

Unveiling The Veiled Injustices of Women Researchers in Cameroon

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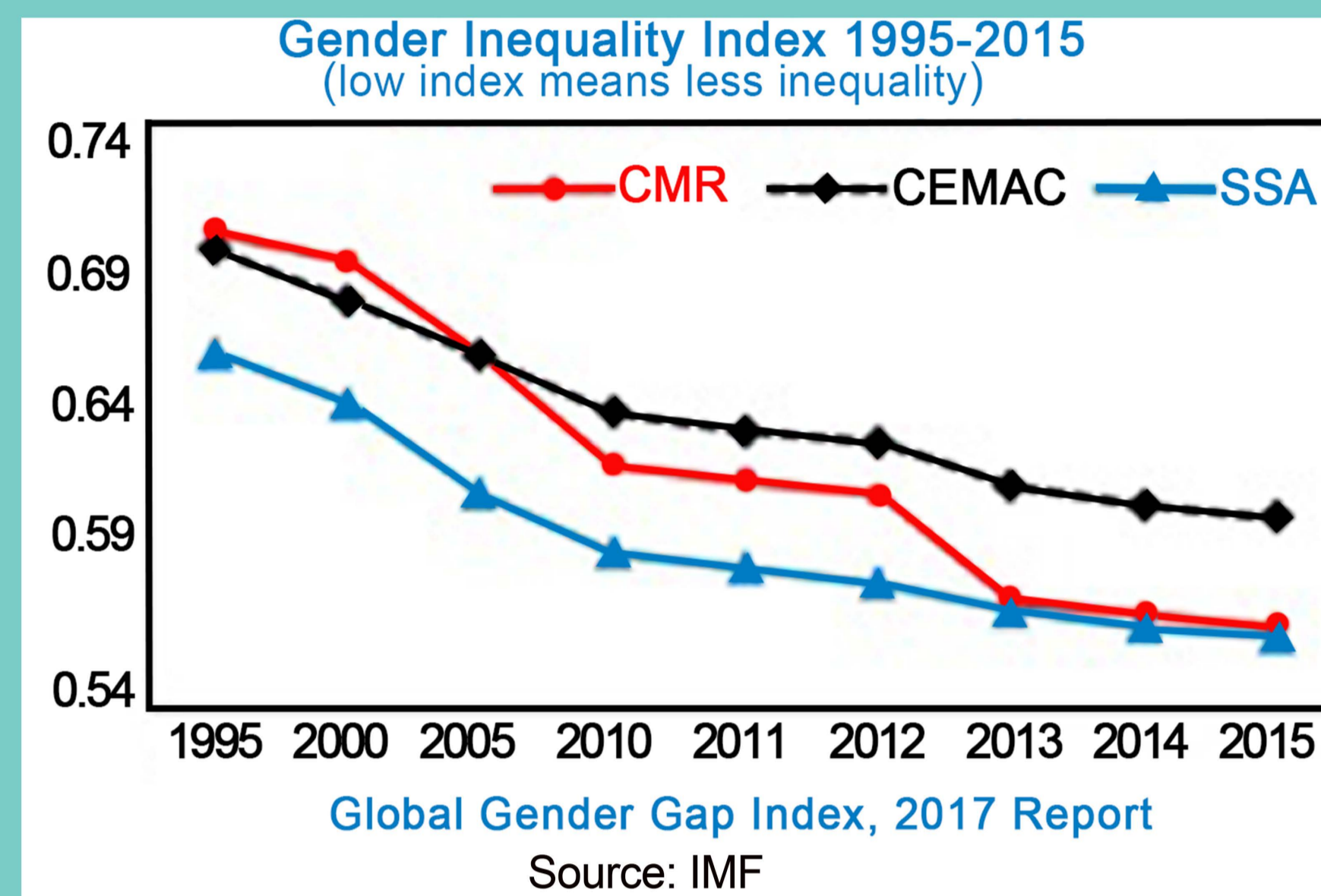
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Introduction

Despite the signing of various international conventions, such as EDAW and Maputo, aimed at upholding women's rights, women in Cameroon, including researchers, continue to face multiple injustices. Persistent inequalities hinder their full participation and advancement in research, leading to disparities in the field.

In Cameroon, for instance, female researchers account for only 7% of academia professors (TDR 2020). Atanga (2018) reveals that women constitute a mere 18% of the faculty, with a paltry 10% as professors, falling below the critical threshold of 30% outlined in the Beijing Platform. These statistics highlight the significant gender disparity in academia. Furthermore, Cameroon was ranked 141 out of 162 countries in terms of gender equality in 2019, with a gender equality index of 0.560 (UN 2019).



