

The Role of Law in Combating Gender-Based Violence: Challenges and Legal Reforms for Gender Equality

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Abstract

The article discusses the rationale of legal frameworks concerning the fight against gender-based violence (GBV) and gender equality. Despite this significant step towards the actualisation of the fact that GBV is a severe violation of human rights, many legal systems across the entire world have not been capable of giving real preventative and responsive solutions to the vice of violence. This paper discusses the existing legislations which aim at combating GBV and how the loopholes and failures are hindering the implementation and performance of the legislations. It further compares the socio-cultural or institutional barriers that affect access by the survivors to the law. This research unveils effective measures and best practises that have enabled legal intervention in GBV by comparison analysis of other legal reforms. The significance of the research introduces the necessity of having such legal changes so thorough not only to criminalise instances of gender-based violence, but also to accommodate survivor-oriented measures, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and take it a step further to make the judiciary and law enforcers gender sensitive. As a solution to these, the law can play a radical role in eradicating this inequality (gender) in the system and creating safer and more equal societies. In conclusion, it is suggested in this study that unitary law and a unitary law and policy system should be considered in this study as one of the theories to be used in terms of fighting the gender-based violence.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a widespread problem in the world and it is something that affects individuals, families, and communities alike. Expansively, GBV encompasses violence against people of different genders or gender identities with a majority being the women and the marginalised members of the society (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2021)¹. The high rates of

1 World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). Violence against

GBV also underline that there is underlying gender inequalities embedded in social, cultural and economic systems. Although GBV is quite reputed as the gross infringement of the actual human rights, its elimination remains a challenging issue, even at the international level. The frameworks to prevent and act on GBV have gained more popularity in legal systems across the world, but the lack of implementation and socio-cultural barriers commonly hinder these initiatives (Bacik, 2017)².

Gender-based Violence (GBV) is a term others define as any act of violence not previously recognised as gender-based violence due to its historical and contextual contexts and prevalence. The term Gender-based Violence (GBV) has been given meaning by other people as any act of violence that has not been territory and circumstances identified as gender-based violence as it is either not historical or prevalent.

United Nations defines GBV to be any form of gender-based violence resulting or likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering of women, threat of such violence, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty either in or out of public life (United Nations General Assembly, 1993³, p. 4). GBV represents a broad category of abuses, that is, domestic violence, sexual assault, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and trafficking. It is not confined to individual actions but to the systemic forms of discrimination and violence which support the idea of the hierarchies of gender and power imbalances (Heise, 2011)⁴. This broad scope can only be understood so that it can be developed into

women prevalence estimates. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>

2 Bacik, I. (2017). Gender-based violence and the law: An analysis. Routledge.

3 UN General Assembly. (1993). Declaration on the elimination of violence against women (A/RES/48/104). <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women>

4 Heise, L. (2011). What works to prevent partner violence? An evidence overview. London: STRIVE Research Consortium.

effective legal responses that help in alleviating the short-term harms as well as the structural inequalities.

Significance of Legal Frameworks in GBV Attack

The law is a powerful tool in combating GBV as it cuts across legal prohibitions, punishments, and protection of victims. They indicate the frowning of the society in regards to such violence and offer channels of justice and redress (Henrard, 2014)⁵. Nevertheless, the success of the legal structures is largely determined by its design, execution as well as the larger social context. The implementation of laws cannot eliminate GBV since they are the basis of supporting an enabling environment of gender equality and human rights protection (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [UN Women], 2020)⁶. Further, the legislation should be survivor-centred, culturally sensitive and resources provided with respect to sufficient resources and institutional capacity to afford access to justice.

Research Questions and Objectives

The purpose of this article is to discuss the role of law in fighting GBV through a critical element discussing the current legal frameworks, challenges in implementation and reforms that should be made to it to be more effective. The research questions that will be used in this study include: How are the existing legal frameworks addressing GBV, and what are their shortcomings? What are the socio-cultural and institutional barriers that influence the access of the survivors to justice? What are the ways in which the legal reforms can enhance gender equality and response to GBV?

Structure of the Article

5 Henrard, K. (2014). The role of law in fighting gender-based violence. In M. Freeman (Ed.), Human rights and gender violence (pp. 123-145). Routledge.

