

# Gender Equity, Equality and Empowerment for Samoan Women

*Aruna Tuala, Felila Saufoi Amituanai, Raphael Semel, National University of Samoa*

## Abstract

*Samoan women make up half of the population and contribute much to the national economy, community and family unit of the country. The women have shown their value in decision-making processes to contribute to government ministries and business industries. However, the question still looms over them of their full fledged right to gender equity, equality and empowerment in the society. The social and cultural norms in leadership roles and responsibilities, community status and recognition of women in workplace and community is not well recognized by the society under the matai system as compared to men. Therefore, this research is to investigate and assesses how fairly and justly the women are being treated in the workplace and the community. The research findings indicate a great shift taking place where men are respecting, treating and giving opportunities to women to participate in leadership roles and responsibilities, decision making and express their views and opinions in workplace and community affairs.*

## Introduction

The research discussed the opportunity and treatment of Samoan women with the lens of equity, equality and empowerment in workplace and community obligations, participation and responsibility. The paper looked at the treatment, relationship and opportunity given by male workers to females in the workplace and community.

The cultural practices and traditional norms on the role of women emphasize that they are supporters not copartners to men. These social and cultural norms have spillover effects into the workplace, community and family unit placing women at the disadvantage and disbenefit compare to men. The paper discussed the good deeds and treatments provided by men to women in community and workplace like offering promotion, providing leadership opportunity and involving women in decision making. It also identifies the barriers still exist hindering women to access and participate fully in the workplace and community activities like running for elective office or take part in decision making and planning. The gender equity, equality and empowerment are chosen to be part of this study because Samoan women represent half of the country's population and they have the fundamental human rights to fairness and justice like men. Besides, they are the main driving force for social and economic developments of the country.

The 36 female research participants who are workers employed in the small, medium and large public and private sectors within Apia participated in the Likert scale study survey. The information obtained for the research are from the

questionnaire survey that disseminated to the 36 female workers in Apia. The questionnaires were collected, tabulated and analyzed using the simple arithmetic mean (Average).

The authors with the knowledge and experience in Samoa provide substantial insights to help fill the gaps in information on the gender equity, equality and empowerment on Samoan women. The study experienced several issues in the conduction of the survey. The greatest challenge is to persuade and convince the female workers to participate and answer the questionnaires. Also, therepresentation, relevancy and validity of data are of great concern as survey does not cover the entire country. However, every effort has been made to validate and substantiate the data and information collected from the 36 research female workers in Apia.

### **Literature Review**

The gender equity and gender equality are related but they are not the same. Sami, (2022) explained that gender equity refers to fair treatment of women and men according to their respective needs, while gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men. The gender empowerment is empowering gender to accept their viewpoints, participation in decision making, hold leadership roles, raise their status and recognition in workplace and give them freedom to pursue their desired values and goals (Jackson, 2014; Crichton, 2015)

#### ***Gender Equity***

Gender equity ensures social and economic treatments and opportunities are given to everyone impartially and fairly (Schiavo, 2023). UN Women Institute of Development Studies. (2024) stressed to create equal outcomes for community members and fairly distribute the benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The females are deemed as weak or less important compared to males so gender equity to be enforced and practiced in workplaces and communities (Rose-Clarke, 2023).

Today, gender equity has shaped and changed the roles and expectations of men and women at work and home (Schiavo, 2023). The society expects everyone to accept each othertalents, skills, and abilities, regardless of their gender (UN Women Institute of Development Studies, 2024). To respect all people and provide them opportunities to achieve better health, education and economic without gender discrimination (Rose-Clarke, 2023). Schiavo (2023) said gender equity allows women

to improve and pursue their health care benefits, workplace benefits and social benefits.

UN Women Institute of Development Studies (2024) further stated to empower intelligent and powerful women who have broken discrimination barriers and changed the future for women everywhere in the social and economic spheres of life. Promote and share with neighbors, communities and coworkers what women have accomplished to improve the world and join the efforts to focus on gender equity at workplace (Rose-Clarke, 2023).