Objectives

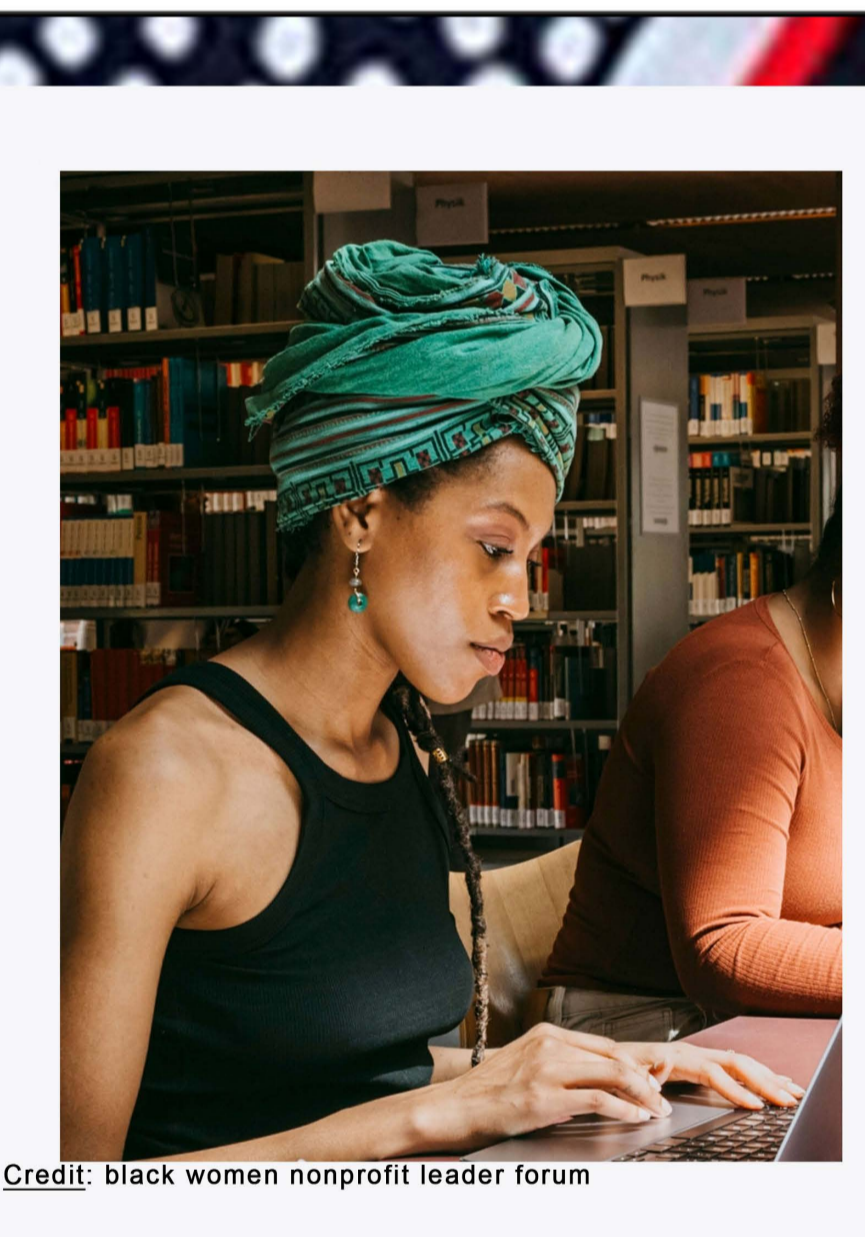
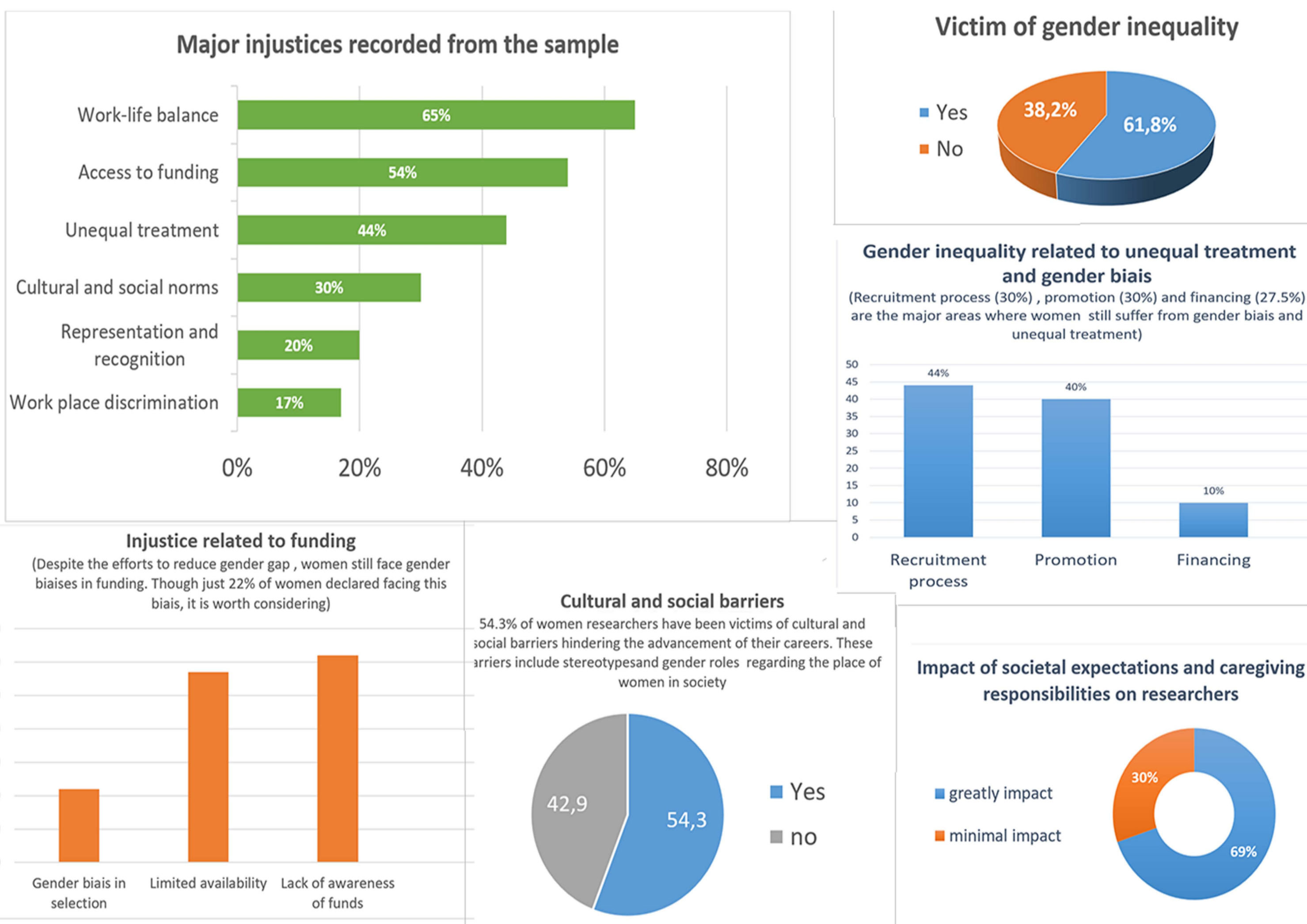
1. Examine the injustices faced by women researchers, raise awareness, foster understanding and advocate for a positive change in order to reduce gender disparities.
2. Provide recommendations to foster a more equitable research landscape.