6 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). (2020). Gender-based violence and the law. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women>

The article is organised in the following way: after this introduction, Section 2 expands on the conceptual/theoretical framework the analysis will be based on. Section 3 examines international legal tools addressing GBV, whereas Section 4 gives a comparative analysis of legal systems of countries. In Section 5, socio-cultural and institutional barriers to justice have been discussed. Part 6 looks at legal reforms and innovations and Part 7 summarises issues of implementation. Section 8 discusses how gender equality can be encouraged by the law in a more comprehensive way. Lastly, the 9th and 10th Section provide a conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Theoretical Views and Structural Formulation

Gender and gender inequality is a basic concept to study gender-based violence (GBV). Gender is socially constructed identity, which specifies the roles, behaviour and expectations that a person should exhibit concerning his/her sexiness, usually leading to the inequalities in the system (Risman, 2004)⁷. Gender inequality is reflected in power disparity that spawns an atmosphere that shapes GBV (Connell, 2009)⁸. Intersectional approach of human rights and GBV emphasises on the overlaps in identities of race, classes, and sexuality as worsening the cases of discrimination and violence (Crenshaw, 1991)⁹.

The first one is the feminist legal theory which is a critical analysis of the way legal laws have a historical record of reflecting and reproducing patriarchal ideals, and it advocates legal changes that will disrupt the ideology of gender stereotyping and advance equality (Smart, 1989)¹⁰. Critical legal studies

go further to question the purpose of law as a means of social control that can in turn buttress hierarchies within the society (Kennedy, 1982)¹¹. Legal reform theories show that the law can bring about social change but acknowledge that any legal changes must result in a wider social change in society to succeed (Tamanaha, 2006)¹².

The unitary law and policy system approach supports coherent legal systems of GBV interventions to tackle the issue comprehensively so that the problem-solving principles of law, policy, and organisation are effectively integrated, and the synergy between the health care system and other societal entities is enhanced (Henrard, 2014).

International Legal Acts on Gender-Based Violence

The international human rights laws addressing GBV

Gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the issues that have gained significant attention in international human rights law as a severe infraction that requires a detailed legal intervention. International tools on rights of mankind underline the safeguarding of the people especially women and weak groups against violence based on gender discrimination. These tools set the state in the obligation to prevent, investigate, and punish in event of GBV as well as access to justice and support victims and survivors (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner [OHCHR], 2019)¹³. The development of the international human rights law has increasingly incorporated GBV as part and parcel of gender equality and the worth of humanity.

7 Risman, B. J. (2004). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. *Gender & Society*, 18(4), 429–450.

8 Connell, R. (2009). *Gender: In World Perspective* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.

9 Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299.

10 Smart, C. (1989). *Feminism and the power of law*. Routledge.

11 Kennedy, D. (1982). The structure of Blackstone's Commentaries. *Buffalo Law Review*, 32(2), 205–261.

12 Tamanaha, B. Z. (2006). *Law as a means to an end: Threat to the rule of law*. Cambridge University Press.

13 United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR). (2019). Gender-based violence and human rights. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/genderbasedviolence.aspx>



UN Major Conventions and Declarations

One of the biggest international documents is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. CEDAW requires states to stop the discrimination of women in all sectors, such as violence protection (CEDAW Committee, 2017)¹⁴. The convention that was officially referred to as the 2011 Istanbul Convention and is also called the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against women and domestic violence (2011) is a historic regional convention that solely aims at fighting violence to women. It creates the legal standards in the framework of prevention, protection, prosecution and integrated policies (Council of Europe, 2011)¹⁵. The normative framework that comes to strengthen the normative framework that deals with GBV across the world has been reinforced by other declarations, including the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993).

International Courts and International Committees Playing their Role

International bodies and treaties are important in ensuring that states stick to their commitments in GBV. State reports are examined by the CEDAW Committee and General Recommendations that should guide the implementation of the Convention, such as General Recommendation No. 35, which is on gender-based violence (CEDAW Committee, 2017). The ICC tries GBV under crime against humanity and as a war crime to promote culpability in occurrences of sexual violence in conflict areas

(ICC, 2023)¹⁶. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights are regional courts that heard landmark cases and broadened the protection of GBV survivors, as well as strained the state to amend domestic legislation.

