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GENDER ROLE: CONFLICT AND OPINION



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The research tutorial on Gender role conflict and opinion broadened my understanding of gender stereotypes and the resistance of change for equality. The influence of culture on our daily lives was also witnessed during the research.

I sincerely thank the Professors of my department, and in particular Prof. Biva Samadder for her elaborate and lucid guidance.

Let me also thank my batch mates and the college authority for their constructive support.

INTRODUCTION:

Gender roles are cultural and personal. They determine how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society. Learning plays a role in this process of shaping gender roles. These gender schemes are deeply embedded cognitive frameworks regarding what defines masculine and feminine. While various socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, movies, television, music, books, and religion—teach and reinforce gender roles throughout the lifespan, parents probably exert the greatest influence, especially on their very young offspring.

Gender roles adopted during childhood normally continue into adulthood. At home, people have certain presumptions about decision-making, child-rearing practices, financial responsibilities, and so forth. At work, people also have presumptions about power, the division of labor, and organizational structures. None of this is meant to imply that gender roles, in and of themselves, are good or bad; they merely exist. Gender roles are realities in almost everyone's life

Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups. Stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about others. When people automatically apply gender assumptions to others regardless of evidence to the contrary, they are perpetuating gender stereotyping. Many people recognize the dangers of gender stereotyping, yet continue to make these types of generalizations.

Traditionally, the female stereotypic role is to marry and have children. She is also to put her family's welfare before her own; be loving, compassionate, caring, nurturing, and sympathetic; and find time to be sexy and feel beautiful. The male stereotypic role is to be the financial provider. He is also to be assertive, competitive, independent, courageous, and career-focused; hold his emotions in check; and always initiate sex. These sorts of stereotypes can prove harmful; they can stifle individual expression and creativity, as well as hinder personal and professional growth.

The weight of scientific evidence demonstrates that children learn gender stereotypes from adults. As with gender roles, socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, religious leaders, and the media—pass along gender stereotypes from one generation to the next.

One approach to reexamining conventional gender roles and stereotypes is androgyny, which is the blending of feminine and masculine attributes in the same individual. The androgyny, or androgynous person, does not neatly fit into a female or male gender role; she or he can comfortably express the qualities of both genders. Parents and other socializing agents can teach their children to be androgynous, just as they can teach them to be gender-biased.

Emerging as a powerful sociopolitical force beginning in the 1960s, the feminist movement, or women's liberation movement, has lobbied for the rights of women and minorities. Feminists have fought hard to challenge and redefine traditional stereotypic gender roles.

Sexism produces inequality between the genders—particularly in the form of discrimination. In comparable positions in the workplace, for example, women generally receive lower wages than men. But sexism can also encourage inequality in more subtle ways. By making women feel inferior to men, society comes to accept this as the truth. When that happens, women enter “the race” with lower self-esteem and fewer expectations, often resulting in lower achievements.

Sexism has brought gender inequalities to women in many arenas of life. But inequality has been a special problem in the areas of higher education, work, and politics.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The aim of my research is to contribute towards a gender-sensitive society where solidarity, opportunities and responsibilities are shared by women and men in equal measure. Everyone is to enjoy the life they determine in accordance with their individual skills, their needs and their desires.

Once this is achieved equality, instead of being treated as an aside, will be a natural element of all processes and measures. Women and men will no longer be seen as a uniform group of human beings, but will have their social, ethnic and age differences taken into account.

The main objectives of my research are followed:

- I. Equal career opportunities for women and men
- II. Fair distribution of unpaid and paid work among women and men, wages and salaries that women and men can live on independently
- III. Equality of women and men with regard to representation and participation
- IV. Enhancement of gender roles and standards for women and men, elimination of restricting standards
- V. Same personal freedoms for women and men, protection against all forms of aggression

Gender equality is intrinsically linked to sustainable development and is vital to the realization of human rights for all. The overall objective of gender equality is a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

