



CULTURE, POWER, AND PATRIARCHY: DECODING GENDER INEQUALITY AND MASCULINE NORMS IN INDIA

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.70096/tssr.260404035>

Abstract

This study examines how people in India think about gender inequality and how it connects to ideas about norms of masculinity. The study conducts an online survey of 127 people aged 16 to 65 with different levels of education. The study looked at what people think causes gender inequality and how they feel about ideas about men and women, how the media shows gender roles, and what kinds of policies could help. The results show that most people think the main reasons for gender inequality are standing cultural beliefs and traditions, not just problems with laws or policies. Many people said cultural norms and traditions (89.8%) and family systems that put men in charge (85.0%) are the reasons. Education differences (81.1%) were also seen as important. Fewer people thought about problems (36.2%) or how the media affects things (42.5%). Also, the study found that people who think ideas about being a man help cause inequality are more likely to want to change those ideas ($\rho = .58, p < .05$). Even though there was significant divergence (Mann-Whitney U, $p < .05$) regarding the importance of masculinity in society, there was commonality when it came to the gender differences. The demographic patterns indicated that those with high education levels had higher conceptual knowledge, whereas young people aged between 16 and 25 were more affected by media depictions of men and masculinity. In general, it is crucial to note that this research highlights the need for reconceptualization of masculinity in reform activities.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Inequality, Masculinity, Patriarchy, Public Attitudes

Introduction

The issue of gender inequality in India is yet to be resolved both in discourse and statistics. As per the findings of the 2025 Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum, India was placed at the 131st spot among 148 countries based on an overall parity score of 64.1%, which is lower than the global average of 68.8% and that of many other South Asian countries (World Economic Forum, 2025). India stood 108th among 193 countries on the Gender Inequality Index released by the United Nations Development Programme in its 2024 Human Development Report (United Nations Development Programme, 2024). India's own surveillance data also paints a similar picture – the fifth National Family Health Survey found that about 29% of Indian women between the ages of 18 and 49 had been victims of domestic violence at some point (International Institute for Population Sciences & ICF, 2021). The 2024 annual report of India's National Crime Records Bureau also recorded over 400,000 cases of crime against women in the country (National Crime Records Bureau, 2024). It is only natural, then, to wonder what Indians think lies behind this gap.

In recent years, this discussion has been shifting towards incorporating not only patriarchy, caste system, religion, economic inequality, and lack of proper law enforcement but also masculinity and particularly “toxic masculinity” into existing hypotheses, which have been formulated quite some time ago. However, the absence of any quantitative survey research comparing the two hypotheses mentioned and asking respondents about their degree of belief in one hypothesis and their opinion about the connection between beliefs in masculinities and gender inequalities can be noted.

This is the gap that is attempted to be filled in this study, albeit on a very modest level. This paper presents an analysis of the original survey, conducted among 127 respondents regarding demographic information, exposure to gender inequality and masculinity discussions, a list of attitude questions on a Likert scale, and ten binary questions on particular structural issues. This study is descriptive rather than confirmatory, as it attempts to present patterns of beliefs of this particular sample, correlations between attitudes, and differences by gender, age, and education. Besides the overall belief system, three particular issues will

be addressed: Is there any difference between the men and the women participating in the study when it comes to their explanations of gender inequality? Does the explanation vary from one generation to another? And does more education lead to a different approach towards the issue?

Background: What does literature say about each factor

Before looking at our own data, however, it is worthwhile taking a few moments to discuss these ten contributing factors (Cultural traditions and patriarchal family systems, Dowry system, Economic disparity, Legal and Policy barriers, Media representation, Caste system, Religious beliefs and practices, Gender based violence, Education level and Masculinity) within the context of the literature, so as to be able to both justify their selection and to provide some broader context for our results.

Cultural traditions and patriarchal family systems: The notion that the domination of what is considered a hegemonic form of masculinity within society, a form defined by traits such as stoicism, dominance, and control, contributes to men's control over women is best represented by sociologist R. W. Connell's conception of "hegemonic masculinity," developed further in conjunction with James Messerschmidt (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Focusing on the specific case of India, recent studies using an "India's Patriarchy Index" have shown higher fertility and female infant mortality rates among more patriarchal districts, even controlling for socio-economic variables (Singh et al., 2025).

The dowry system: Though dowry is illegal according to the 1961 Dowry Prohibition Act, the tradition is still practiced in different forms (Government of India, 1961). In an analysis based on a national multilevel longitudinal dataset, it was demonstrated that the women residing in the districts where there was high prevalence of dowry practice had lower self-perception of their health regardless of household wealth and other controlling variables indicating that dowry serves as a proxy for local status inequality between men and women (Stroope, Kroeger, & Fan, 2021).

Economic disparity: For many decades the percentage of employed women in India was lagging behind the global average by far. The International Labor Organization research explained the reduction in the 2000s and 2010s due to growth in education attainment rates, increased family income making women quit the workforce, and the changes in the measurement across survey rounds (Kapsos, Bourmpoula, & Silberman, 2014), whereas the more recent research indicated that participation stagnated in urban India despite rising elsewhere (Klasen & Pieters, 2015). Naila Kabeer's influential work about women's economic resources serve as one of three interconnected aspects of empowerment which include agency and achievements as well, a reminder that economic disparity and cultural constraint tend to reinforce one another rather than operating separately (Kabeer, 1999).

Legal and policy barriers: India has adopted considerable laws in the last few decades in respect of women's rights, such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (Government of India, 2005), the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (Government of India, 2013), and recently the 106th Amendment of the Constitution reserving one-third of seats for women in legislatures (Government of India, 2023). But whether any legal or policy change has brought about a transformation in the mindsets of people remains a different and a debatable issue – an issue highlighted by the current survey since legal and policy barriers were not considered as important reasons for gender inequality.