### ***Gender Equality***

Gender equality adopted to become international human rights law by the Universal Declaration at the UN General Assembly in 1948 (UN Women, 2021). UN Women (2021) said this law recognized that all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms without discrimination in race, color, sex, language, religion, birth or other status. There is a long way yet to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities between men and women (Belingheri, Chiarello, et al, 2021). However, it is important to reduce and eliminate gender violences, unfairness treatments and abuses against women (Guthridge, Kirkman, et al, 2022). Therefore, women to access quality education, health care economic benefits, employment accessibility and leadership, opportunity to political life and decision-making. (Kurzman, Dong, et al, 2019). To harness the female equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities to be fair to meet their respective needs (UNESDOC, 2022). The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres (UNESDOC, 2022) said to achieve unfinished business of our time is to give and empower gender equality to our women and girls in the world today.

In 1993 UN General Assembly adopted a declaration on the elimination of violence against women with a comprehensive definition of violence against women and a clear statement of the rights to ensure elimination of violence against women in all forms (United Nations, 1993). The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. CSW promotes women's rights, documents the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shape global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women (Commission on the Status of Women, 2022).

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created a single UN body tasked with accelerating progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (UN Women, 2010). UN Women (2010) said a new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was formed to accelerate the progress to achieving

gender equality and empowerment of women. It merges four agencies: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

### ***Gender Empowerment***

The Millennium Development Goal Three (3) is to promote gender equality and empower women (Beloskar, Haldar & Gupta, 2024). The goal aims to eliminate females' disparity in health, education, employment and get into parliament (UN Women, 2023). The existence of a separate goal strengthens global women movements to advocate and empower females to participate in leadership and decision-making in the national and international levels (Narayanaswamy, Schöneberg, et al, 2023).

Empowering women is to allow them to know and understand gender relations and how these relations changed. Developing the sense of selves-worth, the belief in women's ability to secure desire changes and the right to control their lives. (UN Women, 2023). Gaining the ability to generate choices and exercise bargaining power and gaining the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order for women nationally and internationally (World Economic Forum, 2023).

Empowering women today, is giving power and freedom to women to empower them is the process of making them become the agents of change to hold corporative positions and political leadership (UN Women, 2023). According to World Economic Forum (2023) women have been empowered in social, educational, economic, political and legal areas through participation and decision-making process but more females to participate in these areas of developments. To strengthen and engage them in development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security for economic growth, political stability and social transformation in society (Ghosh, Mahapatra, Tandon & Tandon, 2023).

Women empowerment is for enterprise to take into account and recognize the income levels and power relations within the households, markets, communities, national and international economies where women contribute in (Beloskar, Haldar & Gupta, 2024). It is crucial to empower and allow women to have access to information, education and skills training, income and develop strategies, address their concerns and support other women (World Economic Forum, 2023). The global society needs to work to achieve the gender equity, gender equality and gender empowerment for women (Njuki, Melesseb, et al, 2022; UN Women, 2010).

### ***Samoa Gender Challenges and Concerns***

The women have different special needs compared to men and such needs must be recognized and understood by men so the equality, equity and empowerment must be harnessed to improve women (UNESCO, 2022). Samoan women make up half of the population and contribute much to the national economy, community and family unit progress and development (Crichton, 2015; Samoa News, 2021). Samoan women have shown their value in decision-making processes and continued to be the important stakeholders within the government and business industries (Schoeffel, 2010). Their needs and aspirations in the political, social and economic development process and their participation in decision-making and raising issues in workplaces need to be impartially and fairly recognized by male counterparts (Schoeffel, 2016; Schoeffel, 2010)

Samoa gender project developments have widened the scope to ensure social inclusion of women into all areas of developments. Crichton (2015) said Samoa policy objectives have moved steadily from women progression to gender equality, equity and empowerment. The women's concerns and issues are incorporated into the policy and have shown positive progress in the community and workplace environment (UN Women Asia and Pacific, 2021; PACWIP 2021). Samoa also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms (Crichton, 2015). It incorporated the principle of equality of men and women into the legal system and adopted appropriate laws to prohibit discrimination against females (Crichton, 2015; PACWIP 2021; UN Women Asia and Pacific, 2021).

