how far gender equality has come in the world, how international law might be used to solve gender gaps, and the ongoing issues that prevent gender equality from being achieved. The study also looks at significant court rulings and cases that have helped advance women's rights and the recognizing the existence of gender-based discrimination is against the rules of international law. To incorporate gender perspectives into policy and decision-making processes, it also examines how gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting have emerged. The paper cites several obstacles to the successful advancement of gender equality through international law despite these developments. Gaps in execution and enforcement of cultural and societal norms that uphold discrimination against women, and the prevalence of gender-based violence are some of these issues. The report emphasizes that to solve these challenges, there needs to be better cooperation between nations, international organizations, civil society, and other stakeholders.

Keywords: CEDAW, Gender Discrimination, Gender Equality, Istanbul Convention, Sustainable Development Goals, Women Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Global progress in women's and girls' rights and empowerment depends on promoting gender equality through international law. International legal frameworks act as thorough tools to combat violence, inequality, and discrimination based on gender as well as to advance laws that support gender equality. International law is essential in determining social norms and assuring the protection and advancement of rights because it recognizes the importance of female parity within a legal framework. Girls and women are entitled to protections and privileges outlined in international agreements on rights for humans like the CEDAW [1]. States that sign these agreements have a legal responsibility to implement measures to end discrimination against women and achieve gender parity in a range of areas, notably governance, the workplace, wellness, and academia. Discrimination based on gender is prohibited by the concept of non-discrimination, which is inscribed in numerous international human rights documents, notably the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” [2]. This principle serves as the cornerstone for ensuring that women and girls have equal rights and opportunities, including security from assault based on gender, access to medical care and schooling, and fair employment opportunities. The international community considers gender-based abuse to be a violation of human rights. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and associated agreements call on states to take action to stop, look into, and condemn assaults on women, including intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and harmful traditions like female genital mutilation and compelled marriage.

The relevance of women's economic empowerment as a way of achieving gender equality is recognized by international law. The CEDAW places a strong emphasis on providing women with equal access to social security, benefits, and employment. It supports initiatives reducing the gender wage gap, support female entrepreneurship, and guarantee equitable access to career development. The significance of women's political

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representation and engagement is acknowledged by international law. The Convention guarantees women equal access to the vote and public office. In addition, to support long-term peace and security, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security urges women to participate in peace processes and decision-making. While international law offers a solid framework for advancing gender equality, the willingness of governments to carry out and uphold these legal commitments is essential for effectiveness. Holding governments accountable and promoting the realization of gender equality through international law also requires the support of civil society organizations, advocacy groups, and individuals.

Motivation and Challenges for the Literature Study

A fundamental human right, gender equality is recognised in numerous international law documents. To protect and advance human rights values globally, a literature study on developments and difficulties in achieving gender equality through international law is being conducted. Policymakers can assess the efficacy of current legislative frameworks, pinpoint gaps and restrictions, and create well-informed improvement measures by performing a literature review. A literature review helps to create and spread information about gender equality through international law. It aids in the synthesis of current research, theories, and practises, making this knowledge available to academics, practitioners, and policymakers engaged in the subject. Through international treaties like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), numerous nations have committed to advancing gender equality. Assessment of the progress accomplished and the areas requiring additional work can be done by looking at developments and difficulties in this context. It can improve people's lives and help create more inclusive and equitable societies to know how international law can successfully address gender inequality.

However, doing a literature review on this subject has its share of difficulties. Various legal frameworks, institutions, and legal instruments make up the complex field of international law. Researchers may find it difficult to navigate this intricacy and comprehend the pertinent legal principles and methods, especially if they lack legal expertise. The cultural, social, and legal circumstances that differ between different nations and regions have an impact on the complicated subject of gender equality. Conducting an extensive literature review can be difficult due to the lack of data and research resources that are readily available and accessible. The scope and depth of the study may be impacted by the fact that some places or regions may lack data or research on particular topics related to gender equality and international law. Researcher must keep up with the most recent scholarly work and changes in the field due to new legal developments, governmental initiatives, and growing difficulties.

Scope and Organization of the Survey

The scope of the literature survey on advancements and challenges in promoting gender equality through international law would involve reviewing the existing literature related to the role of international law in promoting gender equality among the community and challenges regarding the framed international laws on gender equality and the difficulties in implementation. The previous section depicted the overview of international human rights promoting gender equality and its consequences and the motivation and challenges of the present study on literature survey. The advancements in promoting gender equality through international law and its challenges were discussed in the following sections based on the literature survey.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL LAWS IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND ITS ADVANCEMENTS

By providing a framework and guidelines that forbid gender discrimination, international laws play a crucial part in advancing gender equality. They urge states to establish gender-responsive laws and regulations, deal with gender-based violence, guarantee equitable access to healthcare and education, and abolish discriminatory practices. In order to hold states responsible for their pledges and promote global collaboration for the advancement of gender equality, international law also creates monitoring systems. Additionally, they influence society attitudes and behaviours by establishing rules and guidelines that support gender equality.

Friedman 2018 [3] mentioned that since the global framework for human rights has been acknowledged by the majority of countries and bears its accepted standards, feminine social liberty advocates have come to grasp the potential of this structure in legitimizing political concerns. Many of the authorized representatives were pendants from the International Movement that read, "Women's Values Are Fundamental to Humanity." "The International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC), the Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), and the International YWCA", collaborated on a worldwide protest campaign in 1991 as a result of the aforementioned frame. A worldwide campaign for feminine rights as human beings has unmistakably emerged, beginning with the regional upsurge of female mobilization around issues concerning human rights and culminating in the recognition of feminine fundamental liberties in the Vienna Declaration.

