



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR LEGAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Open Access, Refereed Journal Multi Disciplinary
Peer Reviewed Edition :

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ISSN

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A CRITICAL STUDY ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION FACED BY GIRL CHILD IN ACQUIRING FORMAL EDUCATION IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the gender discrimination faced by girl children in acquiring formal education. This paper examines the barriers and challenges that affect the girls access to education. Societal norms, economic factors, and institutional biases are seen as some of the factors responsible for the existence of gender discrimination in educational institutions. It discusses about the need for policy changes and societal shifts in ensuring equal access to education for all children, regardless of gender. The findings underscores the significance of tackling these disparities in promoting high-quality education in Chennai.

KEYWORDS

Gender inequality, Opportunities, Educational institutions, Parents, Society

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful tool for eliminating inequalities within our country. However, the irony lies in the fact that inequalities in providing education act as a significant barrier to our nation's progress. Gender discrimination, particularly in educational institutions, continues to be a serious issue in India, especially in rural areas. Girls often face discrimination in various aspects compared to their male counterparts. Promoting gender equality has been a goal of Western civilization for over half a century. Nevertheless, gender discrimination remains a pervasive issue in many societies, and part of this is attributed to how students are educated within the school system. Educational institutions should be the places where students are taught about promoting gender equality. Still, if gender discrimination occurs in schools, where else will students learn the importance of gender equality? While the government has taken various measures to address these issues, the effectiveness of these efforts remains questionable. Discriminating against girl students in schools or colleges can limit their potential, preventing them from fully expressing their talents and capabilities. In 2011, India's gender gap in access to education was evident in childhood literacy rates – 82% of boys were literate, while only 65% of girls could read and write. By 2019, statistics showed that approximately 10% more girls were enrolled in secondary school compared to 2011. Various legal provisions prohibit gender discrimination in educational institutions, making it illegal for schools or universities to discriminate based on sex, race, color, religion, or national origin. Gender stereotypes play a significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions and attitudes. They influence students' experiences in the classroom, choice of subjects, and academic performance. Gender bias has far-reaching effects in an educational setting. Girls' education not only strengthens economies but also reduces inequality. Positive attitudes in schools lead to higher academic achievement, while negative attitudes result in lower academic performance. Gender inequality in higher education in India is a complex issue, affecting various fields, including education, employment opportunities, income, health, culture, social issues, and economics. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021 by the World Economic Forum, India is ranked 140 out of 156 countries with a score of 0.625 concerning gender inequality. Educators need to be gender-aware, allowing both girls and boys to make choices in their learning and development, fostering self-confidence, well-being, peer acceptance, and social support. Achieving gender equality in education means offering equal opportunities for boys and girls to realize their full human rights and contribute to economic, social, cultural, and political development. This research also addresses public opinions on this practice and identifies factors responsible for gender discrimination in educational institutions. The paper concludes by suggesting possible ways to

eliminate gender discrimination.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To find out the causes for gender discrimination in educational institutions
- 2) To analyze the effects of gender discrimination in educational institutions
- 3) To study the role of government and public in this problem
- 4) To suggest the possible remedies to abolish this gender discrimination in Education

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **(Trentham and Larwood 1998)** This study extends to work with an experimental survey design in which employed participants were asked about how others respond to conditions classically eliciting rational bias discrimination. The results show evidence of continuing discrimination and support the theory predicting rational bias gender discrimination in the workplace.
2. **(Unterhalter and Aikman 2007)** This paper discusses the content and delivery of education and how it can reflect and reproduce gender inequalities. Girls' and boys' learning and interaction with each other and the teacher are influenced by teaching methods, curriculum content, and classroom dynamics.
3. **(O'Donnell 2010)** The paper recommends changes needed to ensure that educational provision promotes gender equality in schools. It observes disparities among states in various gender-related indicators, highlighting the need for progress in Northern states.
4. **(Matope 2012)** Universities can play a powerful role in promoting gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in higher education. The paper suggests academic institutions should establish policies to support researchers and prevent gender-based sacrifices.
5. **(Fiske 2012)** This paper examines the impact of discourses on excellence and private sector managerial techniques on gender equality in academia. It introduces gender budgeting as a tool to promote gender equality through resource allocation.
6. **(Raj et al. 2013)** The article focuses on gender bias in higher education in India, emphasizing the persistent gender gap in literacy rates and the need for societal change.
7. **(Mahrotra 2013)** This paper highlights the double standards in society's attitude toward women and the need to understand and address gender inequality.
8. **(Popa and Bucur 2014)** The study aims to determine the extent of awareness about gender discrimination among Romanian educational practitioners.