Media representation: It has been found through media content analysis of Indian television commercials that men tend to be more represented in terms of primary roles and voice-over, while women are often depicted in terms of domestic space and household items (Das, 2011), something which seems to hold true even today.

Caste system: Caste and gender are not two separate or additive forms of subordination; in a field experiment conducted in Uttar Pradesh, it was found that the discrimination in the form of gender biasness towards female doctors got was significantly amplified when the doctor was also of a lower caste background, direct evidence of the kind of intersectional compounding first theorized by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989; Islam, Pakrashi, Sahoo, Wang, & Zenou, 2021).

Religious beliefs and practices: It has been shown that laws based on religion, specifically personal laws concerning marriage, divorce, inheritance, and guardianship in Hindu, Muslim, and Christian communities, can be used to embed patriarchy within the legal protection accorded to women when there is constitutional equality before the law in India.

Gender-based violence: India has two sources of data related to violence statistics, and both agree that roughly three in ten women across the nation experienced domestic violence (International Institute for Population Sciences & ICF, 2021). At the same time, NCRB's Crime in India register accounts for hundreds of thousands of registered cases of violence committed against women, with "cruelty by husband or relatives" being the most widespread type (National Crime Records Bureau, 2024).

Education level: Data from Pew Research Center surveys across multiple countries revealed that individuals who received more education are more supportive of growing gender equality compared to those with little formal education in 27 out of 27 countries covered by the surveys (Pew Research Center, 2019).

Last but not least, on the side of masculinity, specifically: the 2018 APA guidelines for boys and men give explicit recognition to the link between adherence to traditional masculine norms and poor mental health outcomes for males, which is consistent with other empirical findings that found a link between these same norms and restrictive emotionality (American Psychological Association, 2018). When the two works are read together, this work, as well as all of our respondents, broadly confirms that gender inequality in India is not just a failure of some institutions, but is embedded in the culture, the family, and the economy.

Database and Methodology

This study makes use of primary survey data ($n = 127$), which were gathered through an online Google Form based on a snowball sampling technique that was triggered from within an academic university network. Due to this sampling strategy, the dataset skews toward highly educated individuals and academic professions, representing a specific network rather than a nationally representative sample of the Indian population. All the data analysis were done in Excel (data entry and cleaning) and RStudio (data visualisation and analysis). There are no missing values for the 34 variables in this dataset, which are grouped into four data sets:

Demographics (5 variables): Gender, Age, Education Level, Occupation, and Region of Residence. Awareness & Concept Attitudes (9 variables): Ordinal scales (3 to 5 levels) with items related to the concepts of gender inequality and masculinity. Attitude Scale Items (10 variables): These are items that use a Likert-type scale and assess attitudes towards statements about gender role, media, and policy. Inequality Drivers (10 variables): Binary items (0 = No, 1 = Yes) reporting on specific perceived causal factors of gender inequality in India.

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were computed for overall sample demographics and individual survey items. Given the non-parametric nature of Likert-type ordinal response scales, statistical procedures were selected to accommodate ordinal data distributions without assuming interval equality or normality (Field, 2018; Jamieson, 2004).

- **Correlation & Internal Consistency:** Bivariate associations between ordinal attitude items were evaluated using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ). To evaluate the internal consistency of identified attitude clusters, Cronbach's alpha (α) was calculated, adhering to standard reliability thresholds (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).
- **Two-Group Comparisons:** Gender-based differences between men ($n = 64$) and women ($n = 62$) were tested using the Mann-Whitney U test. One respondent whose recorded gender code fell outside these binary options was excluded from two-group comparative tests to preserve participant anonymity and avoid invalid statistical inferences from a single-element group (Field, 2018).
- **Multi-Group Comparisons:** Differences across age brackets (five groups) and education levels were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis H tests. To ensure adequate statistical power and prevent inflated Type I error rates, education sub-groups with fewer than five observations (High School, $n = 2$; Senior Secondary, $n = 1$) were excluded from education-level comparative analyses (Austin & Leonthukai, 2018).
- **Categorical Association:** A Pearson's chi-square (χ^2) test of independence was performed to assess the association between participant gender and baseline familiarity with the term "toxic masculinity" (McHugh, 2013).

Results

Demographic Characteristics: There was almost an equal division among gender with 64 male (50.4%) and 62 female (48.8%) respondents, and 1 respondent was recorded as unknown (0.8%). Age skewed young with the most numerous was the 26-35 age group with 76 respondents or 59.8 per cent, followed by 16-25 (31 or 24.4 per cent); the three older groups (36-50, 51-65 and 65+) combined had only 20 respondents (15.7 per cent), and this older group in particular was very small with just one respondent, making any pattern reached anecdotal rather than statistical. The same applied to education, which leaned toward higher ends of the scale: Doctorate holders made up the largest group in education ($n = 57$, 44.9%), followed by Master's ($n = 48$, 37.8%) and Bachelor's ($n = 19$, 15.0%); High School and Senior Secondary combined accounted for only 3 (2.4%). Combined, this is a much better educated sample than the general population and a biased sample toward respondents with early-to-mid adulthood demographics.