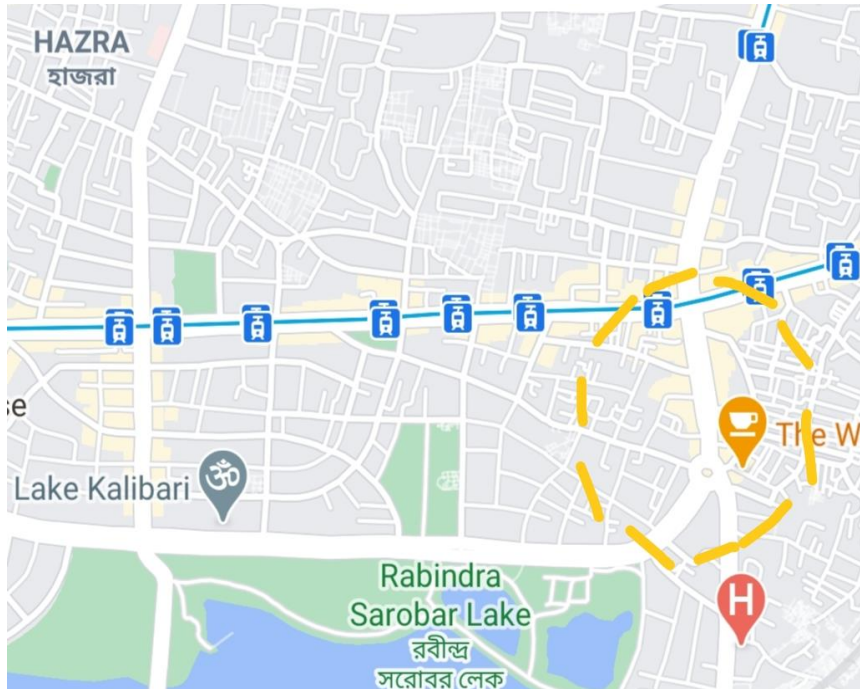
The research design used is the Descriptive research design. It has allowed me to include multiple ways of data collection. The procedure that has been followed is-

- Formulating the objectives of the study.
- Designing the methods of data collection.
- Selecting the sample.
- Collecting, processing and analyzing the data.
- Reports and findings.

AREA OF THE STUDY-

The area for my survey was my own locality in Golpark and the adjacent areas of Gariahat including the stretch of southern avenue to cover the maximum variety of opinions.

The following marked area in yellow was my field of study:



SAMPLING METHODS-

The sampling technique used is-

- I. Simple random sampling under Probability sampling method.

SAMPLE SIZE-

The sample size of my research were seventy (40) individuals. I questioned twenty (20) males and twenty (20) females through my questionnaire which carried close ended questions as well as open ended questions.

RESEARCH DESIGN-

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RESEARCH METHODS-

Research methodology is the path through which researchers need to conduct their research. It shows the path through which these researchers formulate their problem and objective and present their result from the data obtained during the study period. This research design and methodology chapter also shows how the research outcome at the end will be obtained in line with meeting the objective of the study.

The research methods used are-

- I. Social survey.
- II. Questionnaire.



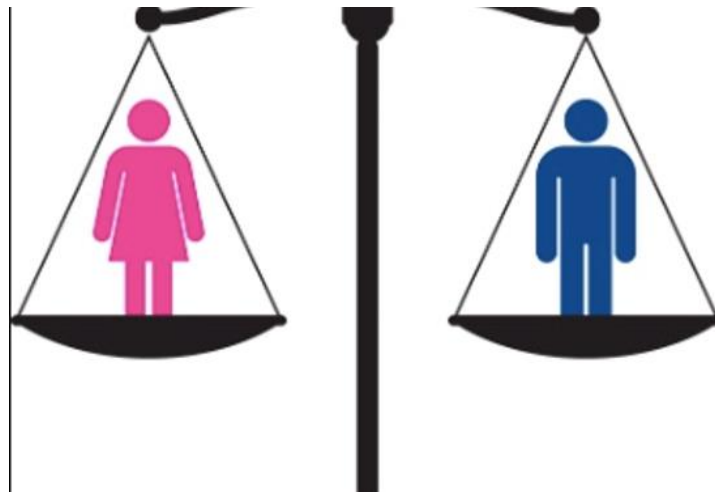
Questionnaire method.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION-

Research techniques vary depending on the social phenomena studied. Data-collection techniques differ from participant observation, content analysis, interviewing, and documentary analysis. In this approach each problem studied requires a specific unit of observation, be it an individual, an organization, a city, a relationship between units, or a statistical rate.