Participants

- 200 women (women researchers, focus groups, academic administrators, and policy makers).
- Diverse fields including STEM, arts, and social sciences.
- Various academic backgrounds (PhD, senior lecturers, professors, research associates etc).
- Distribution: 50% early career professionals (0-5 years), 30% professionals (5 years and above), 10% administrators and policy makers, and 10% retired researchers.

Results from a sample of 200 researchers

The analysis of the questionnaires and interviews unveiled a range of injustices experienced by women researchers, which can be attributed to cultural norms and societal expectations deeply rooted in traditional patriarchal societies



Methods

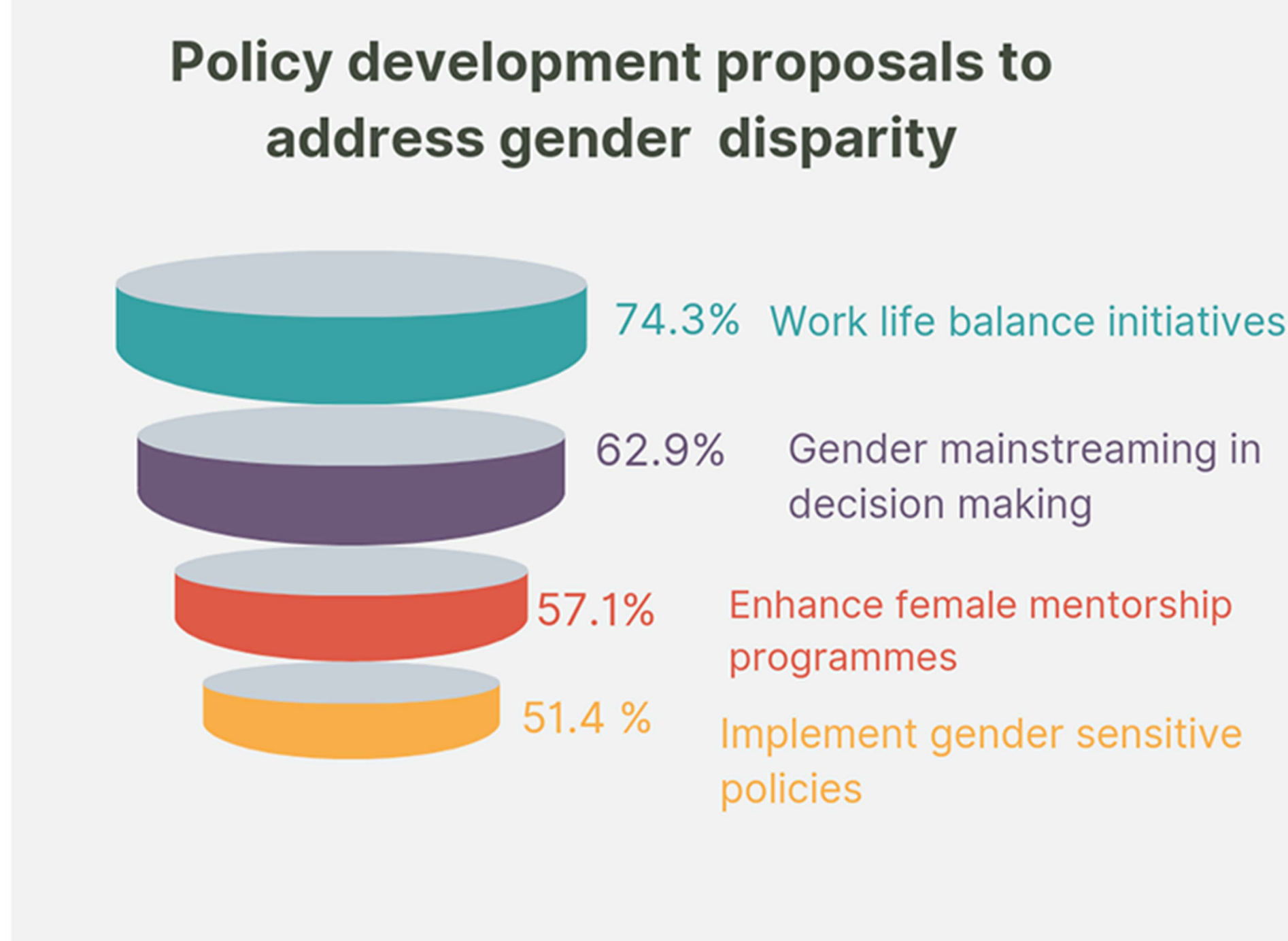
Data collection: mixed methods approach through qualitative data (in-depth interviews and focus group discussions) and quantitative data (200 questionnaires to women researchers)
Data analysis: social role theory using Eagly's (1987) framework. This theory explores how traditional gender roles and stereotypes influence experiences and contribute to gender disparities

Conclusion

Addressing the injustices faced by women researchers is crucial for achieving gender equality in the research sphere. These injustices which have as effects reduced research productivity and limited opportunities for career advancement, greatly limit women's potentials.. Implementing policies to promote equal opportunities, address biases, provide support systems, and challenge societal norms can create a more inclusive and productive research environment.

Recommendations proposed by women researchers

- 01 CREATE GENDER INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT
- 02 ENCOURAGE WORK LIFE BALANCE INITIATIVES
- 03 DEDICATED FUNDING PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN
- 04 CHALLENGE GENDER STEREOTYPES AND NORMS
- 05 PROMOTE PUBLICATION EQUITY
- 06 IMPLEMENT GENDER QUOTAS FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



Testimonies



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