Respondent Demographic Profile

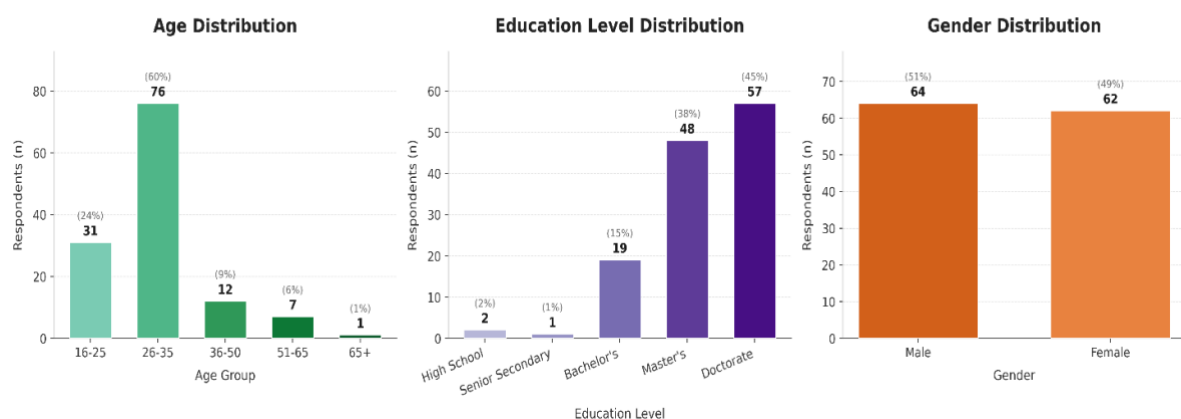


Figure 1. Distribution of age bracket, education level, and gender across the sample ($n = 127$).

The occupational distribution is based on the snowball sampling method that was started in a network of universities. The majority of the participants were academics (n=99, 78.0%), including Researchers (n=41, 32.3%), Professors/Teachers (n=30, 23.6%), and Students (n=28, 22.0%). For meaningful comparison with the professional environment, occupations were classified as part of two main analytic cohorts: academic cohort (n=99, 78.0%): Students, Researchers, and Professors/Teachers; and non-academic cohort (n=28, 22.0%): Corporate professionals (n=18, 14.2%), Business owners/employees (n=9, 7.1%), and Industry personnel (n=1, 0.8%).

Geographic distribution also showed a similar concentration, as more than half (n=71, 55.9%) of the sample was from one regional zone (Northern India). This spatial and occupational clustering is indicative of the primary recruitment approach, which is based on a network, and reflects the local, academic nature of the sample.

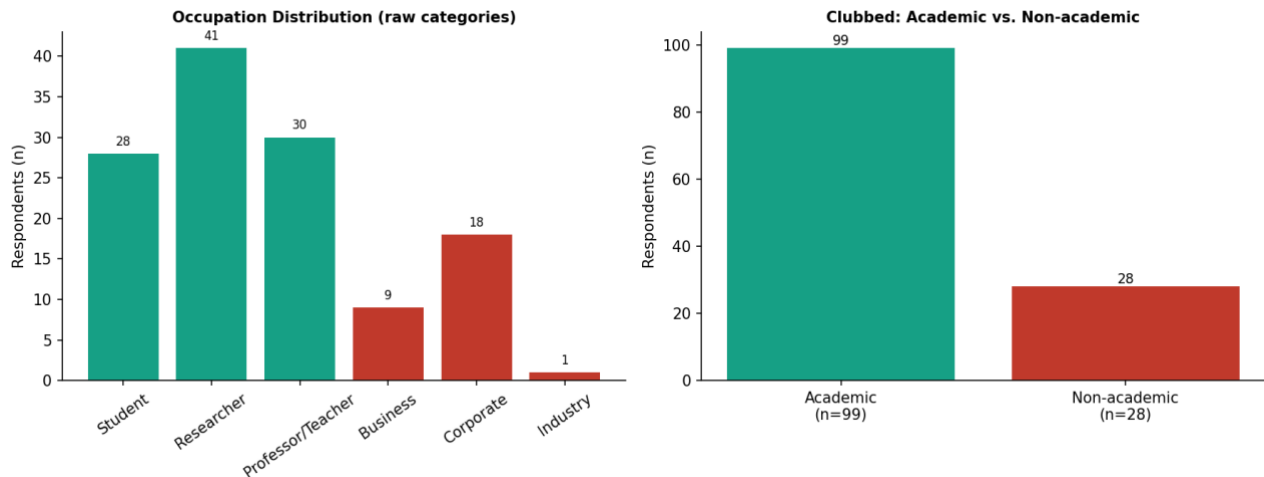


Figure 2. Occupation distribution, shown as the six original categories and clubbed into academic vs. non-academic groups

Perceived contributing factors to gender inequality

The respondents were asked whether each of the 10 factors below is a cause of gender inequality in India. Reactions were far from being uniform, with endorsement starting from 89.8% for cultural norms and traditions, all the way down to 36.2% for legal and policy barriers.