Cornwall and Rivas 2015 [4] stated that to achieve rights for women on the global development list, feminists deployed the notions of "gender equality" and "women's empowerment" and their attempts were a tremendous success. The field of global growth had completely accepted these ideas. The rhetoric of women's equal rights and empowering women was prevalent, taking pride in their position amongst their top objectives for development amid international NGOs, funding authorities, and multilateral institutions. However, these phrases have lost their intellectual and political heft, and their application as the main framework for requesting equal treatment and rights was compromised. They made the argument that novel frameworks were required if the post-2015 strategy was to fulfill its pledge of gender equality and engage with and support the wider fight for equitable societies by carefully analyzing the growth pathways of these phrases.

Alvarez 2018 [5] depicted that the majority of the publications created by provincial and local organizations throughout the Beijing process highlighted the "plural," "multicultural," and "pluriethnic" nature of Latin American and Caribbean cultures and campaigns for women. A comparatively recent development—the feminist voluntary organization (NGO)—became popular and extremely divisive in the 1990s, maintaining and expressing the structural webs of the broad Latin American feminist movement sector. The adoption of several of the most culturally and socially permissible aspects of the feminist ideology encouraged the greater specialization and professionalism of an increasing variety of feminist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) committed to influencing both international and national policy decisions.

Murdie and Peksen 2015 [6] asserted that WROs were effective allies in raising the profile of women, especially when they use a specific lobbying strategy called "naming and shaming" of NGO's and claimed that it would be difficult for the government to protect women's rights that are internationally recognized, a focused "naming and shaming" exposure campaign was required. In a global statistical framework from 1991 to 2005, they investigated the implications of the assertion utilizing a new collection of data on the lobbying efforts involving more than 1,595 WROs and showed that WRO humiliation had the potential to enhance women's economic and social freedoms while exerting little to no effect on their ability to vote. The sheer existence of WROs does not seem to be having a substantial influence on the rights of women and implied that governing bodies were more likely to advocate for and uphold rights that do not jeopardize their political stature and authority, such as gender rights in society and the economy when they were subject to pressure from lobbying organizations.

Vijayarasa 2021 [7] centered around the concept that efforts to gauge progress approaching the objective of gender parity proved both more effective and significant if rooted in the rights of women criteria set in CEDAW, a strategy that had been rarely used. The study promoted the "quantification" of CEDAW to increase responsibility for enshrining women's liberties in national laws and provided useful strategies employing the Gender Legislative Index and also addressed the flaws in more recent quantitative methods and their relation to multiple kinds of prejudice.

Goetz and Jenkins 2018 [8] explored a portion of the primarily empirical contemporary political theory research and addressed the factors that influence the efficacy of egalitarian gender legislation campaigning. The power of feminist organizations and the kind of resistance that their requests for legislation gave birth to strategies and had the drawback of underestimating the tactical considerations adopted by feminist policy favors in justifying the achievements. The work depicted that paying close consideration to policy entrepreneurs' tactical ability was necessary to comprehend the range of the results attained by gender equality activists.

George 2020 [9] explored the effect of enactment in 1994 on nationwide press articles about the nation's human rights rhetoric on gender bias and showed how adoption changed the vocabulary used in coverage of gender equality in the national media to more frequently allude to the agreement and phrase rights abuses in the terminology of "discrimination" via an investigation into stating in nationalistic daily. The study presented a novel way to investigate the "influence" of ratifying an agreement on human rights, even while official modifications to legislation and regulations have just recently been minimal by following these links between the treaty and relevant information in regional media.

Mariappuram 2015 [10] analyzed the impact of the CEDAW on the rights of Muslim women, with a particular focus on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Arab women are frequently the target of prejudice, which is frequently attributed to Islam and the application of Sharia law. In order to determine how much CEDAW contributed to the advancement of women's rights in politics and society in each nation, the study looked at four case studies: "Sudan, Morocco, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia".

Edgell 2017 [11] analyzed the effect of foreign aid on developing nations' acceptance of regulations encouraging gender parity, emphasizing two causal processes: enacting gender targets to demonstrate a dedication to global norms, either as a means of securing future aid or as an end in itself; and inspiring the implementation of equal opportunity allocations by effective foreign aid interventions intended for empowering women. The analysis of information on foreign aid obligations to 173 non-OECD countries from 1974 to 2012 revealed that, whereas aid programs aimed at empowering women have an impact on quota acceptance to some degree, nations that are dependent on American external aid were far more likely to use gender quotas as signaling tools than as a consequence of efforts to liberalize their economies.

Cannoy *et al.* 2020 [12] related the adoption of the CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), two accords, to health metrics that show the conditions for children and women's wellness, were getting better and demonstrated that both CRC and CEDAW have verifiable substantial impacts spanning a range of pertinent health metrics employing two novel approaches, ITSA and Joinpoint analysis, and have generated effects in nations irrespective of area, degree of expansion, and policy category. Almost every country in the globe was a party to each of the aforementioned regulations, which demonstrates their power as global standards and makes them of specific importance.

Rubin and Bartle 2021 [13] analyzed the GRB initiatives' accomplishments in different nations and pinpoint the main reasons for either successful or unsuccessful execution. The elements they discovered, were comparable to the factors that account for the successful implementation of preceding budget adjustments that prioritized efficacy and efficiency and gave a framework to comprehend GRB campaigns, even though the equitable purpose of GRB sets it apart from past budget reforms. The achievement of GRB efforts demonstrated that the authorities can leverage their finances to achieve social equality goals even though gender representation was merely a component of promoting equity.