The methods of data collection used are both Primary and secondary data collection.

1. Primary data collection- data collection through interviews and questionnaire.
2. Secondary data collection- data collection through journals and articles of researchers and analysts.



DATA ANALYSIS:

There are two types of data analysis- i. Qualitative and ii. Quantitative

Out of the 40 individuals, I have tried to reach an equal number of women and men. The following tables represents my analysis:-

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY-

Answerers on the basis of age [TABLE 1]

Gender	18-24	25-30	31-40	40+
Male	10	5	3	2
Female	8	4	7	1

The age group of 18-24 had most respondents as most of them were students and were open to most of the questionnaire. As the age group moved up, I witnessed slight hesitation and mixed ideas about the subject.

Answerers on the basis of caste [table 2]

Gender	SC	ST	OBC	GNL
Male	6	3	3	8
Female	4	2	4	10

There were no major differences of opinions on the basis of caste but slight inclination of beliefs were evident in the answers. The influence of global culture has put its mark on setting gender roles.

Answerers on the basis of family income [table 3]

Gender	10-20 (thousand)	20-40 (thousand)	40-60 (thousand)	60+ (thousand)
Male	3	5	5	7
Female	2	4	8	6

The financial conditions of individuals has a direct influence on their ideology of gender roles. Lower income group families are bound to work both ends whereas very few tend to focus on the education of the next generation. And in the higher income group, the advent of modern life has brought forth convenience ahead of gender role ideology.

Answerers on the basis of occupation [table 4]

Gender	service	Business	homemaker	others
Male	11	7	-	2
Female	8	3	8	1

The role of occupation is the focal point of the research. It was witnessed that none of the male individuals, who were interviewed, were homemakers. On the other side, it was crucially symbolic that the number of female individuals in the homemaker segment and the service segment were equal at 8. It implies a 50% weightage on gender role distribution among only women. The business family backgrounds were more typical in gender role opinions.

Answerers on the basis of family structure [table 5]

Gender	Nuclear	joint	extended	others
Male	12	3	1	4
Female	13	2	3	2

The family structure is also a great deal of concern when dealing with gender role conflicts and opinions. Most of the answerers belonged to nuclear families and had relatively lesser rigidity on gender stereotypes than the few joint family individuals who were questioned.

Answerers on the basis of academic qualification [table 6]

Gender	Secondary	H.S	Graduate	Masters
Male	3	6	8	3
Female	4	5	9	2

The academic qualification of individuals play a lesser role than they should because only the secondary qualified individuals expressed some rigidity in gender role beliefs. The individuals from higher study groups were mostly seen to be influenced by other factors and maintained a systematic response irrespective of the degree of their degrees.

LIMITATIONS:

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from the research. They are the constraints on generalizability, applications to practice, and/or utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which you initially chose to design the study or the method used to establish internal and external validity or the result of unanticipated challenges that emerged during the study.

The specific limitations to my research were-

1. Unequal number of answerers from each of the sub-category.
2. Lack of reliable answers.
3. Sample size.
4. Bias of culture and ethics in the mindset.
5. Perception of the questions and answers.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION:

Thousands of cultures and communities exist around the world, and each one has its own gender roles and norms. People within the communities and societies are raised surrounded by these stereotypes from the day they are born. These classifications based on genders are passed on generation-to-generation and society-to-society making them difficult to defy. Humans in their early childhood begin connecting specific characteristics to certain genders unknowingly because of the environment they are exposed to. Everything from children's toys to snack packages display gender specific characteristics leading to gender stereotypical terms that are heard on a day-to-day basis in common environments. The consequences of classifying characteristics and behaviors according to genders show in the business world when the people reach adulthood. The way in which a businessman or a businesswoman delegates, leads, and communicates with employees are indirectly correlated to gender specific characteristics. Only when these sex assumptions and expectations are analyzed do people realize how offensive some terms and categorizations can be, but usually importance is not given because classifying has become a casual behavior.