International Law on the Implication and Scopes of International Law to Domestic legal systems

The international law has largely shaped the domestic legal systems by providing a lead and inspiring legal changes. It is due to the international commitments that many countries have either amended or added laws that outlaw domestic violence, sexual harassment and trafficking (Merry, 2006)¹⁷. Nevertheless, the strength of international law is frequently curtailed by such issues as the political will, absence of effective enforcement tools, and social-cultural opposition (Charlesworth, 2018)¹⁸. There can also be a hindrance in uniform application and compliance because of the principle of state sovereignty and differences in legal traditions. Moreover, global tools are also criticised as lack of depth in the targeted marginalising group and strong dependence on state reports, which can be incomplete or biased.

Case Studies of International Impact on the Domestic Laws

The transformative potential of international legal instruments is reflected in a number of jurisdictions. South Africa On the one hand, the impact of CEDAW and African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on legislative framework within the country informed the Law against Domestic Violence (1998) that offers extensive support and protection

¹⁴ CEDAW Committee. (2017). General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19. United Nations.

¹⁵ Council of Europe. (2011). Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention>

¹⁶ International Criminal Court (ICC). (2023). Sexual and gender-based crimes. <https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/otp/sexual-and-gender-based-crimes>

¹⁷ Merry, S. E. (2006). Transnational human rights and local activism: Mapping the middle. *American Anthropologist*, 108(1), 38-51.

¹⁸ Charlesworth, H. (2018). Feminist approaches to international law. *The Oxford Handbook of International Law*, 595-615.

to victims of such violence in the country (Murray, 2010)¹⁹. Equally, in Spain, the adoption of the Istanbul Convention caused the adoption of the Organic Law on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence (2004), providing a specialised court and victim support systems (Radford, 2013)²⁰. These instances show that international legal standards can trigger domestic changes, but success in implementation is the crucial factor towards substantive change.

Flattening the Hierarchy: Comparative Legal Frameworks in nations and the socio-cultural obstacles to receiving justice

General legal strategies to deal with GBV

The legal frameworks of different countries to combat gender-based violence (GBV) are rather multi-tiered to encompass criminalization, civil remedies, protection orders and institutional reforms. Specific laws have been passed against domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment in most countries, but they are commonly complemented by gender equality and human rights laws. Such legal frameworks strive to offer retributive actions against offenders and preventive action towards the victims (Jewkes et al., 2015)²¹. However, legislation is more often integrating principles that are victim-oriented, where confidentiality, supportive services, and non-discrimination find their place (Heise, 2011).

Making various forms of GBV a crime

One of the fundamental strategies of response on a national level is criminalization, and in the vast

majority of cases, physical, sexual, psychological, and even economic abuse is explicitly declared a crime. The laws relating to domestic violence usually encompass partner violence, violence against spouses, and family-related crimes (UN Women, 2019)²². Sexual violence provisions criminalize rape, sexual assault, and harassment that are defined and different in terms of definition and evidentiary differences. These laws however vary greatly in scope and power. Indicatively, there are countries that have marital rape listed as a crime whereas others do not consider it because of cultural inclinations or exceptions provided in law (Bott et al., 2012)²³. Inclusion of new issues like stalking, cyber violence and trafficking, are not even distributed and are increasing in numerous legal systems.

Civil Remedies and protective measures

In addition to criminal penalties, a number of countries enforce civil disabilities to safeguard the victims. These comprise restraining or protection orders, the legal way to prohibit the perpetrators of the act by not allowing them to approach or contact the victims. Support services (such as counselling and shelter facilities) and the compensation schemes are becoming part of the legal structure (Devries et al., 2013)²⁴. Civil remedies provide survivors with a swift solution, which leads to their security and healing. However, such measures have varied levels of availability and enforceability that is usually due to resource shortages and bureaucracies.

Implemental Processes and Problems

Good enforcement will really determine the success of GBV laws yet this is a tremendous challenge

19 Murray, C. (2010). Domestic violence law reform in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36(3), 655-672.

20 Radford, J. (2013). The influence of the Istanbul Convention on gender violence law in Spain. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 20(2), 167-182.

21 Jewkes, R., Flood, M., & Lang, J. (2015). From work with men and boys to changes of social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: A conceptual shift in prevention of violence against women and girls. *The Lancet*, 385(9977), 1580-1589.

22 UN Women. (2019). Progress of the world's women 2019-2020: Families in a changing world. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

23 Bott, S., Morrison, A., & Ellsberg, M. (2012). Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: A global review and analysis. World Bank.