Barrientos *et al.* 2019 [14] investigated the efficacy of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) for promoting women rights as employees in Global Value Chains (GVCs) and put forward that an organizational structure featuring all sectors and social actors was essential for preventing bias against women in GVCs and progressing gender-neutral conduct to equality due diligence.

Novitz 2020 [15] explored that the International Labour Organization (ILO) recognized the value of enhancing worker representation and realized opportunities to capitalize on them. In 2019, the ILO embarked on various initiatives, such as the "Global Commission on the Future of Work, the ILO Centenary Declaration, and Convention No. 190", all of which emphasized the importance of broader access to collective worker representation. These efforts aligned with the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" and offered an expanded platform for the ILO's involvement in promoting social sustainability. Notably, SDG 8 highlighted the significance of "decent work," while SDG Target 16.7 emphasized the necessity of inclusivity and involvement in all stages of decision-making. These factors created favorable conditions for the ILO to engage with social sustainability through its commitment to the SDGs.

Raynolds 2021 [16] emphasized the gender typical categories of important farming credentials, illuminating the disparate strategies used by programs like Fair-Trade USA and Rainforest, which prioritize equal opportunity in job opportunities, and others like Fairtrade International and UTZ, which integrate wider equality for women. The author concentrated on analyzing the Fairtrade certification and working encounters at certified flower plantations in Ecuador by a thorough field investigation utilizing qualitative and quantitative methodologies and demonstrated how Fairtrade certification attempts to improve the welfare of female employees by tackling their professional needs, involving equal job prospects, and therapies.

Luna and Whetstone 2022 [17] assessed the implementation of UNSC 1325 on women, peace, and security (WPS) as well as its follow-up bills which consider equal inclusion of women in resolving conflicts, conciliation, and afterward advancement, and revealed that grassroots women's real-world encounters encourage the tenets, even though that they are typically excluded from 1325 processes. The article makes the case that implementing 1325 and NAPs locally in a bottom-up, participatory manner was essential in advancing the WPS objective.

Dür and Keller 2018 [18] analyzed the effects of a week-long in-person interaction during the “AustrIndia-4QOL project's final phase” and looked at how Austrian and Indian students conceptualized equal rights for women and "decent employment and economic expansion" under the SDGs and whether their ideas changed after receiving exposure to different viewpoints. The results of the qualitative content assessment, which relied on brief texts that the pupils had written at the inception and end of the teamwork in response to particular prompts, showed that their understanding had significantly increased and that there had been a noticeable change in how they viewed subjects that were connected to the mentioned SDGs. The encounter with differing perspectives during the collaboration appeared to have influenced in some way the students' evolving understanding and suggested that face-to-face interactions and engagement with peers from different cultural backgrounds have a positive impact on enhancing awareness and altering perspectives on SDGs.

Saiz and Donald 2017 [19] assessed SDG10's humanitarian rights-related benefits and drawbacks, as well as its societal susceptibility and execution chances, and discussed how legal norms, regulations, and mechanisms served as guidance and lead activities regarding these pledges, particularly how social liberties evaluation processes served an important part in tracking achievements and offering an environment for reliability. Now is critical for equality campaigners and organizations, especially those at the grassroots level, to grab the chance to have an impact on how the legislation is implemented and to lay an argument for responsibility using the system of human rights.

Pimpa 2019 [20] examined the effects of CSR initiatives on gender parity (through employment, sustainability, instruction, and financial pursuits) and the daily lives of female miners, residents, and their families in a working group in Southern Laos and demonstrated that CSR initiatives emphasizing equal treatment at work, career advancement, and additional financial possibilities might affect mining firms' propensity for social responsibility.

Parr 2016 [21] concentrated on the SDGs' feminist theme as an illustration of how the MDGs have changed in light of the SDGs. According to his argument, the SDGs encompassed a more ambitious and revolutionary vision that better represents the multifaceted issues and calls for fundamental changes in the world's economic system, and additionally tackles some of the MDGs' most significant inadequacies. The SDGs additionally railed against the MDG method of creating broad objectives and the mistaken notion that clarity, tangibility, and precision are strengths. The SDGs have a chance to be an increasingly revolutionary agenda, but their execution will require sustained campaigning on each one of the goals to keep governments accountable.

Zabaniotou 2020 [22] deliberated and realized the achievement of learning potential and the promotion of gender equality within the “Mediterranean Engineering Schools Network (MESN)”, through a tailored strategy. The strategy included various steps, such as highlighting the interaction between sustainability and gender equality, leveraging the synergies between SDG-5 and other SDGs, incorporating equal rights for women in initiatives for equitable growth, and deploying the network's personnel. Furthermore, backing an initiative in the EU played a crucial role in this endeavor. Through the creation of a practice community and the unanimous

approval of a gender equality policy statement, member-institution leaders demonstrated their commitment to the SDGs.

Tiessen and Swan 2018 [23] examined the efforts taken toward a feminist international strategy between 2015 and 2017, paying special attention to the way of approach departs from that of earlier Canadian administrations. Examined are the responses of civil society organizations (CSOs), especially in the light of global security and peacekeeping initiatives, as well as early pledges of greater gender parity programs. Scholarships in feminist politics and foreign affairs have long been in favor of a feminist global strategy. The outcomes of the feminist research were examined in this part in connection to the discourse, rhetoric, and feminist policy objectives seen so far.