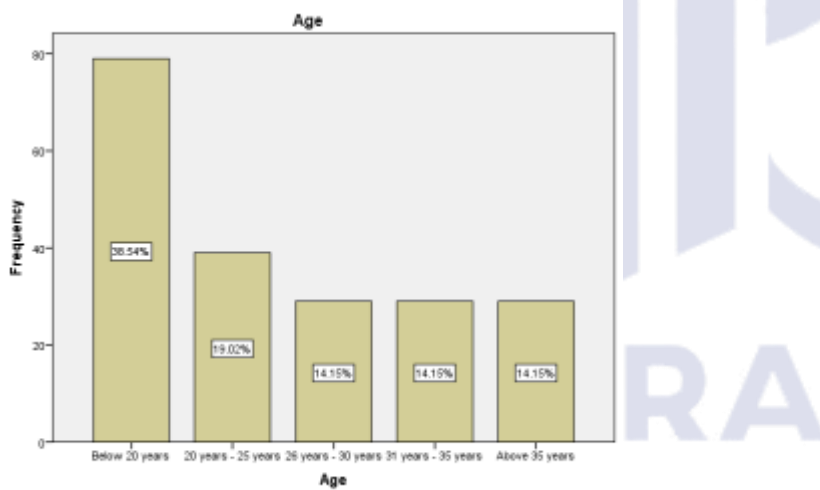
9. **(Klein et al. 2014)** Gender equality in education is essential for promoting women's empowerment, health, political participation, and preventing gender-based violence.
10. **(Sumanjeet 2016)** Despite high growth and government measures, gender inequality persists in India. The article examines the extent, causes, consequences, and suggests policy measures to reduce gender inequality.
11. **(Amutha 2017)** This article re-conceptualizes gender equality in education quality, emphasizing the need to analyze gender dynamics in the wider social context of boys' and girls' lives.
12. **(Ovseiko et al. 2017)** This study explores the experiences and perceptions of participation in Athena SWAN in medical science departments to advance gender equality.
13. **(Kilgour 2017)** The influence of teachers and educators on gender roles in students impacts their educational outcomes and societal roles.
14. **(Anurag 2017)** This paper addresses the struggle for equality and factors responsible for gender inequality while suggesting measures to eradicate this problem.
15. **(Gupta 2017)** The paper analyzes the reproduction of gender inequalities in organizations employing educated professionals and how social-cultural norms construct and maintain masculinity at the workplace.
16. **(Stefanie 2017)** The paper discusses gender inequality in India, the importance of gender equality in women's empowerment, and the role of gender mainstreaming in development.
17. **(García-González, Forcén, and Jimenez-Sanchez 2019)** The study provides evidence that men and women have differing perceptions of gender equality in science and highlights the importance of both genders being aware of gender biases in research.
18. **(Levine, and Mishel 2020)** Social scientists have documented a "gender revolution" in the last half-century, emphasizing the need for institutional and cultural change to further reduce gender inequality.
19. **(Clavero and Galligan 2021)** The paper employs the concept of epistemic justice to examine the potential for gender equality plans to bring about sustainable transformative change towards gender equality in higher education.
20. **(Huang, n.d,2021.)** The paper examines change in multiple indicators of gender inequality from 1970 to 2018, emphasizing the progress and some areas of stagnation.

METHODOLOGY

The research method followed was empirical research. A total of 201 samples have been taken. The research survey was taken through online mode. The independent variables are age, gender, marital status, education and locality. The dependant variables are Have you ever witnessed gender discrimination in your educational institution? What is the main cause for gender discrimination in education? Rate the strictness of our countries law on gender discrimination in education? Gender discrimination in India is increasing or decreasing? Are you satisfied with the initiatives taken by our government against gender discrimination? Do you think gender discrimination in India can be stopped? respectively.