24 Devries, K. M., Mak, J. Y., García-Moreno, C., et al. (2013). The global prevalence of intimate partner violence against women. *Science*, 340(6140), 1527-1528.



to most countries around the world. They involve the insufficient training of law enforcement and judicial personnel and lack of gender sensitivity and corruption (Chantler et al., 2019)²⁵. The survivors are victimized with victim-blaming attitudes, delays in the legal procedures, and lack of protection during the event of the judicial proceedings. The lack of resources in the police, courts and social services further de-escalate efforts of the law enforcement. In fact, informal justice systems and customary practices usually clash over statutory law and it becomes difficult to enforce the law (Merry, 2006).

Comparative Case Studies: Successes and Failures in other Jurisdictions

Comparative analysis provides an insight of both achievements and weaknesses of national GBV laws. The Domestic Violence Act (1998), passed in South Africa, has received high applause; it is regarded as a holistic legislation in that it incorporates the use of criminal and civil actions as well as support to the victim (Murray, 2010). Equally, Spain enacted under new legislation Organic Law on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence (2004) which established the existence of specialized courts and multidisciplinary support systems that has resulted in a rise in prosecution rates (Radford, 2013). On the contrary, in those states, where patriarchal culture is firmly established, e.g. in some South Asian and Sub-Saharan African countries, the law does not always turn into effective protection because of the limited institutional capacity and the social stigma surrounding their change (Bott et al., 2012). The need to reform the laws contextually with sound implementation frameworks is highlighted by these case studies.

Customary Law and Religious Laws

Most of these societies have customary and religious laws that work together with statutory legal systems and have a great impact on the reaction to GBV. These customary systems are likely to contradict the official legislations particularly in

matters such as in marital rape, child marriage and rights to inheritance (Merry, 2006). Whereas certain traditional norms contribute to gender inequalities and condone violence, others have changed to be incorporating protection norms. It is necessary to engage customary and religious leaders in the legal reform and awareness campaigns to reconcile the laws and improve the accessibility of justice (Charlesworth, 2018).

Social-Cultural and institutional factors of barriers to accessing Justice

Gender Stereotypes and cultural norms

Culture and gender stereotypes have an acute influence on the capacity of a survivor to seek justice. GBV is a normalized phenomenon or a domestic issue across most cultures preventing reporting and intervention (Jewkes et al., 2015). Victims are usually blamed and stigmatized as a side effect of stereotypes regarding the roles and personality of women. Not only do these factors make survivors be silent, but it also affects the attitudes of law enforcement and judiciary staff members, which weakens the objective use of the law (Heise, 2011).

Bias in law enforcement and the judicial system based on the gender factor and in the judiciary is as well institutionalized bias, as this factor is observed in all official domains of law enforcement and legal courts (as analysed by the United States in this body).

The problem of institutional bias is still prevalent in law enforcement and legal institutions. Judges and police officers might not have been trained on gender sensitivity, and thus they will be insensitive, do not believe, or treat survivors in a discriminatory way (Chantler et al., 2019). These biases deter the survivors about seeking assistance and lead to poor reporting and prosecution. These include training programs, gender-sensitive policies that are essential in overhauling institutional cultures and improve the efficacy of GBV legal frameworks.

Experiences of the survivors and barriers to reporting GBV

Several barriers to reporting GBV are common cases among the survivors as they include fear of revenge,

²⁵ Chantler, K., Gangoli, G., Hester, M., & Ahmed, A. (2019). Responding to gender-based violence in the criminal justice system. Bristol University Press.

financial reliance on the abusers, and mistrust in law enforcement (Devries et al., 2013). Anonymity and trauma involved in reporting abuse is another reason why people do not report abuse. In other circumstances, the survivors can be subjected to secondary victimization because of antagonizing interrogation or absence of assistance in legal action. These issues emphasize the need to use survivor-centered strategies and supportable and available legal assistance.

Socio-Economic Factor Effects on Availability of Justice

Access to justice to the survivors of GBV is affected by the socio-economic status in a significant way. Poor conditions lead to poverty and lack of education, as well as low mobility and lower the ability of survivors to interact with formal justice systems (Bacik, 2017)²⁶. Access is further limited by the expenses incurred in legal processes like costs of transporting and legal fees, which most marginalized and rural people cannot afford. It is important to deal with these economic disadvantages in the name of fair justice.