The legal provisions provide women with equal access and opportunities into political life, the right to vote and stand for election, education, health and employment (UN Women 2021; PACWIP 2021). In education, women are well represented and performing well than their male counterparts. In health there are concerns on access to contraceptives, maternal mortality, pre and post-natal care (Schoeffel, 2016). Schoeffel (2016) pointed out that structural shifts in health sector are underway to ensure policy direction, health care delivery and universal access to facilities and treatment are accessible and fairly obtained by women.

Samoa government also established tribunals and other public bodies to protect women to ensure no persons, organizations or enterprises to discriminate against women (Jackson, 2014; Schoeffel, 2010). The government agrees to take all appropriate actions including legislation and special measures for women to enjoy their human rights and freedom. Samoa currently has a woman Prime Minister and five other females in parliament (Schmidt, 2016; Schoeffel, 2010). A parliamentary bill ensures 10 percent of women representatives to be in the national Legislative

Assembly (PACWIP 2021) to contribute to development of the country. The Samoan constitution makes reference to equality but has limited scope for anti-discrimination coverage beyond public institutions. Candidates contesting for political leadership must have a Matai, or chiefly title (Jackson, 2014; Schoeffel, 2010). The female Matais title is of less value compared to male Matai titles (Jackson, 2014). Despite such cultural norms, women are becoming more important stakeholders in the employment sector, and the number of women are increasing in holding onto high positions in the public and private sector in Samoa (Schoeffel, 2016).

Despite the advancement of women in the political and professional level, there continued discrimination at the cultural level that hindered progress of women in the villages (Schmidt, 2016; Schoeffel, 1987). The discriminatory practices, includes the segregation of women based on their marital status or the status of their husband continued to reinforce the value of women as a supporter of husband in the village (Jackson, 2014). This historical practice is enshrined in the traditional village structure within the village (Schoeffel, 1987). Therefore, women do not have a large representation in the village fono or the council of chiefs but contribute significantly to the development of a village (Jackson, 2014; Schoeffel, 2010).

The practices and evidences showed that women continue to be marginalized in social and economic development (Schoeffel, 2016). They faced challenges in areas of health, education, disability, economic, discrimination and domestic violence (Jackson, 2014; Samoa News, 2021). More than half of Samoan women are victims of domestic abuse subject to abuse by either their husbands, parents or other women. (UN Women, 2022; Samoa News, 2021). Women need to be looked after, treated well and take more active role in the development as per the National Policy for Women (UN Women Asia and Pacific, 2021).

### **Research Methodology**

The study uses Likert scale questionnaire survey to collect data and information from female workers working in small, medium and big public and private employment sectors in Apia. The questionnaire focused primarily on gender equity, equality and empowerment of Samoan women. The survey learned more towards a rating scale to measure and weigh the thoughts, opinions, attitudes and behaviors of female workers on how they felt they are treated at the workplace and community setting.

The questionnaire survey subdivided into three sections (gender equity, gender equality and gender empowerment) consist of statements on the equity, equality and empowerment with a series of four answer statements of strongly agree, agree,

disagree and strongly disagree. The female respondents chose the best answer option that corresponds to how they feel and think about the statement of their rights to equity, equality and empowerment. As described by Ho (2017) that respondents are presented with a range of possible answers with the Likert scale questionnaire. It is great to capture the level of agreement, feeling and thinking in regard to the topic in a more nuanced way. However, Joshi, Kale, Chandel and Pal (2015) and Chakrabartty (2014) argued that Likert scales are prone to bias responses as respondents either agree or disagree with all the statements due to fatigue or have social desirability and tendency toward extreme responding or other demand characteristics.