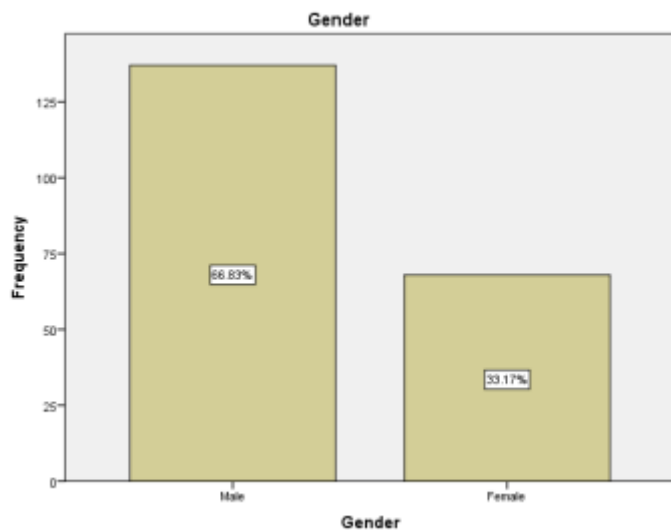
ANALYSIS:

Figure 1



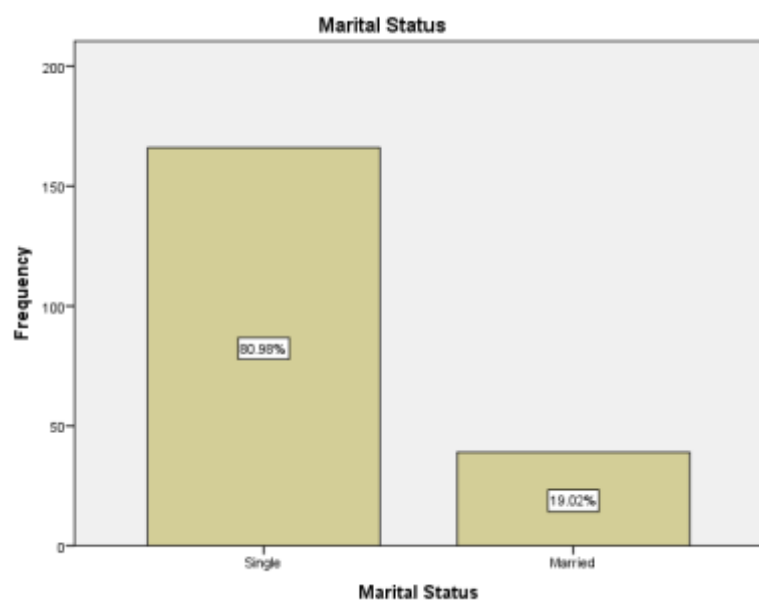
Legend: Figure 1 represents the age of the respondents

Figure 2



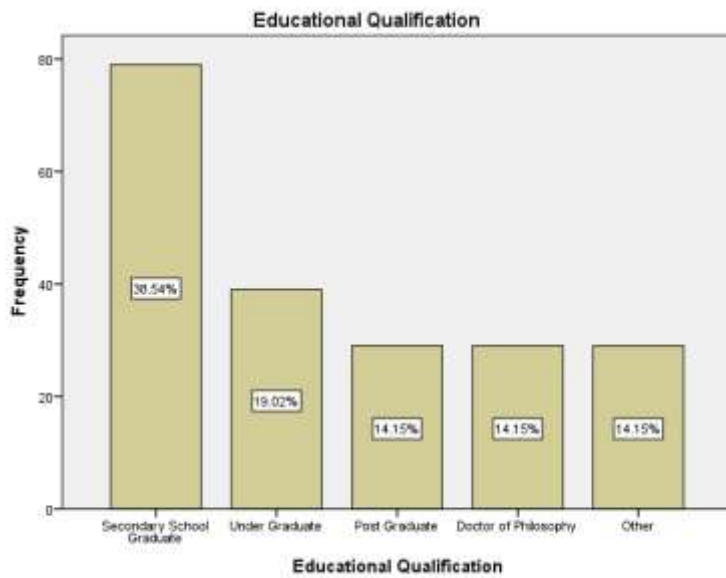
Legend: Figure 2 represents the gender of the respondents