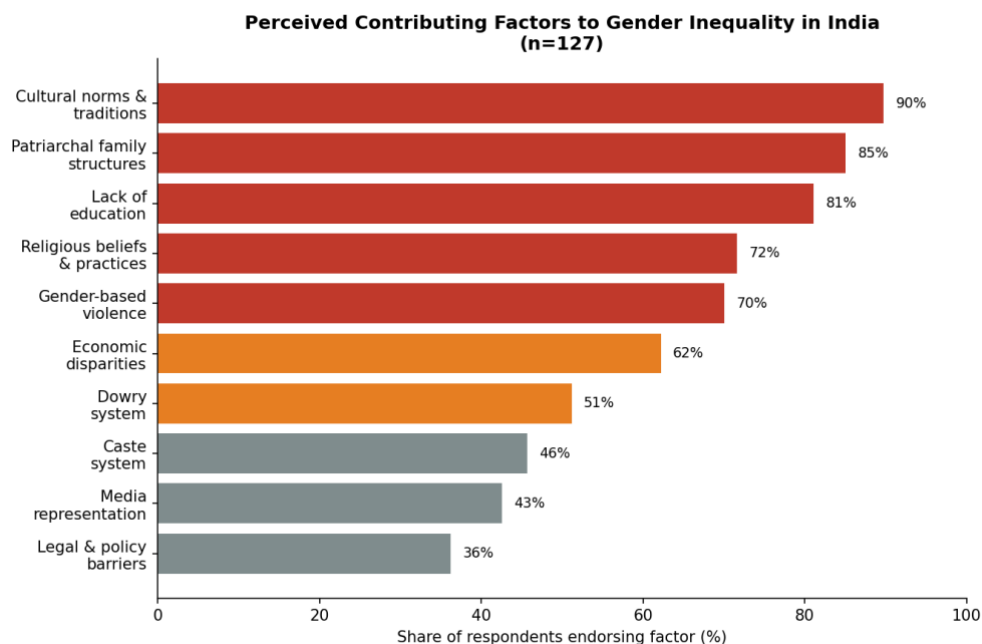


Figure 3. Share of respondents affirming that each factor contributes to gender inequality in India (n = 127).

Notice the pattern in the top and bottom of the list. The three most endorsed: cultural norms and traditions (89.8%), patriarchal family structures (85.0%), and lack of education (81.1%) are all broadly sociocultural. The two lowest, legal barriers (36.2%) and media representation (42.5%), are more institutional. At least this sample suggests that the issue is not deficient laws or media practice, but social norms and family structures deeply embedded in society. The respondents on average confirmed 6.4 of the 10 factors ($SD = 2.6$; median = 7); no one confirmed fewer than 2 factors, meaning that almost all of them take the view that gender inequality has many causes and not just one. The ten items also performed fairly well together as a set (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$), indicating that participants who believe in multiply determined gender inequality tend to have a fairly uniform perspective on the entire list, rather than endorsing some unrelated factors at random.

Attitude towards Masculinity and Gender Inequality

After examining the inter-correlations among the ordinal attitude items, some meaningful groups were formed (Figure 4). Interestingly, the highest correlation in the entire item set is between the endorsement of the traditional definition of masculinity contributing to gender inequality and the endorsement of redefining masculine norms ($\rho = .58$), which appears to be a more correlated endorsement of redefining masculine norms than any other endorsement/redefining masculinity correlation measured. A related cluster is the link between the belief that traditional gender roles influence inequality, the belief that traditional manhood contributes to inequality and perspectives on the media representation of gender roles and manhood ($\rho = .40$ to $.46$). Perceiving specific barriers to men challenging traditional masculine norms moderately correlated with feeling pressured to conform to them ($\rho = .47$), and with support for a redefinition of manhood ($\rho = .38$). This was also related to increased awareness of the constructs of gender-inequality and masculinity ($\rho = .39$) and valuing the role of education in reducing gender-inequalities ($\rho = .48$). Five of these related items can be pulled together to provide an acceptable internal reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$) that is a good basis for considering the items as a loose grouping of a "progressive masculinity attitude" rather than five unrelated items.