Sen 2019 [24] investigated the significance of feminist mobilization in influencing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) gender equality agenda, with an emphasis on Goal 5, which seeks to accomplish gender equality and inspire all women and girls and also takes into account the inclusion of gender-related focuses throughout other SDGs. Three main factors—"the socioeconomic and political circumstances, organizations, and movement-building processes", have impacted the direction and efficacy of this strategy. In comparison to the MDGs, feminist mobilization has made tremendous progress towards the SDGs, but a number of obstacles still need to be overcome. These involve the difficulties with funding and political resistance to the liberties of women and social justice. The presentation made the case for a thorough comprehension of feminist mobilization within the larger historical framework of gender inequality and breaches of girls' and women's human rights, as well as continuing struggles against these atrocities. Continued feminist mobilization was deemed necessary to address these persisting barriers and further the agenda of the SDGs.

Soyza and Zipp 2019 [25] evaluated the efforts of key stakeholders such as UNESCO, the (former) UNOSDP, the IWG, the IOC on "Women and Sport", and other organizations to advance gender parity in and outside of the sports world. However, critics argued that progress has been slow and uneven, resulting in the continued marginalization of generations of girls and women. A renewed initiative has emerged, aiming to establish a "UNESCO Global Observatory" for Sport, exercise, and physical education for women. The facility aims to serve as a focal point for these collective actions, fusing action into a single platform. Through this initiative, stakeholders aspired to create a more cohesive and impactful approach toward empowering women, and addressing the persistent obstacles girls and women confront in the world of sports.

Scott *et al.* 2022 [26] proposed a "Framework for combining Rights and Equality (FIRE)", an integrative concept that creates linkages among egalitarian and rights-based solutions to Climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and explained how FIRE was created, examined, and improved throughout a five-year global development and technological collaboration program throughout Asia. The authors discussed restrictions tackled by FIRE while acknowledging that gender parity and HRBA concepts have guided programs for development for centuries and emphasized the significance of an architecture that helps government agencies to incorporate sexual rights and equality into processes while embracing the vital contribution of grassroots organizations in promoting reforms on behalf of underrepresented groups.

Table 1. Review of advancements in promoting gender equality through international law.

Citation No.	Author	Year	Advancements in gender equality	The Implication of the Study
[3]	Friedman	2018	Human rights framework for advocacy.	Human rights legitimize political concerns.
[4]	Cornwall & Rivas	2015	Critique of gender equality rhetoric.	New frameworks for gender equality are needed.
[5]	Alvarez	2018	Rise of feminist NGOs in Latin America.	Specialization and professionalism of feminist NGOs.
[6]	Murdie & Peksen	2015	Effectiveness of "naming and shaming" tactic.	WRO campaigns enhance women's rights.
[7]	Vijayarasa	2021	Quantifying CEDAW for progress.	Using CEDAW criteria for gender parity.
[8]	Goetz & Jenkins	2018	Factors influencing gender legislation campaigning.	Consideration of tactical ability for successful activism.
[9]	George	2020	Effect of the treaty on media language.	Ratifying agreements influences media language on gender equality.
[10]	Mariappuram	2015	Impact of CEDAW on Arab women.	CEDAW influenced women's rights in MENA region countries.

[11]	Edgell	2017	Foreign aid and gender equality.	Foreign aid influences gender quota adoption in developing countries.
[12]	Cannoy et al.	2020	Impact of CEDAW and CRC on health metrics.	CEDAW and CRC have positive effects on health metrics globally.
[13]	Rubin & Bartle	2021	Assessing the success of GRB initiatives.	GRB initiatives contribute to social equality goals through budget reforms.
[14]	Barrientos et al.	2019	UNGP and women's rights in GVCs.	The governance framework is crucial for combating gender discrimination in GVCs.
[15]	Novitz	2020	ILO's initiatives for worker representation.	ILO's efforts align with SDGs for promoting social sustainability.
[16]	Raynolds	2021	Gender standards in agricultural certifications.	Certification programs address gender equality in different ways.
[17]	Luna & Whetstone	2022	Grassroots impact on UNSCR 1325.	Bottom-up implementation advances the WPS agenda.
[18]	Dür & Keller	2018	Face-to-face collaboration on SDGs.	Cultural exchange enhances awareness of SDGs.
[19]	Saiz & Donald	2017	Assessing SDG10's benefits and drawbacks.	Human rights evaluation for equality and accountability.
[20]	Pimpa	2019	CSR initiatives and gender parity.	CSR initiatives influence social responsibility in mining firms.
[21]	Parr	2016	Feminist critique of SDGs.	Sustainable development requires sustained campaigning.
[22]	Zabaniotou	2020	Gender equality in Mediterranean Engineering Schools Network (MESN).	The tailored strategy promotes gender equality in MESN.
[23]	Tiessen & Swan	2018	Feminist international strategy analysis.	Examination of feminist policy objectives and discourse.
[24]	Sen	2019	Feminist mobilization and SDGs.	Feminist mobilization shapes the SDG agenda for gender equality.
[25]	Soysa & Zipp	2019	Advancing gender equality in sports.	Establishment of a global observatory for women in sports.
[26]	Scott et al.	2022	Integrating rights and equality in DRR and CCA.	FIRE framework promotes gender equality and right

CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL LAW

The advancement of gender equality has some obstacles due to international law. The primary barrier to the widespread implementation of laws requiring equal treatment for women is the stark difference in social and cultural norms between nations. Furthermore, it's possible that there aren't sufficient processes for accountability in place for breaking international agreements and regulations. Discrimination and bias inside legal systems may provide significant obstacles because gender-based preconceived notions and beliefs may still prevail. Furthermore, progress is impeded by conservative organizations' opposition and political inertia in several countries. Finally, a comprehensive and nuanced approach is required to deal with interconnectedness and the unique challenges marginalized groups face when pursuing gender equality. Addressing these challenges calls for international collaboration, persistent campaigning, and legal reform.