The total population of 36 female workers between the age of 21 and 48 were used as the sample size for the research work. They were randomly selected from small, medium and large organizations in the public and private sector in Apia town area. The questionnaire containing 21 statements adapted from the 4-point Likert scale on strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The survey questionnaires collected from all the respondents were analyzed using the simple arithmetic mean (Average). To analyze and interpret the data to produce the outcomes which were tabled as findings.

### **Findings**

The 36 female workers research participants between the age of 21 and 48 answers are tallied and analyzed in the table. The table below is divided into three sections of gender equity with eight statements, gender equality with seven statements and gender empowerment with six statements. The analysis is done with number of respondents and percentages as shown in the table.

**Table 1: Gender Equity**

Gender Equity Questions	S A	%	A	%	D	%	S D	%	To tal	Tot al%
Aggressive attitude and manner express by Samoan males towards you	5	14	15	41	12	33	44	12	36	100
Family male members behave towards you with politeness	21	58	12	33	33	9	0	0	36	100
Generally Samoan males behave towards you with politeness	7	20	21	58	8	22	0	0	36	100
Samoan males speak politely with you	7	20	23	63	6	17	0	0	36	100
Samoan males speak harshly to	3	9	14	38	15	41	4	12	36	100



	you										
	Samoan males use body or sign language to speak with you	3	9	15	41	12	36	67	136	36	100
	Samoan males do argument with you often	2	6	8	22	16	44	10	28	36	100
	Samoan males greet you well with calmness and gentleness	8	22	22	61	66	17	0	0	36	100

**Table 2: Gender Equality**

Gender Equality Questions		S	%	A	%	D	%	S	%	T	Total
		A						D		otal	al%
9	Male colleagues at workplace valued your work performance	13	37	19	53	25	55	25	55	36	100
10	Male colleagues at workplace admire your work attitude	10	28	20	56	53	13	13	33	36	100
11	Male colleagues at workplace distribute resources and things fairly with you	13	36	14	38	96	22	0	0	36	100
12	Male colleagues at workplace provide resources that you ask for to you	82	22	18	50	96	22	16	22	36	100
13	Male boss at your workplace provide	10	28	13	36	22	34	16	22	36	100

	opportunit y to you for promotion										
1 4	Male colleagues at workplace share their work, knowledge and skills with you	1 4	3 9	1 7	4 7	3	9	2	5	3 6	100
1 5	Male colleagues at workplace share their gifts, rewards and benefits with you	6	1 6	1 3	3 6	1 3	3 6	4	1 2	3 6	100

**Table 3: Gender Empowerment**

Gender Empowerment Questions	S A	%	A	%	D	%	S D	%	To tal	Tot al%	
1 6	You given opportunit y to make decisions in your family and workplace	1 5	4 1	1 8	5 0	3	9	0	0	36	100
1 7	You given opportunit y to express	1 5	4 2	1 6	4 4	5	1 4	0	0	36	100

	your views in your workplace and community meetings											
18	You given authority and power to plan and direct the male dominated group at your workplace	8	23	14	38	12	34	2	5	36	100	
19	You authorized to express your negative feelings about unfairness at your workplace or in community meetings	8	23	15	41	12	34	1	2	36	100	
20	You given the autonomy to lead the team of male and female at your workplace at times	9	25	20	55	7	20	0	0	36	100	
21	You given the	8	23	18	50	8	22	2	5	36	100	

	chance to do changes to certain policies and laws at your workplace or even in the community										
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

### ***Gender Equity***

Fifteen respondents agreed that Samoan males expressed their aggressive attitude and manner towards them at home and at workplace which was strongly supported by the other five respondents. While 12 other respondents disagreed and another four strongly disagreed about such aggressiveness expressed towards them at workplace or at home. A total of 56 percent participants said Samoan males have aggressive attitudes, while 44 percent disagree illustrating 10 percent more were witnessing the aggressiveness behavior of Samoan males.