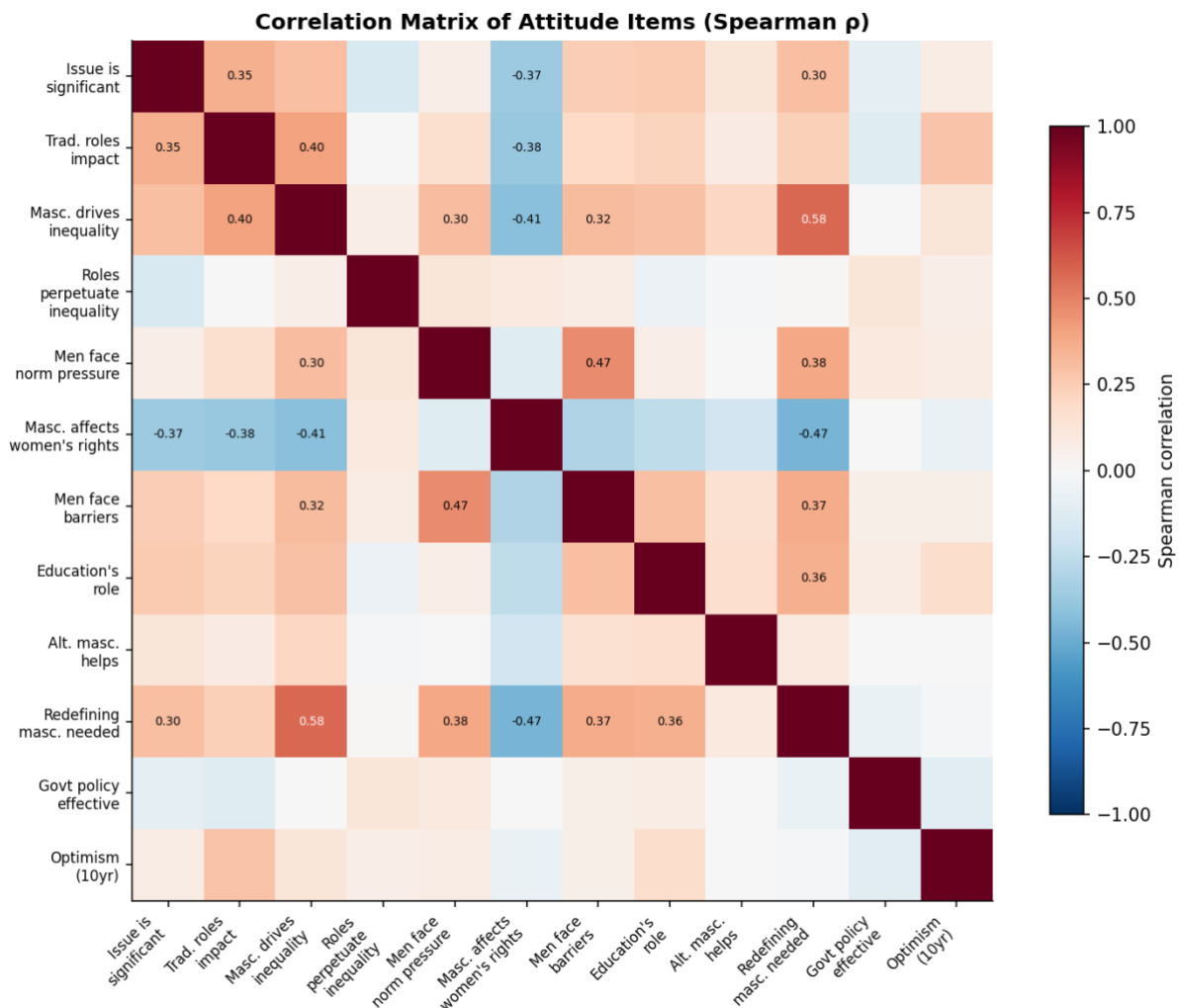


Figure 4. Spearman correlation matrix across twelve attitude items; coefficients with $|\rho| \geq 0.30$ are labeled

Demographic differences in Attitude

Having looked at how attitudes cluster together, we turn to whether they differ across four demographic dimensions collected in the survey: gender, age group, education level, and occupation (per section, 4.1). We ran Mann–Whitney U tests comparing men ($n = 64$) and women ($n = 62$) across all nineteen ordinal attitude items. Six came back statistically significant at $p < .05$, summarized in Table 1.

Item	Men (mean)	Women (mean)	p
India vs. other countries comparison	3.20	3.63	.025
Media portrayal of gender roles	2.66	2.29	.032
Traditional masculinity contributes to inequality	1.62	1.29	.020
Masculinity affects women's rights	3.39	3.71	.035
Education's role in addressing inequality	1.47	1.21	.013
Redefining masculinity needed	1.58	1.23	.012

Table-1: Mann-Whitney U test across different genders

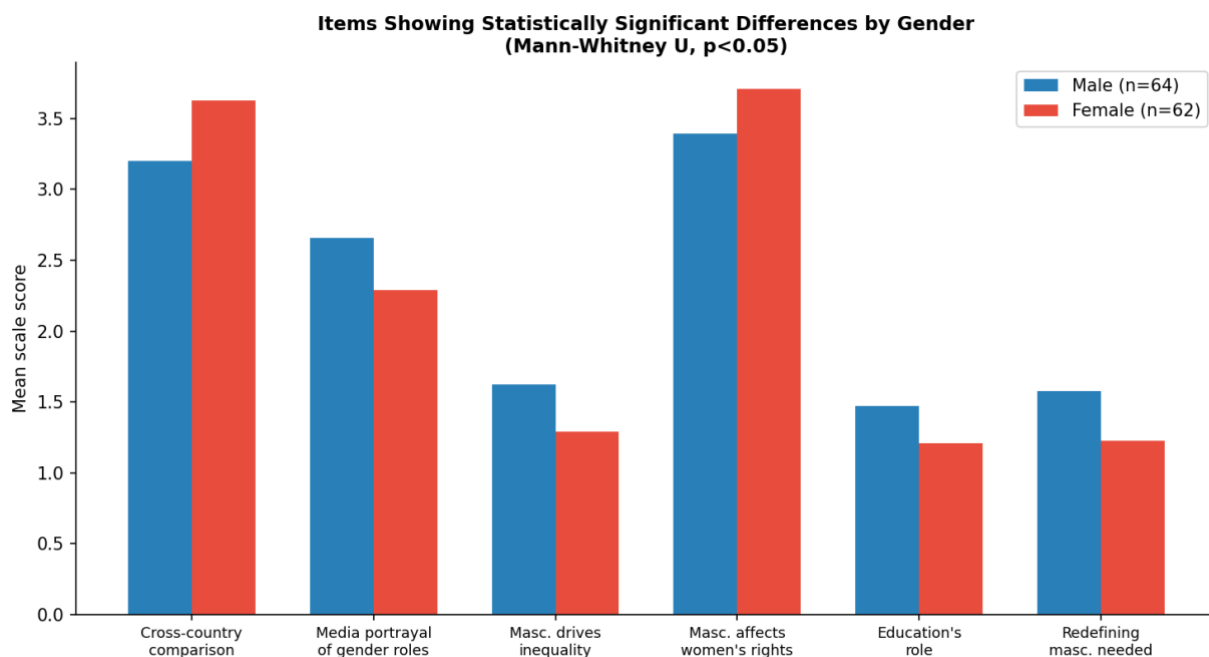


Figure 5. Mean scale score by gender on the six items with a statistically significant difference (Mann–Whitney U, $p < .05$).

On four of the six items (traditional masculinity contributing to inequality, the role of education, and redefining masculinity), women's mean scores on the continuum fell less than those of men, while on the other two items (cross-country comparison and masculinity's effect on women's rights), they scored higher than men. As there are no anchor labels confirmed for these six items, it is not possible to definitively say that the women and men in this sample are tending towards more or less agreement; it is only possible to say that there is a consistent pattern of women and men answering this sample of 13 items differently from the six items.

But, perhaps just as notable, is the number of things that were the same between men and women: thirteen of the nineteen items were found to have no significant difference between the sexes. That signals a fair amount of common ground on the overall

contours of the problem, but the actual wrangling is focused on a smaller number of items, primarily those related to the part masculinity plays in perpetuating inequality.

