

Key Aspects

- Gender and gender discrimination?
- Unpacking gender-Social aspects.
- Economic aspects of gender bias.
- Constitutional provisions for gender equality
- Women movements and its outcome.

Gender as a term refers to the differentiation or varying attitudes between persons on the basis of their sex. There are two kinds of differences between men and women i.e., sex and gender. Sex signifies the physical and biological differences



between females and males. Which is a natural phenomenon. On the other hand gender refers to the socially constructed differences between men and women. These ideas further give way to the exploitation and discrimination against women.

Discrimination is associated with prejudice and regarded as objectionable. It may entail behaviour either to benefit an individual or harm the individual concerned. Gender discrimination refers to a belief in relation

to gender of a person which may or may not carry legal consequences but is of social nature.

When we talk of gender discrimination, we talk about patriarchy which is a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. It manifests itself in preference for a son, discrimination against daughter, in food distribution, burden of household work, lack of opportunities for girls, lack of educational opportunities, restricted mobility, acts of domestic violence, lack of inheritance to women. Foot binding in China, Sati system, dowry system, ill-treatment of widows and child marriage in India are manifestations of patriarchy. The dichotomous nature of gender leads to the creation of inequality that manifests itself in numerous dimensions of daily life. Also when distinctions are made between males and females and differential treatment is given out to boys and girls, then there is gender inequality.

Key Question 1

What is gender?

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF UNPACKING GENDER ROLE

Gender role: Gender roles develop through internalisation and identification during childhood. This internalisation of gender norms can be seen through the example like which types of toys children are typically given. While “feminine” toys often reinforce interaction, nurturing and closeness, the “masculine” toys reinforce independence and competitiveness. Education also plays an integral role in the creation of gender norm.

Gender Discrimination in School

Gender discrimination is an unhealthy social development. It causes damage to the society in many ways. We see these discriminations in almost every walk of life. In the schools, that are an integral part of a healthy society, there prevails gender discrimination as well, but of a different kinds. What we need to do is to provide equal opportunity to all the school children whether, a boy or a girl.

Inequalities prevailing in the field of education and at times at the school level are as follows:

- The girl child is very often not allowed to continue her education, especially in the rural areas even by the parents. Some people do not favour to send their girl child to get school education even upto primary level. This situation is further disturbing among the tribals, minority communities and the other socially and economically weaker sections of the society.
- There is alarming dropout rate of girls in the schools in primary education. The

girls dropout rate is about 30 percent more in comparison to the boys.

The girls are at the core of our social structure. They need to be nurtured, cared and educated properly. Their upliftment is essential to the well being of every society. Neglecting girl child simply means destroying the possibility of a mentally strong, sensitive and socially responsible individual. We should not forget that by providing proper education to the girls, we are building a healthy society for future generations.

We can begin by encouraging education to the girl child at the school level. It is important to infuse the sense of gender equality at the elementary level. At school, we can establish gender equality by following means:

- The girl must feel equally safe, as it is for the boys.
- The children, whether a boy or a girl, should be equally encouraged to participate in the extra-curricular activities. They should be equally respected, cared for and valued. The girl child should be given fair and unbiased treatment with a view to encourage them and raise their confidence.

In this way we can ensure better opportunities for the girls creating a path to a healthy society. The schools can play an effective role in establishing gender equality by guiding the tender minds with new ideas and sense of social responsibility.

Let's Find OUT

Read the newspaper and cut the news about discrimination in our society and paste them in your scrapbook.

The Reinforcement of Male Dominance

Male dominance is both a socialising and structural force. It exists at all levels of society,

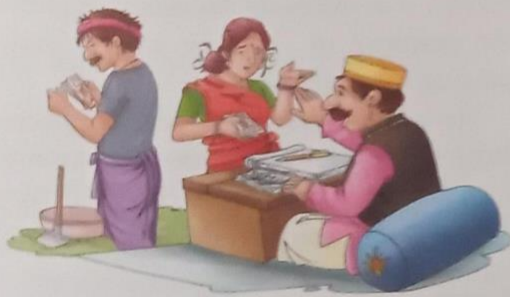
from the interpersonal interaction of women and men to the patterning of gender that is found in all cultural and social institutions.

Language is one such form that perpetuates male dominance by ignoring women. Use of the pronoun 'he' when the sex of the person is unspecified and of the generic term, mankind to refer to humanity in general are obvious examples of how women is neglected in the popular languages spoken in different parts of the world.

Gendered media : The media plays up traditional traits of men and women. Boys and men are often portrayed as active and aggressive persons while women are portrayed as quiet, submissive and pretty.

Economic Aspect of Gender bias

In the workplace, wage discrimination is the discrepancy of wages between two groups due to a bias towards or against a specific trait with all other characteristics of both groups being equivalent.



Gender based wage discrimination

The gender income disparity can also be attributed in part to occupational segregation, where groups of people are distributed across occupation according to gender. Men and women possess different physical, emotional and mental capabilities. These different capabilities make the genders make the comparatively better suited for certain jobs. While some occupations have become more

gender integrated (mail carriers, bus drivers and real estate agents), occupations including teachers, nurses, secretaries and librarians have become female dominated. Occupations including architects, electrical engineers and aeroplane pilots remain predominantly male in composition.

So, in short it would not be wrong to say that gender inequality has many terms and it still exists in the different spheres of our social life.

Glass Ceiling

The term 'glass ceiling' refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organisation is deliberately stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly based on sex or racism.

This situation is referred to as a "ceiling" as there is a limitation blocking upward advancement, and "glass" (transparent) because the limitation is not immediately apparent and is normally an unwritten and unofficial policy. The term "glass ceiling" has been thought to have first been used to refer to invisible barriers that create obstacles in the career advancement of women in the workforce of developed countries.

The term glass ceiling was originally specifically applied to discrimination against women.

Key Question 2

What is glass ceiling?

Types of glass ceiling barriers

- Different pay for comparable work.
- Sexual, ethnic, racial, religious discrimination or harassment at the workplace.
- Lack of family-friendly workplace policies.

Answer these questions

1.What is gender discrimination?

2.Write example of gender discrimination in school.

3.What is economic aspect of Gender bias?

4.What is glass ceiling?