The 91 percent respondents said male family members behave towards them with politeness, whereas 9 percent said they do not. The 33 respondents said Samoan males behave towards them with politeness and good attitude, while three others said they do not receive politeness and kindness from males. Thus, indicating that majority of Samoa males show gratitude, respect and kindness to their sisters.

The 78 percent participants agreed that generally Samoan males show respect and politeness towards them in different areas and circumstances. The other 22 percent said the Samoan males do not show respect and politeness to them. This indicates males have more respect and kindness towards females in Samoa

Twenty-three respondents said Samoan males speak to them politely and another seven strongly agreed with. While the other six participants said Samoan males speak to them impolitely. It shows that 83 percent respondents agreed and happy with how Samoa males speak to them while the other 17 percent disagreed and were unhappy with the males' approach in speaking to them. Generally, more Samoa males showed good mannerism and respect in speaking to females.

Seventeen participants agreed that Samoa males speak harshly to them, while the other 19 percent disagreed with them. The 47 percent believed males are polite with good character towards females, while 53 percent do not think so, indicating more females receive rudeness and bad mouth from males.

Twenty-eight percent participants agreed that Samoan males argued with them while 72 percent of respondents disagreed saying they do not receive argument from males. The 10 participants said Samoan males argued with them and the other 27 respondents said Samoa males are respectful and do not argue with them.

Eighty-three percent of respondents said Samoan males greet them well with calmness and gentleness approach, whereas 17 percent participants disagreed. The six participants said they do not receive calmness and gentle mannerism from males, while the 30 respondents usually receive calmness, comfort and gentle greet from Samoan males.

### ***Gender Equality***

Ninety (90) percent of respondents agreed that their male colleagues at workplace valued their performances, while the other 10 percent participants said their male counterparts at workplace do not value their performances. The 32 respondents are happy with their male colleagues recognizing their value and performance, while the other four participants said their male counterparts do not appreciate and acknowledge their value and performance at workplaces. Majority of working male individuals acknowledge and appreciate their female colleagues value and performance in workplaces.

Thirty participants agreed that male colleagues admire their work attitude in offices, while the other six respondents said their male counterparts do not appreciate and admire their work attitude at their workplaces. Eighty-four (84) percent respondents believe and like the male colleagues who admire and acknowledge their work attitude at workplaces, whereas the other 16 percent participants do not. This shows most Samoan males respect and admire their female counterparts work attitude and love to work with them.

Seventy-four (74) percent of respondents agreed that male colleagues love to distribute resources and share their experiences and other things with them in the offices. While the other 26 percent participants disagreed saying their male counterparts do not share their experiences, knowledge and distribute resources with them. The 27 participants love to work with male colleagues as they share their knowledge, experiences and resources with them, while the other nine respondents see male counterparts as greedy by not sharing their personal qualities, skills and resources with them. This demonstrates that most male workers participate, share and work well with female workers at the workplaces.

The 26 respondents agreed and were happy with their male coworkers in giving things to them when they ask them. On the other hand, the 10 participants disagreed saying their coworkers are uncomfortable and unwilling to give them things when they ask them. Seventy-two (72) percent of participants are happy and comfortable to work with male coworkers as they exchange and use things together, while the other 18 percent respondents disagreed and disliked to work with their male coworkers at the workplaces. The higher percentage of male coworkers like to give things to their female counterparts when requested or asked by their female workers.

Twenty-three respondents agreed saying their bosses at workplaces provide opportunities to them to be promoted, while the other 13 participants said their bosses do not provide opportunities to them for promotion. Sixty-four (64) percent respondents are likely to be promoted at their employment while the other 36

percent would hardly get any promotion in their job. Female workers promotion opportunities at workplaces are high compared to females' un-promotion opportunities.