The chi-square test revealed no significant association between gender and hearing the term “toxic masculinity” ($\chi^2 = 0.02$, $p = .90$); there was no significant difference between men and women in this sample in hearing this term.

Frequencies of the five age groups were compared using Kruskal–Wallis tests, with significant or near significant differences being found in six items, many of which are specifically related to media and masculine norms (Table 2). As there was one score for the 65+ bracket, this is presented for reference only and is not included in the statistical comparison and should not be interpreted as representative of the 65+ bracket.

Item	16–25	26–35	36–50	51–65	p (16–25 to 51–65)
Media portrayal of gender roles	2.90	2.42	1.92	2.00	.005
Men face barriers challenging norms	1.90	1.25	1.67	1.71	.002
Men face pressure to conform to norms	1.94	1.49	1.17	1.57	.038
Media portrayal of masculinity	2.52	2.18	1.83	1.57	.036
Traditional masculinity contributes to inequality	1.74	1.43	1.17	1.00	.059
General awareness of terms	1.45	1.17	1.00	1.00	.041

Table-2: Kruskal-Wallis test across different age groups

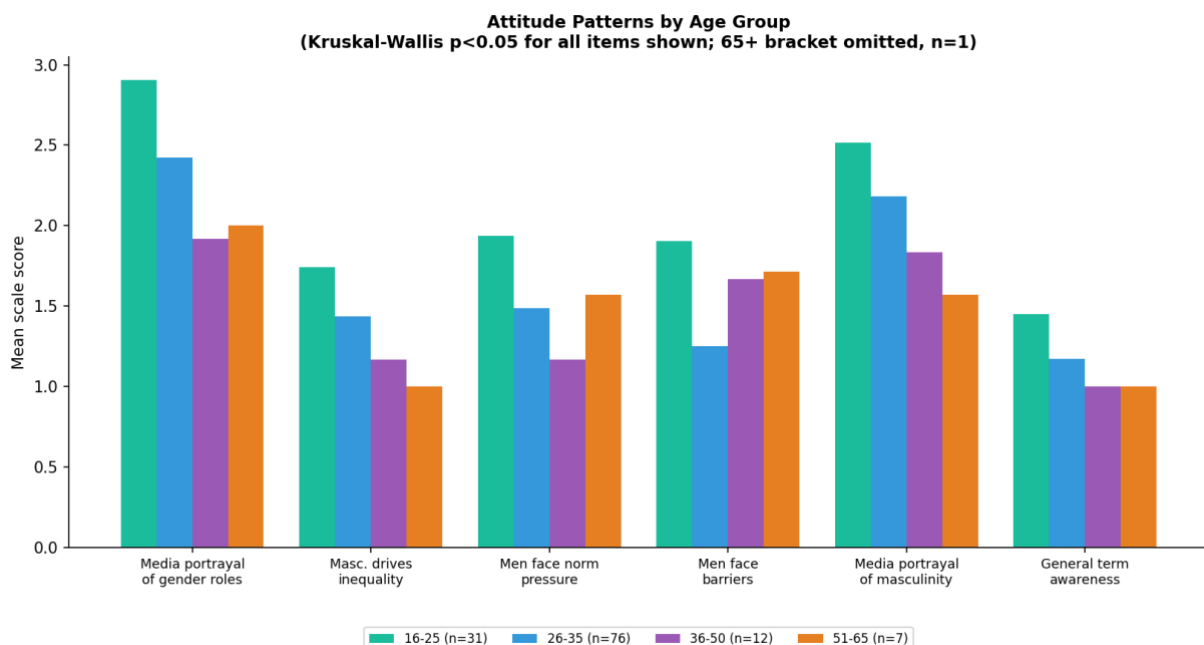


Figure 6. Mean scale score by age group on six items with a significant or near-significant Kruskal–Wallis result (65+ bracket, $n = 1$, omitted).

The one thing that stands out in these six is the generational trend; in each of these cases, the 16-25 age group posted either the highest or very high score, and the scores for the age groups decreased in steps along the way. That's a pretty consistent downhill

trend as a result rather than a whiffle graph, so it's more likely that this is a genuine generational trend in this sample than just noise, but again, without scale anchors confirmed, it may be easier to describe the shape of the gradient than make any substantive meaning statement. General knowledge of terms used to describe gender-inequality and masculinity also showed the pattern of decreasing with age, with younger respondents generally having a greater familiarity with these terms than their older counterparts.

Restricting the comparison to the three education groups with adequate sample size (Bachelor's, $n = 19$; Master's, $n = 48$; Doctorate, $n = 57$), Kruskal–Wallis tests found significant differences on five items (Table 3).

Item	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	p
Gender inequality is a significant issue	1.74	1.56	1.39	.067
How masculinity is defined	2.32	2.81	2.98	.030
Masculinity affects women's rights	2.89	3.60	3.72	.007
Media portrayal of masculinity	2.53	2.38	1.96	.012
General awareness of terms	1.42	1.27	1.09	.046