Esquivel 2016 [27] presented a feminist hegemony evaluation of the SDGs approach and results. Most see numerous potentials for advancement in equal treatment and the dignity, even for alteration, in the SDGs. However, there are plenty of arguments to be skeptical about because the 2030 Agenda for SDG's was not often supported by sufficient speech, transparent regulations, or adequate finance. It was expected to be hardly a technical exercise to realize the "transformative potential" of the plan and that was especially relevant to the complete consciousness and have to think about how the Agenda, the SDGs, and the execution strategies for them confront or strengthen underlying dynamics of power.

Davies and Bennett 2016 [28] examined the specific significance of the gender issue in discussions regarding worldwide wellness and the contribution that global equality law makes to promoting improved health conditions in times of emergency. Looking especially at the disease outbreaks, concerning situations was the dearth of involvement with rights-related terminology and the variety of experiences among women in the disaster regions, at a time when women-specific guidance ought to be offered. They discovered that there was still a gap among worldwide health recommendations being given and the observation of omnipresent fundamental gender disparities in the communities witnessing emergencies and remedies given at the beginning

of the crisis presupposes that women have access to financial, social, or legal means of exercising the autonomy outlined in worldwide guidance.

Roberts 2015 [29] investigated the rise of a political-economic movement known as "transnational business feminism" (TBF) over the past ten years. TBF is a joint endeavor involving a number of participants, including states, financial organizations, the UN, businesses, and NGOs. Its main emphasis is on stressing the "business case" for gender equality, which claims that investing in women may result in real advantages for households and neighborhoods as well as increase business revenue and competitiveness worldwide. TBF is unintentionally strengthening the power of corporations by utilizing a feminist historical dialectical perspective to shape knowledge about "gender" and "development." It claims that TBF encourages a simple and vitalized perspective ignoring the historical and structural causes that drive impoverishment and inequalities based on gender. It uses the Nike-led "Girl Effect" promotion as an instance to support its claim. TBF also unintentionally supports the neoliberal macroeconomic system that sustains gender-based and additional kinds of injustice by feminizing labour, reducing backing for communal reproduction, and fragmenting feminist challenges of neoliberalism.

Franzie 2018 [30] found out how nations uphold and safeguard the liberties outlined in the CEDAW and the investigation used a case research technique to analyze the gender equality policies of Sweden, Latvia, Libya, and the UAE. To ascertain if the rule of law affects state behavior, the UN's Universal Regular Assessment procedure, the signing of Supplementary Protocols, and contractual concerns were examined and discovered that a nation's behavior was not significantly influenced by international legislation. Instead, whether a state abides by the rules of global law depends on its customs and independence.

Runyan and Sanders 2021 [31] depicted the spreading advocacy for CEDAW, with a focus on the case of "Cincinnati", demonstrating the potential to advance women's rights principles. This movement tackles the challenge faced by the United States, which has not ratified important treaties like CEDAW. Cities for CEDAW aimed to bridge the gap by persuading communities to support and apply CEDAW norms and the strategy involves creating a local effect, where locally advancing momentum in politics creates downward strain, ultimately improving gender equity outcomes nationally. While the impact of Cities for CEDAW on local jurisdictions shows promise in enhancing honoring the liberties of women, its influence somewhat limited. Nonetheless, the movement served as a vital catalyst for promoting gender equality across the country and fostering a path toward comprehensive change at the national level.

Zaidi and Fordham 2021 [32] contended that despite progress being made in encouraging the female involvement in catastrophe planning and computing, the Sendai framework overall constituted an unused chance for tackling key gender-based concerns in DRR. The SFDRR was being implemented, and suggestions were given for addressing a number of its flaws. Describing a more nuanced conception of gender was one of them, as was improving the representation of women and sexual minorities in its metrics and execution materials, as well as a closer connection to various comparable legislative structures and metric networks.

Jones 2018 [33] revealed that one of the Convention's biggest flaws was the uncomfortable attachment to the idea of "gender," which has given rise to "profound ambiguity" concerning private abuse. All instances of sexual, emotional, physical, or economic abuse inside a family, intimate unit, or among ex-spouses or companions were considered instances of domestic assault, regardless of how the offender currently resides in the identical house as the victim. The Council of Europe has been striving to eradicate aggression against women for many years, particularly through the "European Court of Human Rights", which resulted in the Istanbul Convention. The Treaty, regarded as the most recent international agreement addressing abuse of women, was enacted in 2011 in Istanbul lacking a vote.

Kozłowska *et al.* 2022 [34] investigated how worldwide legal legislation addressed gendered slander based on the assertion that "sexist speech" and "sexist hate speech" ought to be distinguished in legal conversation considering that the latter is classified as an instance of assault towards women. Then, using the stances on hate speech generally as an instance of comparison, explored how two legitimate rights enforcement systems—the UN and the European Council—have responded to the phenomena of misogynistic racist remarks. Both systems were eager to confront sexist hate speech through the equal opportunity framework, particularly

combating assault regarding women, then they are to define hatred discourse following basic legislation on human rights. The authors made the case that it's crucial to identify and confront discriminatory remarks about women regardless of the scope of instruments for gender parity and the anti-hate expression paradigm created by multinational equality organizations.