Thirty-one respondents experienced their male workers share their knowledge and skills with them at the workplaces, while five female participants do not experience such at their workplaces. The 86 percent of female respondents love and appreciate their male counterparts sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences with them, while 14 percent respondents said male colleagues dislike to share their skills and knowledge with them. Most Samoa males love to share their personal skills and knowledge with their female colleagues to harness and improve the female work experiences and performances.

The 18 respondents agreed that male coworkers share their gifts, rewards and benefits with them at the workplaces. The other 18 participants disagreed saying the male counterparts do not share their gifts, rewards and benefits with them. Fifty percent respondents agreed and fifty percent participants disagreed with Samoa males' good heart and kindness in giving personal things to female workers at workplaces. This illustrates the equal splits between the kindness and unkindness in Samoa males to share gifts, rewards and benefits with female workers at workplaces.

### ***Gender Empowerment***

Thirty-three respondents agreed that they participate in decision making in workplaces and in their family units. While the other three participants partake in their family unit decision making but are rarely involved in the workplaces decision making processes. Ninety-one (91) percent participants enjoy engagement with other family members and work colleagues especially males to discuss, talk and make decisions on workplace and family matters and issues. Whereas nine percent respondents effectively engage in their family units talks and discussions but do not participate in workplaces decision making. This is an indication showing that many women are now empowered to participate in decisions making in jobs and families as active partners to their male counterparts.

Eighty-six (86) percent of participants agreed saying they openly express their views and opinions in workplaces and communal meetings, while the other 14 respondents do not express their views and suggestions in community meetings and workplaces. The 31 participants freely exercise their rights to express their thoughts and opinions on matters and issues in community and workplace. However, the other five respondents do not freely exercise their freedom of speech to express their views in public meetings and workplaces. Most Samoan women are



empowered to express their views on communal and industrial matters and issues to harness the social and economic situations of community and organizations.

Twenty-two respondents agreed saying they were given the power and authority to plan, direct and lead male coworkers at the workplace. The other 14 participants were not given the power and authority to plan and lead the male coworkers at the workplace. The 61 percent respondents were lucky to lead the male workers at the workplace, while 39 percent participants were not so fortunate to take such responsibility.

The employment sector in Samoa is now empowering more women to take leadership role and responsibility at workplaces. Sixty-four (64) percent of participants agreed saying they were encouraged to express their negative feelings about unfair treatment at workplace. Whereas, the other 36 percent of respondents disagreed about been given such opportunities to express their ill feelings about unfairness situations at workplace. The 23 respondents were given the power and authority to participate in discussions and express their feelings about unfair treatment against them, while the other 13 respondents were not allowed and authorized to express their negative feelings about the unjust and unfair treatment against them at workplace. The women have been given more power to actively share and express their negative feelings about unjust and unfairness treatment towards them at workplace.

The 29 respondents agreed that they were given the autonomy to lead the team of male workers at workplace, while the other seven participants were not given such power to lead the male coworkers. Eighty (80) percent of respondents were given the power and autonomy to take leadership roles at workplace. The other 20 percent of the participants were not empowered to gain the autonomy to lead the male counterparts at work. More Samoan women are encouraged and empowered to take lead at workplace which were once dominated by men.

The 26 participants agreed that they were given the chance to do changes to certain policies and laws at workplace and community. While, the other 10 respondents were not given such chances to participate in the development of laws and policies at workplace or community. The 73 percent of participants were happy to be involved in creating laws and policies at workplace and community. Whereas, the other 27 respondents were unfortunate not to have the chance to engage in the development of laws and policies for community or workplace. Majority of Samoan women are empowered to engage and contribute in the development of laws and policies in the employment sector and community.

