

Equality Rights

Nadtathida Chuamchim¹, Noppawan Phuengpha²

^{1,2} Faculty of Political Science and Law, Burapha University, Thailand

*Correspondence Author Email: noppawanp@go.buu.ac.th

Abstract. Equality rights are fundamental to human dignity, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or sexuality, receive equal treatment under the law. In today's hyperconnected world, where diverse identities and communities interact more frequently through digital means, the struggle for equality—especially in terms of marriage rights for people of diverse sexualities—remains significant. While some countries have embraced equal marriage, others continue to uphold traditional views, denying certain groups their basic human rights. This journal explores the evolution of equal marriage rights as a reflection of broader human rights developments. It examines the principle that all human beings are born equal and deserve the right to marry whomever they choose, free from discrimination. Using a qualitative analysis, we investigate case studies from countries that have passed equal marriage laws and compare them to nations where such laws are still absent. By analyzing the underlying social and political factors contributing to the advancement or hindrance of these rights, this paper aims to highlight the importance of equal marriage in achieving human equality in a globalized, interconnected world.

Keywords: gender, sexuality, equal marriage

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly interconnected global society, the movement for equal rights has gained prominence, especially concerning marriage equality. As digital platforms bring together diverse voices and communities, the issue of equality rights, particularly the right to marry regardless of gender or sexuality, has become more urgent. Hyperconnectivity fosters an environment where societies are more exposed to different cultures and ideologies, making human rights discussions more accessible to a global audience. However, while the idea of universal human rights is widely accepted, the implementation of these rights, especially in terms of marriage equality, remains inconsistent worldwide.

Equality in marriage is fundamentally a human right. Marriage laws not only reflect societal values but also ensure that individuals are recognized and respected, regardless of their gender or sexuality. The United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights asserts that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (United Nations, 1948), and this includes the right to marry. Despite this, many countries continue to impose restrictions on marriage based on gender, often citing cultural or religious reasons.

Over the past two decades, there has been significant progress in the legal recognition of equal marriage rights, with several countries legalizing same-sex marriages. These changes have often come after intense public debate and legal battles. Countries like the Netherlands, Canada, and Spain were among the first to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples, setting a precedent for other nations. Nevertheless, there are still many parts of the world where equal marriage is either prohibited or heavily restricted, as is the case in several Asian and African countries. The reluctance to embrace equal marriage rights in these regions often stems from deeply ingrained traditions, conservative religious beliefs, and political opposition.

This journal explores the socio-political and legal aspects of equal marriage, drawing from case studies of countries that have embraced marriage equality and those that continue to resist. Through

this exploration, we aim to shed light on the importance of equal marriage as part of the broader struggle for human rights and equality.

METHODS

The methodology used for this journal is a qualitative approach, primarily relying on case studies from countries that have legalized equal marriage and those that have not. By comparing legislative frameworks, societal attitudes, and the role of activism, this study seeks to understand the factors that have either facilitated or hindered the progression toward marriage equality. Data for the case studies were gathered from legal documents, human rights reports, and relevant academic literature. The study also includes interviews and surveys conducted with LGBTQ+ activists and legal experts in various countries to provide firsthand insights into the ongoing struggle for equal marriage rights.

This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of the varying societal contexts in which equal marriage debates occur. By focusing on qualitative data, the journal captures the nuances of public opinion, cultural values, and political climates that influence the development of marriage laws across different regions. Through the analysis of these factors, we aim to identify the common challenges faced by LGBTQ+ communities and the strategies that have been most effective in achieving legislative progress.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Global Overview of Equal Marriage Rights

The landscape of equal marriage rights is diverse and complex. While many Western nations have legalized same-sex marriage, other parts of the world remain steadfast in their opposition. In the United States, for example, the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015 marked a historic turning point in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. This decision, made by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, affirmed that marriage is a fundamental right for all citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation (Human Rights Campaign, 2015). Similarly, in Europe, countries like Germany and Ireland have passed equal marriage laws following significant public support and referendums.

In contrast, countries such as Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria maintain stringent laws against same-sex marriage. In these regions, societal attitudes are heavily influenced by religious beliefs and traditional values that frame marriage as a union strictly between a man and a woman. In Russia, for example, the government has actively promoted anti-LGBTQ+ policies, reinforcing traditional family values and criminalizing same-sex relationships (Amnesty International, 2019). This has led to widespread discrimination and violence against the LGBTQ+ community, further marginalizing them from mainstream society.

Despite these challenges, progress is being made, particularly in Latin America. Countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia have passed equal marriage laws, signaling a shift toward more inclusive policies. Argentina was the first country in Latin America to legalize same-sex marriage in 2010, setting an example for its neighbors (Sánchez, 2010). The decision was driven by a combination of strong advocacy from LGBTQ+ organizations and progressive leadership within the government.

2. Societal Impacts of Equal Marriage

Legalizing equal marriage has profound social implications, not only for LGBTQ+ individuals but also for society at large. Studies have shown that marriage equality leads to greater social acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals, reducing stigma and discrimination (Badgett, 2011). In countries where same-sex marriage is legal, LGBTQ+ individuals report higher levels of psychological well-being and a greater sense of belonging within their communities (Riggle, 2016). Furthermore, marriage equality promotes social cohesion by recognizing the rights and contributions of all citizens, regardless of their sexual orientation.

On the economic front, marriage equality also brings financial benefits to individuals and societies. LGBTQ+ couples gain access to spousal benefits, such as health insurance, tax breaks, and inheritance rights, which were previously denied to them. This economic stability allows same-sex couples to contribute more effectively to the economy, thereby benefiting society as a whole (Badgett, 2009). In addition, studies suggest that countries with progressive LGBTQ+ policies tend to attract more foreign investment and tourism, further boosting economic growth (Carroll & Mendos, 2017).

3. Barriers to Equal Marriage

While progress has been made, several barriers continue to hinder the global recognition of equal marriage. Cultural and religious opposition remains one of the most significant challenges. In many countries, traditional views on marriage are deeply ingrained, and any attempt to challenge these norms is met with resistance. For example, in countries like South Korea and Japan, public opinion remains divided on the issue of same-sex marriage, despite growing international pressure to adopt more inclusive policies (Hancocks, 2020).

Political leadership also plays a crucial role in the advancement or obstruction of marriage equality. In nations where governments are supportive of LGBTQ+ rights, legislative changes are more likely to occur. However, in countries with conservative leadership, progress is often stalled or reversed. For instance, in Poland and Hungary, right-wing governments have actively campaigned against LGBTQ+ rights, framing them as a threat to national identity and traditional values (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

Marriage equality is not just about recognizing the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals; it is about affirming the principles of equality, dignity, and fairness for all. As this journal has shown, the path toward equal marriage is fraught with challenges, but it is also marked by significant victories. In a hyperconnected world, where ideas and movements transcend borders, the fight for equal rights is more visible and urgent than ever.

As more countries move toward marriage equality, it is crucial to continue advocating for the rights of all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation. While legal recognition is an essential step, true equality will only be achieved when societal attitudes shift toward greater acceptance and inclusion of LGBTQ+ communities. By fostering a culture of respect and understanding, we can build a world where every individual is free to love and marry whom they choose.

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