Bosak and Vajda 2019 [35] examined how the Istanbul Convention was used politically in Croatia and its lengthy process of acceptance. An effective anti-ratification effort that exemplified the escalating global reaction against the rights of women led to the Convention's approval in 2018, which happens to be the year when it was passed. The conservative movement underlying this effort, which continues to be strong despite its revised objective of leaving the Convention through the voting process, propagated an array of falsehoods regarding the Convention, chief among them being the claim that the Convention would establish an unfavorable "gender ideology."

Gunes 2021 [36] discussed the Istanbul Convention's duties for parties to fight and avert assault towards women and "Turkey's Law No. 6284", which was passed in response. To help women and their households, the law strives to offer safeguards and preventative measures. The nation, nevertheless, has had difficulty putting effective solutions to domestic violence into practice. The paper claimed that, despite Turkey's efforts to enact the Istanbul Convention, the country's male-dominated mindset and preference for household unity and harmony instead of women as "individuals" impedes efficient remedies to gender abuse.

Barrera 2021 [37] identified impediments for perpetrators of sexual assault that comply with the regulatory structure by looking at Colombia's criminal statute on offenses of sexual misconduct with goals such as analyzing legal protections for women sufferers of domestic violence. They employed an interpretive methodology to conduct the investigation and evaluate the law. The findings revealed that despite sexual assault being a sort of crime, legal safeguards are ineffective because victims face significant challenges that have detrimental effects, such as a breach of basic human rights.

Pineiro and Kitada 2020 [38] exposed that a tailored solution to the detrimental issue of gender inequality was required, according to an analysis of the currently in place measures to address sexual misconduct from a socio-legal viewpoint. A zero-tolerance approach must be firmly enforced to realize a work environment free from unfair treatment and improve the efficient hiring and ongoing employment of women sailors because the conventional unwillingness of maritime workers to bring attention to complaints aboard was exacerbated in circumstances of sexual discrimination.

Kreft 2017 [39] investigated the degree to which gender equality is being implemented in UN peacekeeping mandates based on an empirical study of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and suggested that "UNSCR 1325" has led to an increase in gender-related provisions in mandates, albeit selectively. Statistical analysis of a comprehensive dataset spanning 1948 to 2014, covering all 71 UN peacekeeping operations, indicated that mandates with gender mainstreaming were more likely to be seen in conflicts characterized by high levels of sexual violence. Consequently, it appears that when creating gender-responsive peacekeeping missions, actors tend to respond to the prominence of specific gender issues, such as sexual violence, rather than adhering to the gender equality standards that are omnipresent as stipulated in "UNSCR 1325".

Jansson and Eduards 2016 [40] noted that conventional protection settings face difficulties when debating and enacting gender and female fragility in the context of protection and examined the endangered situation when female fragility is up for debate by juxtaposing the UNSC resolutions on feminist philosophy for women, security, and peace. The paper distinguishes between a pair of solutions for the security/gender connection: "gendering safety, which involves implementing concepts addressing gender-sensitive policies and equitable participation, and securing gender", which progresses by situating sexual assault and rape in the context of war laws. Although both actions are promoted in light of women's fragility, they legitimize war and the male soldier, and both strategies eliminate the roles of gender.

Garcia and Masselot 2015 [41] assessed the inconsistency regarding the EU's internal and exterior legal obligations to promote gender parity in all of its behaviours, as well as the lack of a practical application of this ideal within the context of trade agreements with the Asian region. A twofold obstacle to the spread of equal

opportunity norms was created by the EU's desire to promote positive financial relations with important Asian emerging markets and the Asian countries' consistent opposition to the incorporation of standards in Free Trade Agreements. Ultimately, the EU's worldwide "actorness" was seriously questioned and women in Asia were not served by their inability to include equal treatment for women standards in trade agreements with Asian nations.

Koehler 2016 [42] assessed the incorporation of strategies for equal treatment of women and men in addition to equitable growth in accordance with ecological limits in the new SDG agenda established by the UN. The SDGs lack vision and an organized approach to policy, according to this study. The document examines various agreements that have been ratified worldwide that deal with issues related to women's equality and equitable growth, and it offers pertinent strategies to remedy these problems. Beyond the limitations of the present economic theory, the emphasis is on determining the entire set of policies necessary to achieve equal opportunities for all women. According to the author, gender and ecological justice may be advanced through the SDGs in an innovative and radical way.

Alarcón and Cole 2019 [43] examined from the viewpoint of women, the relationships connecting the SDGs and tourism and conducted a critical examination of how SDG 5 pertains to tourism and how gender parity and tourism were interconnected with the remaining SDGs. Then, from the perspective of women, examined the connections between the SDGs and the growth of tourism and advocated that in the absence of addressing equality in a significant and underlying way, likelihood of contributing to the SDGs will be diminished and feasible tourism will continue to be an unattainable "pot of gold." They offered a few strategies to assist tourism enterprises in improving their efficacy concerning women's equality, thus strengthening their ability to lead regarding the attainment of the SDGs.

Agarwal 2018 [44] examined the limitations of SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and also the way it could assist to family food security. Due to the focus placed on women's access to land and other natural assets, it has the potential to significantly increase women's ability to grow and acquire food. However, some of its shortcomings include a failure to recognize forests and fisheries as significant food sources, a lack of clarification as to which resources women require access to and why, and a refusal to take into account the agricultural difficulties that female producers face.