Figure 3



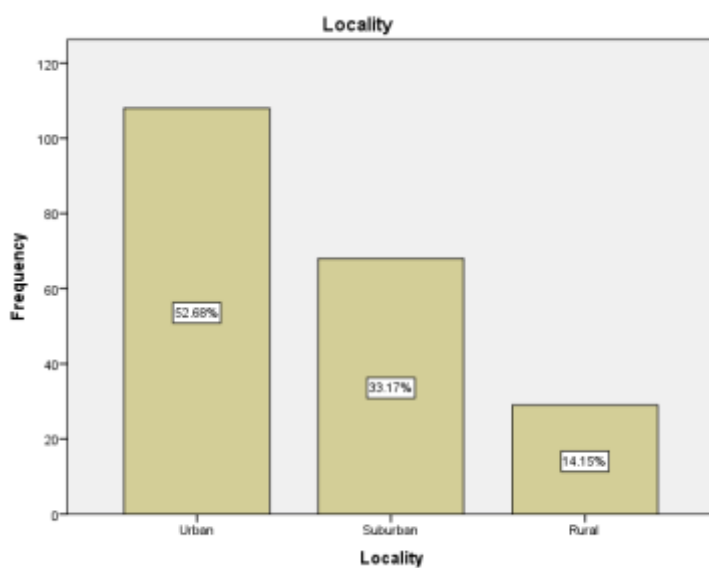
Legend: Figure 3 represents the marital status of the respondents

Figure 4



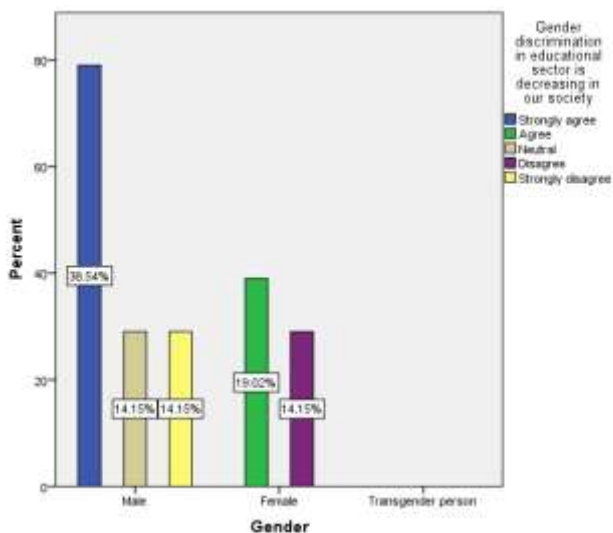
Legend: Figure 4 represents the educational qualification of the respondents

Figure 5



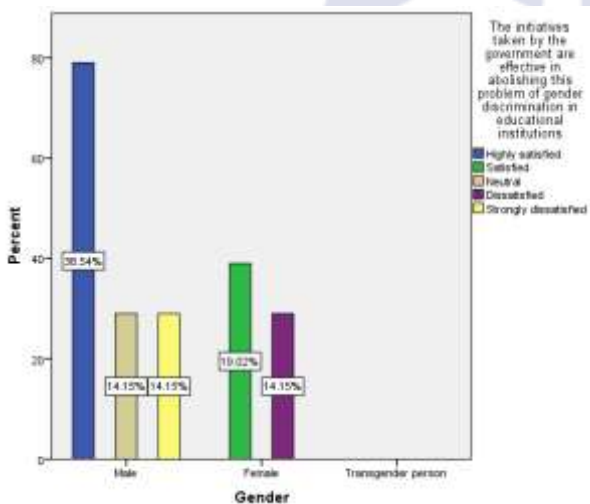
Legend: Figure 5 represents the locality of the respondents.