Table-3: Kruskal-Wallis test across education levels

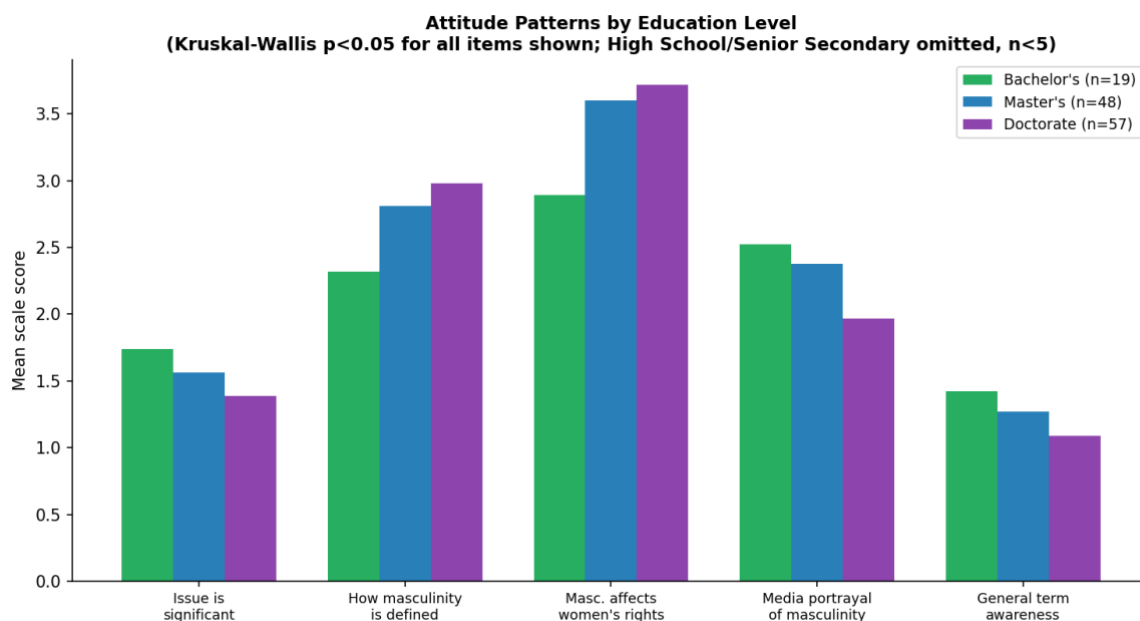


Figure 7. Mean scale score by education level on five items with a significant or near-significant Kruskal–Wallis result (High School and Senior Secondary omitted, $n < 5$).

The general awareness of gender-inequality and masculinity terminology was highest among doctorate holders and decreased in a stepwise manner from the bachelor's to the master's to the doctorate. The same was true about the definition of masculinity and views on the impact of masculinity on women's rights, which also decreased in a stepwise manner from the bachelor's to the master's to the doctorate. Interestingly, this direction was the opposite on the item asking how important an issue gender inequality is believed to be, with those who have a bachelor's degree rating the issue higher than those who have a doctorate; however, the difference was just below our significance level ($p = .067$). The portrayal of masculinity was most evident in the media, with a steady decline from bachelor's to doctorate. It is to be noted that this sample was heavily weighted towards the top of the scale for education (Section 4.1) and that the number of people in the bachelor's group was smaller, and that they may be a little older on average than respondents in the master's and doctorate groups; therefore, age and education should be read together, not separately.

Based on the method of sampling (Section 3), it is worth establishing whether or not the 99 respondents in broad academic occupations (Student, Researcher and Professor/Teacher) view things differently from the 28 respondents in Business, Industry or Corporate occupations. Five items had a significant or near-significant difference in the Mann – Whitney U tests (Table 4).

Item	Academic (n=99)	Non-academic (n=28)	p
Gender inequality is a significant issue	1.44	1.75	.034
Media portrayal of gender roles	2.40	2.75	.056
How masculinity is defined	2.91	2.39	.016
Masculinity affects women's rights	3.66	3.11	.004
Redefining masculinity needed	1.33	1.71	.044

Table-4: Mann-Whitney U test across different occupations

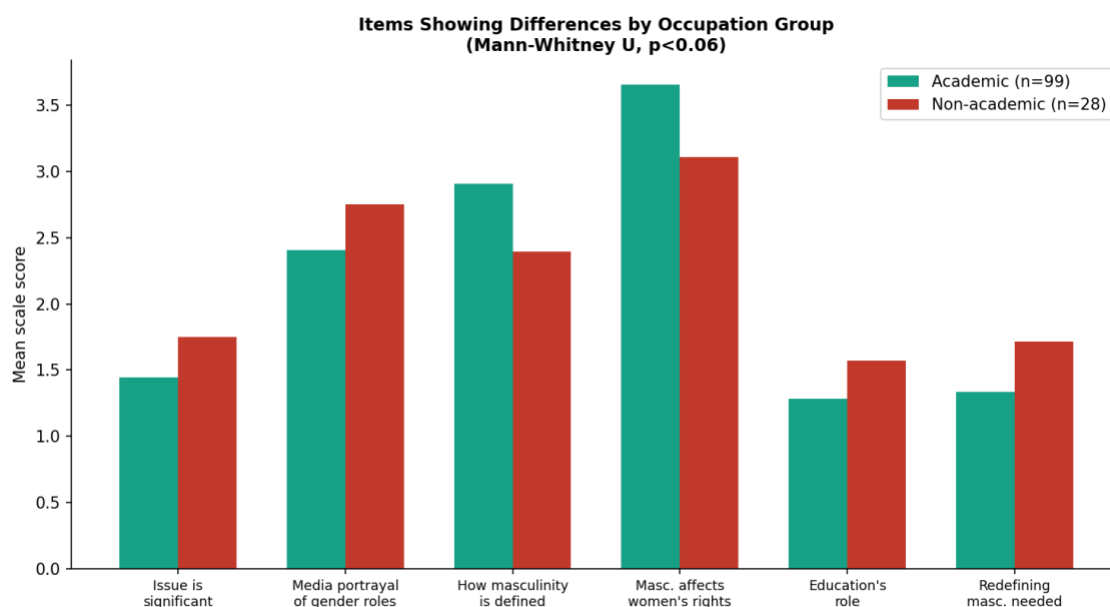


Figure 8. Mean scale score by occupation group on items with a significant or near-significant Mann–Whitney U result

Academic and non-academic respondents have different answers to some of the same questions compared to the ones that distinguished men from women, and younger from older respondents (e.g., the women's rights issues that are also associated with masculinity; the significant-issue item; the redefinition item), and these questions are only found here, of course, when they are included in the occupation comparison. However, when there were 10 binary contributing factor items, the two groups were basically identical (6.33 vs. 6.43 factors affirmed by the academic and non-academic respondents, respectively, a non-significant difference, a trivial difference at best). The same pattern as gender and age appears to be emerging about occupation, with respondents being sorted primarily according to masculine attitudes rather than the question of why gender inequality exists in the first place.