O'Reilly *et al.* 2015 [45] offered an overview of the key elements influencing the wage disparity between men and women in the UK, Europe, and Australia. Nearly forty years since the first wage equality law went into effect, the salary gap still plays a significant role in the prejudice women face in working environments. Despite the fact that the gap in worldwide wages has generally narrowed over the past forty years in numerous nations, it has rarely disappeared and in some countries, it has even gone greater. They emphasized how the patterns in the wage disparity between men and women convey the fluctuation of inequality throughout the four topics as the monetary power of various stakeholders and constituencies evolves as time passes and highlighted three primary topics that can serve as an outline for subsequent policy and research discussion *viz.*, the connection among arbitration and negotiating tactics, the relationship between wage-setting organizations and new organizational practices, and the broadening array of multiculturalism or fairness strings vying for equal consideration.

Chaudhry 2016 [46] focused primarily on household law as it investigates the basis of patriarchal regulations in the UAE. It examines the validity of the theological justifications put out by the UAE to support legislation that favors gender superiority and legalizes domestic abuse. The author advocates employing religious arguments to advance gender-equal family legislation and criminalize domestic abuse while highlighting the changeable character of religious reason.

Omarwan 2022 [47] investigated whether or not legislation was a useful tool for attaining gender parity. Both doctrinal and non-doctrinal methods of inquiry were used in the study and revealed that issues like male supremacy in legislative and legal institutions and an absence of political determination to address some issues would make it difficult to achieve equal rights for women and fully use the legal system. Legal safeguards for women will be challenging in this regard if domestically applicable policies were not enforced. Honouring international agreements similarly poses difficulties because they do not ensure national transformation and

they were also ignored. As a result, local efforts to advance gender parity and safeguard the freedoms of women will be less successful, scarce, or nonexistent.

O'Connor 2020 [48] outlined the precise elements of the framework and mentality that male dominance dominates across various academic organizations, which perpetuates gender inequity. The institutional inequality in managerial capacities and the societal rationality of an extensive variety of practices that value men and encourage their arrival to such roles while underestimating women and barricading their advancement were both examples and demonstrated how minimal development had been made in lecturing gender disparity, even with supposedly new organizational initiatives like Athena SWAN. It emphasized the requirement to acknowledge the role performed by typical systems and society in maintaining.

Kaggwa 2020 [49] examined the employment difficulties that women in the mining industry of South Africa still encounter amid improved gender-sensitive policies and developed suggestions for promoting sustained equality for women in South Africa's mining industry that depended on reliable studies. Lack of job advancement and prejudice in hiring and compensation were the two biggest problems women encountered. Women ascribed these difficulties to their direct bosses and corporate rules. One important takeaway from the study was that, while regulation can be a helpful instrument for easing employment difficulties and eliminating gender disparity, it was lacking in viable remedy.

Bastian *et al.* 2019 [50] analyzed the impact of statistical gender disparity metrics on men's and women's innovative ambitions, which have been demonstrated in research to be highly predictive of the launch of new businesses and examined the mitigating impacts of disparity on significant personal level predictors of ambition to be professional. The UNDP highlighted disparities between genders as a major factor in the decline of progress and included "gender equality" as a SDG target in the UN 2030 agenda and the findings from GEM data of nine MENA nations as well as the gender disparity index indicated that a society's restricted spirit of entrepreneurship affects both men and women.

Halliday *et al.* 2021 [51] claimed that the federal framework for gender justice mitigates the degree to which qualities of organizational management were connected to female board participation by integrating psychological ideas concerning latent prejudices and the concept of agency with organizational theory. The findings emphasized the significance of the national framework for gender balance as a criterion for determining the association between organizational leadership traits and the proportion of female board members.

Wisborg 2014 [52] investigated the economic and equitable perspectives on gender balance in a few policy efforts regarding land sales. Despite the increased focus on women in cultivation in international policy literary works, the examination found that early policy attempts did not adequately or at all analyze gender. Although utilitarian justifications were frequently invoked to support agreements, gender equality was rarely cited as a driver of advancement or "smart economics." While sparingly phrased, equal rights leaflets were more likely to criticise the pacts and mention gender.

Onditi and Odera 2017 [53] explored how the SDGs were conceptualized and localized, as well as how GEWE were incorporated into the MDGs. The topic was advanced by using Amartya Sen's women authority theoretical framework. While there was broad agreement that equal rights for women and women's emancipation should be achieved, the MDGs embraced fell insufficiently of doing so. The arriving SDGs will have to tackle crucial GEWE issues from qualitative as well as quantitative perspectives. They also discussed how the MDGs were conceptualized, put into context, and designed, as well as how the SDGs benefited from the execution of the MDGs.

Khamzina *et al.* 2022 [54] examined the efficacy of Kazakhstan's national legal system in terms of its ability to be put into action, comply with international laws against prejudice, and ensuring that women have the same rights as males and concluded that the lack of a strong law execution system and the incomplete practical execution of the nation's responsibilities cause legislation meant to enforce global requirements to encourage the banning of prejudice and gender parity to fall short of their intended objectives. In addition to the essential ancillary aspects of modifications to civil legal, social, administrative, and penal legislation, legal solutions were provided to neutralize the inherent incompatibility of Kazakhstani labor law with international standards.

Table 2. Review of challenges in promoting gender equality through international law.