Civil Society and Advocacy Group Role

Advocacy groups and civil societies are invaluable to mediate between the survivors and the legal system. They do legal assistance, advice, education, and advocacy and usually occupy institutional gaps (Merry, 2006). Their activities lead to reforms in the law, enforcement, and social transformation in regards to GBV. Sustainable development in governments should be developed in cooperation with the civil society.

Innovations and Reforms in the Law

Background of the recent reforms in the field of GBV

Over the past few years, many nations have engaged in serious legal overhauls in order to enhance their act in gender-based violence (GBV). The main idea of such reforms in many cases is to seal the loopholes of the current legislation by doing this by expanding the definition of GBV to cover psychological abuse,

stalking, cyber violence, and economic control (UN Women, 2020). There has also been the growing acceptance by law of marital rape, and increasing protection to marginalized community including LGBTQ. To illustrate, the implementation of multifarious domestic violence-related legislation and special clauses, concerned with sexual harassment at work environment, represent the mounting knowledge of the complexity of the issue of GBV (Jewkes et al., 2015). These reforms are often supported by institutional actions which help in reporting, prosecution and support of survivors.

Survivor-Available Legal Approaches

One highly important innovation in GBV law systems is the use of survivor-oriented approaches. These place the safety, dignity and agency of survivors at the frontline in the course of legal procedures. The laws that are survivor-centered focus on confidentiality, informed consent, and trauma-informed care with the aim of minimizing secondary victimization (Decker et al., 2019)²⁷. The legal provisions are also increasingly most of victim support services provision like counselling, shelters and legal aid provisions as part of the justice system. Other jurisdictions have introduced the expedited track courts or special tribunals that can speed up the cases relating to GBV, shortening the emotional and procedural weight of the survivors (UN Women, 2020).

Enhancing the Mechanisms of Enforcement and Accountability

Reform of the law is also on the issue of increased enforcement and responsibility. This also involves the introduction of more severe punishment against GBV crimes and explicit requirements that the police agencies check and prosecute the cases (Chantler et al., 2019). Accountability procedures usually imply integrity institutions that control the police and judicial practices in line with legal requirements and safeguarding the rights of survivors. Others have also established some form of compulsory reporting

²⁶ Bacik, I. (2017). Gender-based violence and the law: An analysis. Routledge.

²⁷ Decker, M. R., Peitzmeier, S., Olumide, A., et al. (2019). Gender-based violence laws and their implementation: A global review. *Social Science & Medicine*, 239, 112541.



and incorporation of GBV case management mechanisms in monitoring progress and reduction of impunity (Merry, 2006).

Sensitization and Training of Legal Practitioners on gender

Having identified that legal reactions can be undermined by attitudes and biases, most states have put in place gender-sensitization and capacity-building initiatives to police officers, prosecutors, judges among other players. The attention of training is to grasp the dynamics of GBV dynamics, respecting the rights of the survivor, and the implementation of the law without discrimination or prejudices (Chantler et al., 2019). Such programs are necessary to help change the institutional culture and better manage GBV cases. Such initiatives have to rely on their consistency, quality, and generalization into the continuous professional growth.

This aims to integrate the multisectoral approaches

GBV needs to be tackled in an inter-sectoral way. There is a growing legal reform with multisectoral strategies between health, the educational system, social service, and legal services. Gender equality and respectful relations are divided into prevention programs implemented in schools; health professionals are trained to recognize and refer to the cases of GBV (Heise, 2011). The social services have holistic support of victims, such as economic empowerment programs that minimise vulnerabilities. Multisectoral collaboration represents an increase in the efficiency of the legal system where it facilitates prevention, protection and rehabilitation settings.

Technology and Data Application in the fight against GBV

Technological progress in data management has played a leading role in the fight against GBV. The digital platform helps the survivors to access information and support services as well as making it easy to report anonymously (UN Women, 2020). The case management software is employed to follow legal proceedings and provision of services,

enhancing coordination and accountability. Through data collection and analysis, policymakers are in a position to identify the trends of GBV, the effect of the interventions, and resource allocation. Nevertheless, the issue of privacy, data security and digital inequalities have to be taken care of to provide balanced advantages.