Discussion

There are three main insights from this exploratory analysis. The first is that survey respondents feel gender inequality in India is largely a matter of deeply embedded social structures and norms (culture, patriarchal family structures, past gaps in schooling). In line with these findings, prominent evaluations such as the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2025) identify structural and normative paradigms combined with gaps in economic participation as the main elements for India's low rank (even with advances in women's political quota and legal reform) (Government of India, 2023). This reflects national health

surveillance data and crime statistics, in which documented rates of violence against women and crimes against women remain high after many years of legal reform (National Crime Records Bureau, 2024; International Institute for Population Sciences & ICF, 2021). This sample indicates that legal change and social change are occurring at different paces. People may see the law being changed but still perceive the problem to be deeply rooted in culture and the structure of the family, and this is consistent with the results of the studies that indicate that even without the legal system, healthcare and demographic issues will persist due to patriarchal structures and the practice of dowry (Stroope et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2025).

The second finding shows us that attitudes toward masculinity do not occur in isolation; they form a coherent, moderately consistent cluster. Those who feel that traditional masculinity is a contributing factor to gender inequality also feel that redefining the norms of masculinity is more likely to be a part of the solution to gender inequality. This cluster is part of a larger five-item cluster that holds together statistically ($\alpha = .73$). The internal consistency of the cluster suggests people develop a more integrated perspective toward the topic, in that they connect how they perceive gender inequality is caused versus how they believe gender inequality can be solved. It is reasonable to think that the sample endorses these statements, rather than endorsing a bunch of unrelated statements. This also correlates with the existing research on masculinity, which suggests that traditional masculinity is more socially constructed and a relative hierarchy, than it is a fixed characteristic (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This also correlates with clinical research that demonstrates the negative effects of men rigidly adhering to traditional masculinity norms, not the negative effects of men's traditional masculinity on others (American Psychological Association, 2018).

Thirdly this highlights how, surprisingly, men and women of all ages, education, and occupation levels have similar attitudes towards gender equality, while the attitudes of men and women related to masculinity differ greatly. Thirteen of nineteen attitude items were similar among men and women. The other attitude items that differed among men and women related to attitudes toward masculinity. Among both the academic and non-academic participants, there was alignment in attitudes; they differed in attitudes toward the definitions of masculinity, as well as in attitudes toward the relationship between masculinity and women's rights. The participants also aligned attitudes toward the ten factor endorsements (with respondents in the non-academic group endorsing them at a higher level than the academic group). Younger participants scored differently than older participants on attitudes regarding the media and masculinity, as awareness of the terminology decreased with age. Younger participants also generally favored gender equality more than older participants in approximately half of the 48 countries surveyed (Pew Research Center, 2019). Education reveals further intricacies: Those with doctorates had the most informed opinions and the strongest views on the role of masculinity in violating women's rights but also indicated less concern compared to those with bachelor's degrees on the issue of gender inequality, which partially mirrors a Pew report that shows some respondents in higher educational levels have a stronger preference for gender equality. However, the sample in this study does not clearly show this pattern across all three educational levels. Of the four segments, each of the other segments is discussed more, and the views on the role of masculinity are influenced more by identity. However, when discussing the diagnosis of the social problem of gender inequality, everyone in the sample, to some degree, has the same opinion.

Conclusion

These explorations of 127 responses reveal that people within this sample see cultural and familial roots of gender inequality in India as dominant over institutional causes, that beliefs regarding the role of masculinity in gender inequality make up a cluster that is coherent and moderately reliable, and that while men and women share similar views on most attitude items, there is divergence between the two groups on issues related to masculinity. On top of that, we discover different patterns of attitudes within each group defined by the age and level of education of the respondents: young respondents show greater correlation with media-related and masculinity issues, and doctorate respondents have the highest level of terminology awareness and a distinct – and not just concerned – point of view on the issue of masculinity's role. It goes without saying that we would interpret these patterns as descriptive findings in need of further research, and not as generalizable conclusions applicable to other samples. A clear course for further work would involve probability sampling with balanced regional, generational, and educational representation, validation of a multi-item attitude scale, and longitudinal analysis.

Limitations

Although we cannot avoid some limitations in interpreting the findings, the major one being that the study was done using data from the survey that was administered online via Google Forms, leveraging a snowball sampling approach that originated within an academic university network. Consequently, the sample exhibits a distinct demographic concentration, characterized by higher educational attainment, a predominance of academic occupations, a larger proportion of younger age cohorts, and regional clustering. Rather than incidental biases, these characteristics are direct structural outcomes of the network-driven recruitment methodology.

Acknowledgment: No

Author's Contribution: Kamran Haider Zaidi: Literature Review, Data Collection, Methodology, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing; Srija Das: Data Collection, Methodology, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing; Ananya Pati: Literature Review, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing; Mary Tahir: Literature Review, Data Collection, Methodology, Analysis, Drafting, Referencing

Funding: No

Declaration: The authors have given consent for the publication.

Competing Interest: No

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