Citation No.	Author	Year	Challenges in promoting gender equality	The implication of the study
[27]	Esquivel	2016	Evaluation of SDGs from a feminist perspective.	The transformative potential of SDGs is questioned.
[28]	Davies & Bennett	2016	Gender issues in global health emergencies.	The gap between health recommendations and women's experiences.
[29]	Roberts	2015	Critique of transnational business feminism.	TBF reinforces corporate power in gender and development.
[30]	Franzie	2018	Examining state behavior and CEDAW implementation.	State behavior is influenced by customs and independence.
[31]	Runyan & Sanders	2021	Impact of Cities for CEDAW activism.	Local impact on gender equality, limited national influence.
[32]	Zaidi & Fordham	2021	Gender concerns in disaster risk reduction.	Sendai framework's missed opportunities in addressing gender.
[33]	Jones	2018	Flaws in the Istanbul Convention regarding domestic violence.	Ambiguity in defining domestic abuse and gender issues.
[34]	Kozłowska et al.	2022	The legal response to sexist hate speech.	Confronting discriminatory remarks against women is crucial.
[35]	Bosak & Vajda	2019	Political use of the Istanbul Convention.	Conservative opposition to "gender ideology."
[36]	Gunes	2021	Turkey's struggle with domestic violence.	Male-dominated mindset impedes effective solutions.
[37]	Barrera	2021	Legal protections for victims of sexual assault in Colombia.	Ineffective legal safeguards for victims of sexual assault.
[38]	Pineiro & Kitada	2020	Addressing gender inequality in maritime employment.	Enforcing zero-tolerance for sexual discrimination.
[39]	Kreft	2017	Gender mainstreaming in UN peacekeeping mandates.	Selective inclusion of gender provisions in mandates.
[40]	Jansson & Eduards	2016	Gender and female fragility in protection settings.	Debating gender/security nexus and women's roles.
[41]	García & Masselot	2015	EU's gender parity in trade pacts with Asia.	Obstacles to incorporating equal treatment for women standards.
[42]	Koehler	2016	Examining gender equity in SDGs.	SDGs lack ambition and a systematic policy approach.
[43]	Alarcón & Cole	2019	Interconnections between SDGs and tourism.	Importance of addressing gender equality for effective tourism and SDGs.
[44]	Agarwal	2018	SDG 5 and family food security.	Potential to improve women's food access and limitations.
[45]	O'Reilly et al.	2015	Factors influencing gender wage gap.	Persistent wage disparity and policy considerations.
[46]	Chaudhry	2016	UAE's patriarchal regulations and domestic abuse.	Using religious arguments for gender-equal family legislation.
[47]	Omavowan	2022	Challenges in achieving gender parity through legislation.	Lack of enforcement and political determination hinder progress.
[48]	O'Connor	2020	Male dominance perpetuates gender inequality in academia.	Recognizing societal role in maintaining gender disparity.
[49]	Kaggwa	2020	Employment challenges in South Africa's mining industry.	Requirement for workable solutions to advance gender equality in mining.
[50]	Bastian et al.	2019	Impact of gender disparity on entrepreneurial intentions.	Society's limited entrepreneurial spirit affects men and women.
[51]	Halliday et al.	2021	Federal framework and female board participation.	National framework affects organizational leadership and female board.
[52]	Wisborg	2014	Economic and equitable perspectives on gender balance in land sales.	Gender equality is rarely considered in early policy efforts.
[53]	Onditi & Odera	2017	Localization of SDGs and GEWE incorporation in MDGs.	SDGs need to address GEWE issues.
[54]	Khamzina et al.	2022	Efficacy of Kazakhstan's legal system in promoting gender parity.	Incomplete execution of international requirements in Kazakhstan.

CONCLUSION

This review study has shed light on the advancements and challenges in promoting gender equality through international law. The analysis has revealed significant progress in recognizing the reputation of gender equality as an essential human right and integrating it into international legal frameworks. Various international instruments, such as conventions, treaties, and declarations, have been adopted to address gender-based discrimination and violence, promoting equality and empowerment for all genders. The study has highlighted several key advancements in this field. One notable achievement is the increased gratitude of female rights as human rights, with international legal instruments explicitly addressing issues such as violence against women,

discrimination in employment, education, and access to healthcare. Moreover, the acceptance of the SDGs in 2015 has stipulated a comprehensive framework for promoting gender equality globally, emphasizing the need for targeted actions and policies.

Furthermore, the study has identified the role of international tribunals and courts in holding individuals accountable for gender-based crimes and violations. Landmark decisions by international courts, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), have contributed to setting important precedents and ensuring justice for victims of gender-based violence and discrimination. However, despite these advancements, several challenges persist in promoting gender equality through international law. The review has highlighted the gap between legal frameworks and their effective implementation, with many countries lacking the necessary infrastructure, resources, and political will to enforce gender equality laws. Additionally, cultural norms, societal attitudes, and deep-rooted gender stereotypes continue to impede progress in achieving substantive gender equality. Another issue noted is the inadequate representation of women in leadership roles and processes of decision-making, both nationally and internationally. This lack of representation prevents expansion and implementation of gender-sensitive policies and perpetuates gender disparities.

In conclusion, while international law has played a crucial role in advancing gender equality, much work remains to be done. It is imperative to bridge the implementation gap, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and promote women's meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Continued efforts, collaboration, and advocacy are necessary to address the challenges and realize the full potential of international law in promoting gender equality for a more just and inclusive world.

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