

Original Article

Fighting Gender Stereotypes and Development in Nepal

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Received Date: 26 February 2024

Revised Date: 07 March 2024

Accepted Date: 15 March 2024

Published Date: 03 April 2024

Abstract: Gender is a loaded terminology both as a theory and practice. Gender is a criticized terminology by different feminist theorists. Gender identity is not confined to a binary (girl/ woman/man/ boy), nor is it static. It can be changeable. Thinking about gender transcends the study of politics, law, society, and culture. Gender roles first originated from the Victorian era, which comprised most of the 15th century. It was strongly opinionated with strong ideas regarding the roles of each gender in society, such as men were expected to appear in public and women to guard their homes. Gender discrimination has been deeply rooted in the society.

Gender stereotypes and biases are built from very early childhood, from playing with toys to choosing specific jobs. Specifically speaking of Nepali society, where patriarchal society still is persistent gender. Men's mindsets are designed, whether consciously or unconsciously, to preserve the patriarchal social order. Part of the discrimination is because of women themselves. They follow the social norms and traditions as part of their lives. It is a challenge for women to beat the gender stereotype and break the boundaries in this deep-rooted patriarchal society. Around 25 percent of the women hold leadership around the world indicating unequivocally that men are preferred over women when it comes to executive hiring and salary. Since it is deeply rooted in society and an individual's mind since they were born, education is the key to fighting gender stereotypes. It is not only school education. It is also parental education and awareness so that they are taught that men and women are the same and achieve the same. Right now, we are in the mid-era, where more female children are getting an education than male children, according to the census data for 2022. That has broken all ends of gender stereotypes and bias. But still, there are several holes to be filled because it is deeply rooted and has got strong grip on the patriarchal society. Education and awareness are the only ways to fight gender stereotypes. Even in the digital world, men are more powerful than women. Technology is the new power today. Technology is one of the male-divided occupations. So, females are less likely to indulge in this area. Deep-rooted and systemic, males's dominance over women is acknowledged by both men and women globally. But the norms and the behaviors will change. Dominations and discrimination will end with time and awareness.

Keywords: Gender, Stereotype, Patriarchal, Discrimination, Feminist.

I. INTRODUCTION

Gender diversity encompasses the socially created roles, behaviours, identities, and manifestations of girls, women, boys, and men. It affects how people behave and communicate, how they see themselves and one another, and how power and resources are distributed in society. WHO refers to gender as “Women and men’s socially constructed features, such as conventions, roles, and connections between and among communities of women and men. It differs by culture and can be modified. Gender encompasses five key elements: relational, hierarchical, historical, contextual, and institutional.” The European Institute for gender equality refers to gender as “the social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relation between women and men and girls and boys. These attributes are socially constructed and are learned through the socialization process. They are context- and time-dependent, as well as variable. Gender influences what is expected, authorized, and valued in a man or a woman in a specific environment.” The term gender role was first coined by John Mooney in 1955 in the course of his study of intersex individuals to describe manners in which individuals express their status as male and female. Gender roles are changeable, and it is learned, negotiated or contested subjects. Endocentric is male-focused, and gynocentric is female-focused. All the things we face in today’s world are endocentric. The society is patrifocal from the very beginning.

Feminism has been a popular word in politics more than gender. After feminism took the ground in the world, there came different types of feminism, such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism, black/white feminism, and transgender rights post-feminism, that have been making a large difference in today’s world. The origins of gender stereotyping may be traced back to Marxism, which serves as the foundation for many postmodern philosophical movements. Marx’s thesis held that all persons were equal, regardless of gender or class. Nationalism accepted new gender roles, bringing these phenomena altogether and ultimately overturning the Victorian gender stereotyping era. Lady Liberty, for example, came to symbolize some of the promised new freedoms for women. Gender stereotyping is prominent in modern society, as Victorian



gender roles have not completely faded. Gender stereotypes are socially created roles assigned to women and men in relation to socioeconomic, political, and cultural situations, and they are influenced by other characteristics such as age, class, and ethnicity. Aside from gender differences, men's and women's roles differ, and women and men may mix different responsibilities independently over time or even concurrently. Women are often portrayed as victims in war situations. They are frequently mothers, breadwinners, soldiers, or peace advocates. Gender equality refers to equal rights, connections, duties, and possibilities for men, women, girls, and boys, which is viewed as a human rights issue and a prerequisite for sustainable, people-centered development. A survey in Bangladesh found that nearly half (48%) of women in Dhaka face physical assault. Neglecting girls is another serious issue in India and Nepal. Between 1981 and 1991, around 1.2 million girls went missing as a result of sex-selective abortions and female infanticide, while approximately 4 million died prematurely owing to neglect (George 1997).

A) Objectives

This term paper has set the following objectives:

- a. To access the relationship and its impact between gender stereotypes and development
- b. To prevent and combat gender stereotypes and to give the power to shape women's lives and contribute to the development of society.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research method was purely qualitative. It is mainly based on the secondary data. Different articles and authentic sources were used to identify the problem of the research. The sites are cited and proven in the references. It has discussed the feminist theory and woman-based approach, principles and indicators which will help in the development. This term paper is based on the descriptive and analytical methods of collecting secondary data of information. It is based on the quality of research using already published resources and journal articles, books, and national newspapers as a secondary data basis. The findings are drawn from the discussions and analysis of the principles and theories of governance related and linked development of higher education institutions.

III. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In this paper, we basically focus on the theories of gender stereotypes and their effect on development in Nepal. We also overview the current scenario and the law and order made by the Government of Nepal. Many people saw the dual system theory of patriarchy and capitalism, which was a popular kind of socialist feminism in the 1970s and 1980s, as a failed undertaking in the 1990s and later. Marx's work incorporated elements of Victorian idealism, but he also had a strong interest in women and family issues. Marx argued in his economic and philosophical works as early as 1844 that women's roles in society may contribute to overall societal progress. The fight against gender stereotypes from the Victorian era to this date has gone a long way. Women's rights were first established in 1948 by Elizabeth Lady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. They talked about the slavery convention for the first time being a woman. Likewise, in 1837, the word "Feminisme" was originated by Charles Fourier. The right to vote for women was started at first in New Zealand in 1873. The first-time Women's Day was celebrated across the globe in 1911. Marking 1 million people marching and protesting globally. Un women was originated to help fight for women's rights in 2010. Likewise, from 1955- 2018, women across the globe had the highest position in 0-9.8% consecutively. Development has been gradual, but the mentality towards gender bias is the same, even if modernization has hit the ground. Life history methods are highlighted as an intermediate mechanism that links environmental influences to variations in gender relations, notably traditional versus modernized gender roles, which are determined by now versus future-oriented reproduction strategies.

Gender stereotypes are negative because they impede women's and men's abilities to pursue professional professions and/or make life decisions. Gender stereotyping is the act of assigning specific features, characteristics, or roles to an individual's woman or man only because of her or his gender. Wrongful gender stereotyping is a frequent cause of discrimination against women. It contributes to the violation of a wide range of rights, including the right to life, education, marriage and family, relation, employment, liberty of opinion, liberty of movements, political participation and representation, efficient solution, and independence from gender violence. People develop gender prejudices and biases as early as childhood. They impact the toys that children play with, the subjects that they study, their entire educational experience, and their future lifestyles and vocations. The girls are taught to be feminine and submissive, and classifying femineity comes to leadership at both school and workplace, and boys are taught to live up to the male norms and standards the society has set. In order to break down stereotypes and confront gender bias in the classroom and society at large, it is imperative that we take decisive action. When the demands of the young people and students who are the center of education are not being met, challenge it. Question what is said and what is not said" Maria Nguyen SDG 4 Youth Network. Women have an enormous potential to contribute as empowered actors in the reconstruction and development process. In the mid-1990s gender dimension of peace and conflict started to appear on international policy agendas. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and UN Security Council

Resolution 1925 on Women, Peace and Security (UN Security Council 2007) all these acts enforced women's equal participation and their full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. There have been various women and gender stereotype roles since the very beginning of time. The history of women breaking barriers around the world, such as Women Tamil Tigers, initially performed para military and support roles but were used in combat after 1985. Of the estimated 10,000–15,000 total cadre strength, women are reported to make up 3 out of 10 central committee members (the highest decision-making body of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or LTTE). Women also make up almost 1/3 of the organization and are admitted into every unit. Women from Guinea and Bissau were routinely enlisted as revolutionaries before their husbands. In an effort to escape persecution at home and in society at large, many Salvadoran women joined the guerrillas (Ibanez 2001). Mozambique women and girls were considered more receptive, easier to train, and obedient, so they enrolled and trained women and called women on the fighting grounds. Mozambique women were abducted during the Civil War, boys younger than 8 helped in base camps until they were old enough for military training, and girls were used to cook and clean and do the laundry. Women were forced into marriages called “Jungle Marriage”, “Bush Marriage”, or “AK47 Marriage”. “In East Timor and Sierra Leone, women without guns were not involved in demobilization programs. Women and girls were forcefully recruited into civil wars. (Rehn and Sirleaf & UN 2002).

Nepal also claims that it has an excellent example of women making great leaps on almost all levels. Nepal is a Hindu nation; as in Hindu countries, different deities and religious practices lead to discrimination and gender bias. Chhaupadi Pratha, a dangerous and heartening inhuman practice, was criminalized in a legal code in 2017. Women's and girls' rights were safeguarded in the comprehensive peace treaty, which was developed by Nepal in 2011—the first nation in Asia to do so. The 2015 constitution of Nepal mandates seats for women of indigenous descent and the Dalit ethnic group, and it sets aside a quota of 33 percent of parliamentary seats for women (Upreti and Kolas 2016).