## Discussion

A big shift in gender equity towards women in Samoa workplace and at home where male workers provide opportunities, respect and fair treatment to female workers with very less discrimination. In the survey more women expressed satisfaction and appreciation to their male counterparts' attitude and behavior towards them. Thirty-three women said Samoan males behave towards them with politeness and good attitude, while other three women said they do not receive such politeness and kindness from males. Fifty-four percent of women expressed their concern that males expressed their aggressiveness attitude and manner towards women at home and workplace, while the other sixteen percent of the women in the survey disagreed.

The male colleagues give recognition to fairness and equality towards women at workplace. Thirty-two women in the survey are happy with their male colleagues recognizing their value, performance and ability at work, while the other four women said their male counterparts do not appreciate and acknowledge their value and performance at workplace. 86 percent women appreciate their male counterparts sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences with them, while fourteen (14) percent of women said their male colleagues dislike sharing their skills and knowledge with them.

The male workers provided opportunities and encouragement to female workers to participate in decision making by sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences in the senior and middle management levels. Thirty-three women in the survey participated in decision making at workplace and in family unit matters. While the other three women heavily involved in family unit decision making but rarely engaged in workplace decision making processes. Eighty-six (86) percent women said females openly expressed their views and opinions in workplace and communal meetings, while the other 14 women disagreed saying they do not express their views and suggestions in community meeting or workplace.

It is demonstrated here in the survey that Samoa society has made a big leap whereby men at workplace and home are giving more opportunities and powers to women to engage and participate as their copartners in gender equity, gender equality and gender empowerment in the multipolar communal society today. The once Samoan workplace and community dominated by men in the leadership role and decision-making power are disintegrating rapidly as women are taking the administrative leadership roles and responsibilities and making decisions. The Samoan women are empowered with dignity and right to have equity, equality and empowerment as their male counterparts in the modern working industry and community.

## Conclusion

The Article 15 of Samoa's constitution stipulated that all persons are equal and entitled to equal protection under the law, and no law or executive or administrative action shall discriminate either directly or indirectly on the basis of descent, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, place of birth, or family status. The constitution explicitly states that provisions for the protection of advancement of women and other vulnerable groups are not prohibited under this Article. Whereby the Samoa government is developing policies, laws and having statutory bodies responsible to enforce the gender equity, gender equality and gender empowerment in public and private sectors and community. As indicated in the research findings discrimination and violence against Samoan women still exist but at the minimum level and are being controlled and dissuaded from regular happenings.

## References

- Belingheri, P, Chiarello, P et al. (2021). Twenty years of gender equality research: A scoping review based on a new semantic indicator. *PLOS ONE*, 16(11).  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256474>
- Beloskar, V, D, Haldar, A, Gupta, A. (2024). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A bibliometric review of the literature on SDG 5 through the management lens. *Journal of Business Research*, 172.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114442>
- Chakrabartty, S, N. (2014). Scoring and Analysis of Likert Scale: Few Approaches. *Journal of Knowledge Management and Information Technology*, 1(2), 31 – 44.  
Doi: 4.08.15 DOA 4.02.15
- Commission on the Status of Women. (2022). Climate Change Environment Disaster Risk Reduction: Gender equality at the center of solutions.  
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw66-2022>
- Crichton, B. (2015). Gender equity in Samoan laws: progress vs contradictions. *Journal of South Pacific Law, Special Issue on Pacific Custom*.
- Ghosh, S., Mahapatra, M. S., Tandon, N., & Tandon, D. (2023). Achieving Sustainable Development Goal of Women Empowerment: A Study among Self-help Groups in India. *FIIB Business Review*, 0(0).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/23197145231169074>
- Guthridge, M., Kirkman, M., Penovic, T. et al. Promoting Gender Equality: A Systematic Review of Interventions. *Soc Just Res* 35, 318–343 (2022).  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-022-00398-z>
- Ho, G, W, K. (2017). Examining Perceptions and Attitudes: A Review of Likert-Type Scales Versus Q-Methodology. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 39(5), 607 – 608.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945916661302>

