

© Kamla-Raj 2011

PRINT: ISSN 0971-8923 ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6756

J Soc Sci, 26(3): 163-169 (2011)

DOI: 10.31901/24566756.2011/26.03.01

Is Gender Equality Still an Issue? Tensions and Contradictions Embedding the Work of Feminists Today

Newman Wadesango

*Centre for Learning and Teaching Development, Walter Sisulu University,
P. Bag 19712, East London, Republic of South Africa*

Telephone: 0738539431; Email: nwadesango@wsu.ac.za, newmanwadesango@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS Feminism. Gender Equality. International Instruments. Regional Instruments. State Policies. Gender Discrimination

ABSTRACT Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence. Although the gender gap in labour market participation has narrowed, gender differences in everyday experiences persist in developing countries. This article reviews the place of feminists today in the advancement of gender equality in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and measures taken by the Member States to address the issue. The article is based on secondary data collected through review of studies, reports, policy documents and surveys from various data sets from national, regional and international organisations. Key issues with reference to unequal power relations investigated include economic empowerment, educational empowerment, political empowerment and land tenure empowerment. Conclusions drawn from the review indicate tensions and contradictions that embed the work of feminists and this has serious implications on the achievement of gender equality in society. Although States, through feminist organizations, have put in place legislation and other measures to outlaw gender inequality, practices continue unabated due to persistence of cultural attitudes, lack of capacity, resources and commitment among the implementers.