Figure 6



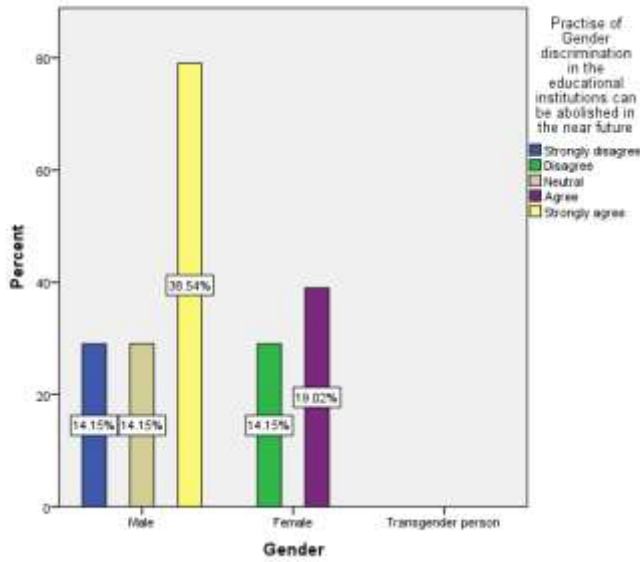
Legend: Figure 6 represents the response to the question “Gender discrimination in educational sector is decreasing in our society”

Figure 7



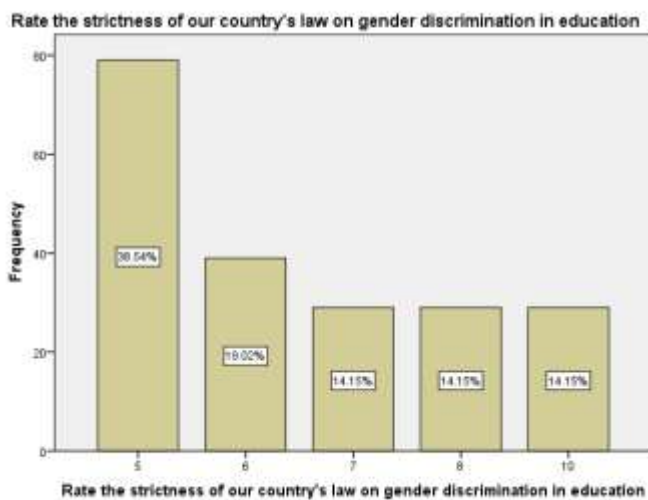
Legend: Figure 7 represents the response to the question “The initiatives taken by the government are effective in abolishing this problem of gender discrimination in educational institutions”

Figure 8

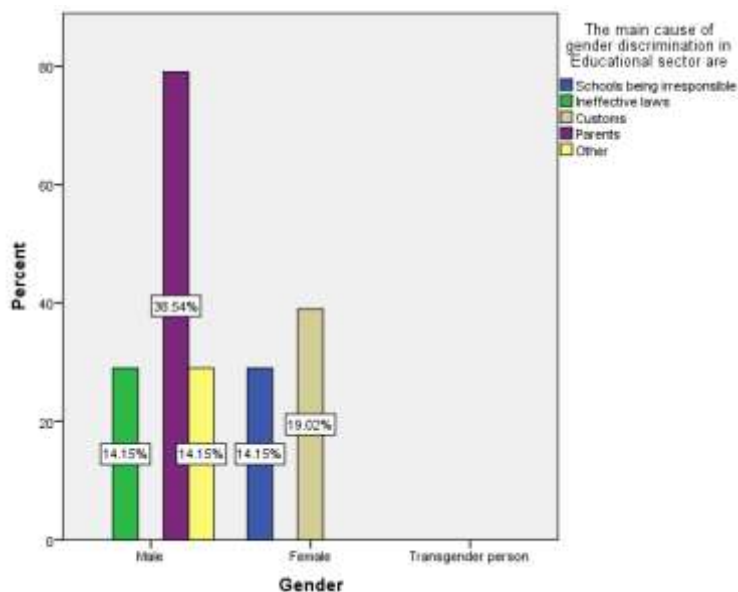


Legend: Figure 8 represents the response to the question “Practice of Gender discrimination in the educational institutions can be abolished in the near future”

Figure 9



Legend: Figure 9 represents the response to the question “Rate the strictness of our country’s law on gender discrimination in education”

Figure 10

Legend: Figure 10 represents the response to the question “The main cause of gender discrimination in Educational sector are”