- Jackson, L. C. (2014). Gender: A development issue for Samoa. CSS doi: 0.13140/RG.2.2.33112.83203
- Joshi, A, Kale, S, Chandel, S & Pal, D, K. (2015). Likert Scale: Explored and Explained. *Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology* 7(4), 396-403. Doi:10.9734/BJAST/2015/14975
- Kurzman, C., Dong, W., Gorman, B., Hwang, K., Ryberg, R., & Zaidi, B. (2019). Women's Assessments of Gender Equality. *Socius*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023119872387>
- Martinez, Holly. What is gender equity? definition and examples. United Way NCA. 07th July, 2022. <https://unitedwaynca.org/blog/what-is-gender-equity/>
- Narayanaswamy, L, Schöneberg, J, et al. (2023). Decolonising (feminist) knowledge and practice. *Development & Gender*, 31(2-3), 307 – 321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2023.2273121>
- Njuki, J, Melesseb, M. et al. (2022). Meeting the challenge of gender inequality through gender transformative research: lessons from research in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 44(2), 206 – 228. DOI: 10.1080/02255189.2022.2099356
- Pacific Women in Politics. (17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021). Samoa. <https://www.pacwip.org/country-profiles/samoa/>
- Rose-Clarke K. Gender (in)equity in global mental health research: A call to action. *Transcultural Psychiatry*. 2023;60(3):400-411. doi:10.1177/13634615231180376
- Sami, S. (2022). A Study On Gender Equality And Women Empowerment: A New Insight Into Sustainable Development Goals. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371335483>
- Samoa News. (11th May 2021). Samoa's gender-based violence still a concern at UN rights council. <https://samoanews.com/regional/samoas-gender-based-violence-still-concern-un-rights-council>
- Schiavo, R. (2023). The Promise and Reality of Gender Equity: Implications for Health, Society, and Communication. *Journal of Communication in Healthcare*, 16(3), 225 – 227. Doi.org/10.1080/17538068.2023.2258682
- Schmidt, J. (2016). Being 'Like a Woman': Fa'afāfine and Samoan Masculinity. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 17(3-4), 287 – 304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2016.1182208>
- Schoeffel, P. (1987). Rank, gender and politics in ancient Samoa: The genealogy of Salamāsina O Le Tafaifā. *Journal of Pacific History*.
- Schoeffel, P. (2010). Gender, Status and Power in Samoa. *Canberra Anthropology*, 1978(2), 69-81. Doi: 10.1080/03149097809508656
- Schoeffel, P. (2016). Revitalization of Women's Associations for Public health Promotion in Samoa. Doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.12208.56327
- UN Women Asia and Pacific. (2021). Gender Equality Brief for Samoa. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/11/gender-equality-brief-for-samoa>

- UN Women Institute of Development Studies. (2024). The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 2024: Gender, poverty dynamics and the implications for social protection in a world of repeated shocks and protracted crisis. *Research and Data Section, UN-Women*.  
[https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/11\\_sept\\_2023\\_world\\_survey\\_egm\\_report.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/11_sept_2023_world_survey_egm_report.pdf)
- UN Women. (2 July 2010). UN Creates New Structure for Empowerment of Women.  
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2010/7/un-creates-new-structure-for-empowerment-of-women>
- UN Women. (2021 14 September). Gender equality and the UN General Assembly: Facts and history to know.  
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/9/feature-gender-equality-and-the-general-assembly-facts-and-history>
- UN Women. (2023). Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2023. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2023>
- UNESCO. (2022). Gender Equality. Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet.  
<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/gender-equality>
- United Nations. (1993). Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.  
<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/violenceagainstwomen/publications/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women-0>
- World Economic Forum. (20 June 2023). Global Gender Gap Report 2023: Benchmarking gender gaps. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2023/>