

Editor's Note

Inequality and Society: A Call to Action

Inequality is a pervasive issue that affects societies worldwide and can manifest in various forms. The chasm between the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor, continues to widen, casting a dark shadow over the fabric of our communities. The ramifications of such an imbalance are felt across all spheres of life, leaving a trail of desolation and despair in its wake.

At the heart of this quandary lies a complex web of interrelated factors that encompass economic, educational, gender, religious, racial, and political dimensions. The distribution of wealth and resources, access to education, healthcare, other essential services, the level of political representation and voice are among the critical factors that contribute to the perpetuation of inequality. To quote Amartya Sen, “True freedom and well-being are not just about having access to resources or material goods, but about having the ability to make choices and pursue one's goals in life.” The consequences of inequality are multifaceted, affecting both individuals and societies. It leads to social exclusion, lower quality of life and limited economic opportunities. Unfortunately, the notion of a level playing field still remains a distant dream, and the prospects of achieving genuine social and economic mobility seem increasingly bleak. One significant aspect of inequality is the concentration of wealth and resources among a small group of individuals or corporations, widening the gap between the rich and poor, with the latter often struggling to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare. Inequalities in education and healthcare can further exacerbate the divide, with disadvantaged individuals

experiencing lower life expectancies and lower quality of life. Inequality can also have a profound impact on social and political stability. The unequal distribution of resources and opportunities can lead to social unrest and civil conflicts. Additionally, inequalities in political power can lead to authoritarian regimes and the suppression of democratic values.

Inequality breeds a pernicious culture of division and exclusion that undermines the very foundations of a just and cohesive society. It fosters feelings of resentment, bitterness, and disillusionment among those who are left behind, and a sense of entitlement and privilege among those who benefit from the status quo. This, in turn, fuels a vicious cycle of conflict, unrest, and instability that threatens to engulf us all.

Therefore, it is imperative that we adopt a holistic approach to tackle this issue, one that transcends narrow partisan interests and seeks to promote the common good. This entails a concerted effort that involves the efforts of policymakers, individuals, and communities to address the root causes of inequality, such as improving access to education, healthcare, and other public services, and reforming economic as well as social policies that favour the few at the expense of many. It also requires a commitment to build bridges across the divides that separate us, by fostering dialogue, empathy, and mutual respect.

Against this backdrop, the current issue of *Akademios* aims to address the theme: **Inequality and Society** in order to bring in scholarly deliberations on this issue. This theme is taken up with the belief that with right discussions, policies and their implementation, we can have a world where the fruits of progress are shared by all, where the dreams of the marginalized are realized, and where the dignity of every human being is upheld.

I sincerely thank our authors for contributing their research piece and enlightening the readers with their unique voice & perspective on this pertinent matter that requires urgent resolution, while remaining true to the scholarly standards of academic writing. It is evident that the

articles are well-researched, thoughtfully crafted, and meticulously edited to ensure their clarity and coherence. I also thank our hardworking associate editors for their continuous efforts in bringing in together these write ups, and the board of reviewers for their valuable feedback. On behalf of our editorial team, I also want to express my gratitude to our Principal, Prof Kalpana Bhakuni for her advice and support in the publication of this issue.

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