On the end of this chain reaction is gender inequality, because indirectly and directly gender inequality is a result of gender norms and stereotypes. For example, the reason for the wage gap, glass ceiling, and lack of women in political positions is a result of centuries and centuries of buildup expectations and assumptions about men and women. The illustration above, similar to a previous cartoon, depicts a second assumption society makes; this cartoon gives the reader a reason to assume laziness and incompetence are correlated with females while hardworking is related with male. Just like the stereotypes mentioned previously, there is a great amount of them that circulate in societies, and will continue to until society

itself ends them. To finally reach society's goal of complete gender equity, we must end gender classification and categorization. We, as a society, must learn and educate the importance of characteristics and behaviors simply being human, not man-like and not female-like. Only when gender stereotypes and gender norms are put to rest can a society reach complete gender equality.

There are a set of questions that should be regularly asked in the society, to fuel and form the basis of breaking gender stereotypes and gender role rigidity.

1. What are the changes we need to be more inclusive?
2. Where are we lacking in progress as a whole society of individuals?
3. What can we do to stop abuse and bias?
4. Do we want our next generations to be smarter and healthier as a society?

We should also promote gestures of non-stereotypical activity citing examples of the many individuals who have made an impact on gender role ideology and norms. It needs a gradual process of change which is already an ongoing asset of our society.

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE:-

1. What is your name? _____
2. Your age? _____
3. Your gender? _____
4. What is your occupation? -Service/business/homemaker/others
5. Your academic qualification? -8th/secondary/HS/graduate/masters
6. Your category? -GNL/SC/ST/OBC/MINORITY
7. Your family status? -Nuclear/joint/extended/others
8. Your family's monthly income? [<10,000/10,000-20,000/20,000-40,000/40,000-60,000/ 60,000<]
9. Do you think that there are any gender roles that people should be taught to follow?
10. Do you believe there is more equality in male and female gender roles nowadays?
 - a. Yes, genders are equal
 - b. No, females are suppressed by males
 - c. No, males are suppressed by females
11. Do you believe in following traditional gender roles? (e.g. Men are breadwinners and women are housewives and it can't be other way around)

- a. Yes, it is supposed to be this way in every family.
- b. No, it is 21st century and women can have full time job and men can be homemakers.
- c. I think it depends on family's beliefs and values, so both options can work.

12. Do you think, women have to present themselves more professionally than men in the workforce in order to gain respect?

- a. Yes, women have to work harder to be validated.
- b. Unfortunately, the statement is true, but I disagree with it
- c. No, it's not true, women and men are equal at work place

13. Do you think it is good to teach children that females should be more emotional and caring while males should be strong and resilient?

14. Do you believe there is any job that is ONLY meant either for male or female?

15. Do you think children should be raised upon gender roles? (E.g. No ballet coaching for boys and No "manly" sports for girls etc.)

16. Have you ever been judged for not being feminine or masculine enough?

17. Do you think women are fully heard?

- a. Yes, women's rights have increased and their voice is more powerful than ever
- b. No, I think that there are women who are suppressed by society and forced to live up to their gender
- c. Other thoughts _____

18. Do you think men and women are willing to change gender stereotypes?

19. What do you think about the gender role conflicts in modern society?

20. Do you believe there is any cultural aspect to gender roles?

21. Were you ever given any responsibility only for your gender?

22. Is there any difference between gender stereotype and gender bias?

23. Finally, do you think there should be an absolute gender equality? (E.g. no job role restrictions, equal pays, equal housework and childcare shares)

REFERENCE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY:

There are few websites and printed journals which have helped me in this quest.
The list is followed-

- SAGE journals
 - Gender, Technology and development.
 - Surveymonkey.com
 - Modern Asian studies.
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