Difficulties in Installing Legal Frameworks

Legal Gaps and Ambiguities

Most frameworks have gaps and ambiguity that reduce their effectiveness despite the legal reforms. Indistinct outlines of crimes, unequal punishment, and absence of rules to address new types of GBV decrease the clarity of the laws and the difficulty of bringing offenders to justice (Bacik, 2017). There are loopholes in some of the laws as they exclude certain populations or violence. To resolve such shortfalls, extensive legislative reviews and amendments on laws should be addressed to make laws understandable, comprehensive, and consistent with the international benchmarks.

Institutional Capacity and the Constraint of Resources

Limited resources and poor institutional capacity tend to limit the implementation process. Crowded courts, inadequate training of staffs, and inability to provide funding on the services provided to victims hinder access to justice (Chantler et al., 2019). Most jurisdictions experience shelter shortages, lack of legal aid services, and forensic services, which are essential in responding to GBV. Institutional capacity building requires long term investment and development of infrastructure and training of human resource.

The guarantee of implementation of GBV laws and promotion of gender equality agendas is pegged on political will. There are situations where commitment is not fulfilled or political priorities lead to lax enforcement and insufficient support of reforms (Charlesworth, 2018). The coherence of the policies is also critical; the dispersed or even

conflicting policymaking in government agencies may hamper integrated blocs toward GBV actions. International pressure and advocacy usually make a significant contribution to keeping political focus on GBV problems.

Backlash of Traditional and Patriarchal Introductions

The culture of patriarchy and conservative formations often opposition to the legal implementation and amendments. The institutions of community leaders, religious leaders, and families might support cultures that condone or hide GBV, which question the prerogative of the legal formality (Merry, 2006). Such resistance is reflected through social stigma of survivors, lack of cooperation with law enforcement and pressure to make peace with offenders. Culturally appropriate communication and community-based education is important to overcoming such resistance.

Surveillance and review of Legal Reforms

The best approach to gauge the effects of GBV legal reforms and implement improvements is to have effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Nevertheless, some nations do not have strong M&E regulations or data bases to follow up on the implementation and results (UN Women, 2020). Among the challenges are lack of standard data gathering, underreporting of GBV, and lack of findings application in policymaking. The measures required to reinforce accountability and learning include the formulation of uniform indicators and improving the quality of data and ensuring transparency.

The lexis of Law in Enhancing Gender Equality other than GBV

Law is also powerful instrument to transform society as it does not only interrupt current gender practises but also creates equality in all life forms (Connell, 2009). Besides solving gender-based violence (GBV), legal frameworks are related to broader gender equality policies to eradicate the systemic discrimination. Complete gender-sensitive legislations enable women and the underprivileged populations since they guard rights of ownership,

inheritance, political participation and body rights (Bacik, 2017). There is also equal employment, education and public life law which helps to minimise the difference between the genders and enable full empowerment of the population (UN Women, 2020). The women-sensitive laws, in the long run affect the social attitudes, culture and power relations, thus establishing more justifiable societies.

Recommendations: The policy implications

Consolidating and integrating legal frameworks to ensure their alignment with international norms and consistency with each other is the high demand in the context of the maximum of the efficient use of the law to promote gender equality (Charlesworth, 2018). In order to enhance the accessibility of justice by the GBV survivors, there is need to remove practises that complicate the access to justice, avail legal support and practises that can be survivorship-focused. Gender sensitivity training should be implemented continuously on legal practitioners to enhance the degree of biases within institutions, as well as with regards to handling cases (Chantler et al., 2019). Combination of health, education, social services and law enforcement Multisectoral embrace is necessary in line of complete responses. Moreover, the mobilisation of community in the form of creation of awareness helps change the conventions of the society that promotes inequality and violence. Data collection and research have to be the priority and then evidence-based policymaking, tracking of progress and successful adjustment of interventions will be appropriate.

CONCLUSION

The paper identifies the role that law can play in combating GBV and gender equality in general. Legal reforms can trigger social change by offering the norms of defence of the rights, discrimination laws, and the empowerment of the marginalised groups. It however, does not suffice to enact such an issue in the absence of implementation, capacity to execute the same and cultural changes. The problems that will be created in the new research include new methods of law, consequences of new

technologies, and the gender relationship with other aspects of identity and oppression. With a solid conclusion, the gender-sensitive legislations, as well as implementation, ought to be a long-term goal in order to create just inclusive as well as equitable societies.

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