RESULTS

From **figure 1** 38.54% if the respondents are below the age of 20 years, 19.02% of the respondents are between the age group of 20-25 years, 14.15% of the respondents are between the age group of 26-30 years, 14.15% of the respondents are between the age group of 31-35 years and 14.15% of the respondents are above the age of 35 years. From **figure 2** 66.83% of the respondents are Male and 33.17% of the respondents are female. From **figure 3** 80.98% of the respondents are single and 19.02% of the respondents are Married. From **figure 4** 38.54% of the respondents are secondary school graduates, 19.02% of them are under graduates, 14.15% of them are post graduates, 14.15% of them are pursuing PhD and 14.15% of the respondents have other educational qualification. From **figure 5** 52.68% of the respondents are from urban areas, 33.17% of them a few from suburban areas and 14.15% of them are from the rural areas. From **figure 6** 38.54% of Male respondents have said strongly agree, 14.15% of Male respondents said neutral, 14.15% of the Male respondents said strongly disagree, 19.02% of female said Agree and 14.15% of female have said disagree. From **figure 7** 38.54% of Male have said strongly satisfied, 14.15% of Male have responded neutral, 14.15% of respondents have responded strongly dissatisfied, 19.02% of females have responded satisfied and 14.15% of females have responded dissatisfied.

From **figure 8** 14.15% of Male have responded strongly disagree, 14.15% of Male have responded neutral, 38.54% of Male have responded strongly agree, 14.15% of female have responded disagree and 19.02% of the respondents have said agree. From **figure 9** 38.54% of the response is 5, 19.02% of the response is 6, 14.15% of the response is 7, 14.15% of the response is 8 and 14.15% of the response is 10. From **figure 10** 14.15% of Male respondents have said ineffective laws, 38.54% of Male respondents have said parents, 14.15% of male respondents have said other, 14.15% of female have said schools being irresponsible and 19.02% of females have responded customs.

DISCUSSIONS

From **figure 1** the majority of the respondents are below the age of 20 years. This is an advantage to this survey as they will have a clear idea about this issue of gender discrimination. From **figure 2** the majority of the respondents are Male. From **figure 3** the majority of the respondents are single. This is because majority of the respondents in this study are still pursuing their education. From **figure 4** the majority of the respondents are secondary school graduates. From **figure 5** the majority of the respondents are from Urban places. This is because the survey was mainly conducted around Poonamallee. From **figure 6** the majority of the response is Strongly agree. So the respondents believe that this problem of gender discrimination in educational sector is decreasing in our society. This is a very good sign for our society. From **figure 7** the majority of the response is Highly satisfied. So the respondents are completely satisfied with the initiatives taken by the government. From **figure 8** the majority of the response is strongly agree. So the respondents believe that this gender discrimination in educational institution can be completely abolished in the future. But to make this possible, people must act responsibly and must promote gender equality in the society. From **figure 9** the majority of the response is 5. So the respondents have given a neutral answer. From **figure 10** the majority of the response is Parents. So the respondents say that parents are the main cause of gender discrimination in the educational institutions. It is prominent that majority of the gender inequalities start from the families. It can also be said that parents act as the root cause of gender discrimination.

LIMITATION

Since the survey was conducted through online mode, network problem was a major limitation in my research. Lack of social awareness among the people were also seen as a major barrier for my research.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

From the findings it is observed that irresponsible acts of schools, Ineffective laws, Customs, and Parents are some of the factors responsible for the practise of gender discrimination to still prevail in our country. It is a fact that law keeps evolving as the society evolves. But a question arises on whether these laws are being effectively used. If these laws were used effectively then this problem of gender discrimination would have solved long ago. Also there are many news portraying the irresponsible acts of the schools. Schools have a very big responsibility in promoting equality among its students. But their irresponsible acts remain a big barrier in abolishing this issue. Our country is filled with diverse customs and practices. But there are certain customs that promote unlawful practices and gender inequality is one among them. People must realize this and must try not to practice those customs that are promoting inequality. It is observed that majority of the inequalities start from the families itself. There are many parents even now with a traditional mindset. They look at their boy child as an asset and their girl child as a liability to their family. They must understand the importance of gender equality. They must realize that even their girl child is equally capable of achieving everything as that of their boy child. They must start investing on the education of their girl child. In conclusion, if the public altogether act responsibly in promoting equality, then this problem of gender discrimination can definitely be abolished in the coming future.

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