Additionally, it reserves 40 percent of seats for women in local government organizations. If the land is registered in a woman's name, the government has instituted a scheme that will reduce land taxes by 25%. A reward of Nepali Rupees 50,000 (about US\$600) has been established by the government for a man who marries a woman who is widowed. There are various quotas for women and girls in education, government, jobs, health, communication and technical sectors. In the Gender Gap Index (GPI) 2022, Nepal scored 0.692 for gender parity. With a score of 58 out of 146, the nation did best in the political empowerment category. Nepal is classified as having a medium level of human development and is ranked 113th in the world in the 2022 report on gender inequality.

However, improvements in certain areas have not yet translated into a broader improvement in the lives of women and girls throughout the nation. There are a lot of challenges for women even today, especially acquiring citizenship rights to the offspring without a father's identity, leaving single mothers at bay and in denial. According to the Nepalese government, women were more severely affected by the earthquake than men were. Women were shown to be casualties in about 55% of cases compared to men. According to estimates from the UN and GON (2015), 40,000 women were immediately vulnerable to gender-based violence following the earthquake. with claims of a rise in female trafficking, particularly in Makwanpur, and brutality against women. Self-defense was taught to actually fight, where women were the most vulnerable during the earthquake. But self-defense was a challenging traditional gender role; it was also a short-term “Sticking plaster” approach, which may raise a little awareness in women, but it has wider and more rooted challenges to be changed. In Nepal, 97% of women experience sexual assault on public transport.

Similarly, Action Aid 2011 says 80% of women had experienced sexual harassment in the city, and 40% of men reported that they had harassed women. The first to be impacted by natural disasters and poverty are the women, so if women are economically stable and self-empowered, then the development of the country will also be stable. According to the study, positional disparities and the exercise of power are the root causes of gender stereotypes. The social and cultural spheres are the unwritten rules of social relations, where men are privileged and create status disparities and inequalities that cause women to be suppressed, have lower self-esteem, and become victims of domestic abuse. It is essential to raise awareness and modify attitudes in order to confront unfair customs and behaviors. Educating young minds can eradicate the roots of the patriarchal hierarchy.

Gender stereotypes are broad beliefs or assumptions about the qualities or roles that men and women should or should not possess or fulfill. When a gender stereotype restricts the potential for growth for both men and women, it is detrimental. Their own skills, pursue their professional endeavors, and/or make life decisions. Certain human rights treaties express obligations concerning harmful stereotypes and wrongful stereotyping. “Gender stereotypes and biases are built in people's minds as early as childhood. They have an impact on the toys kids play with, the subjects they choose to study, their entire educational journey, and their future personal and professional lives. UNESCO. In Nepal, inequality has been both a cause and an effect of exclusion. Over the course of the last five decades of planned development, Nepal has made progress toward more

equal treatment for women. Significant legislative changes have been implemented to support women's rights in important domains like citizenship, inheritance, and anti-trafficking- The ADB Bank.

“One common reason why women are discriminated against is “wrongful gender stereotyping.” It is a contributing factor in the violations of a wide range of rights, including the freedom from gender-based violence, the right to health, an adequate standard of living, education, marriage and family life, the right to work, the freedom of expression and movement, and political participation and representation.” – United Nations Human Rights 1995 Addressing gender inequality has also been aided by the Beijing Platform for Action. In order to address the 12 key areas of concern—which include women's poverty, access to healthcare, education, and decision-making—the Nepalese government developed a national action plan. The 2000 MDG goals also targeted poverty reduction, education and gender inequality. The 1971 International Convention requires Nepal to Eliminate All Forms of Racial Discrimination to protect the human rights of Dalits. Gender discrimination has been a priority for the Nepali government ever since its first five-year plan was created in 1956. This was centered on women's reproductive health, and it continued until the sixth five-year plan. (1980-1985) however, the shift from women in development to gender and development took place in the ninth-year plan (1997-2002) and the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). “When it comes to education, the system trains and teaches young children and young people, for example, how to dress, how to speak, influencing young people's expressions” – Transform Education, United Nations Girls Education Initiative An initiative that UNESCO built on educating young girls and boys about gender equality. If we teach young minds about gender equality, then the coming generation will be assertive and attentive about the gender gap and will not do so in the coming future. Different women have fought gender stereotypes through centuries. Today women are climbing the highest peak to embarking big business setups and standing and ruling over the world. Just centuries ago, it was not possible thing for women to see the changes we are getting to encounter. Queen Elizabeth, who governed the United Kingdom for 60 years; Mother Teresa, who won the Nobel Prize in 1979; Florence Nightingale, who cared for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War.

Similarly, in Nepal, Anuradha Koirala and Pushpa Basnet won CNNs Hero 2010 and 2012 consequently. Mariam O Brein was climbing mountains, breaking gender stereotypes in the 1930s, where men were known as masculine, and women were known as nurturers and homemakers. She broke the stereotype. In 2011, Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner, an Austrian nurse, was the first to summit 14 of the world's 8000-meter mountains without supplementary oxygen. These types of women have broken gender stereotypical thoughts. Preconceptions about gender have significant effects on the workplace and are frequently the source of how we acquire opinions about other individuals and make decisions.

In October of 2017, Jacina Arden became the first female prime minister of New Zealand who proved women can have it all and not have to choose between career and family. Bonita Sharma from Nepal designed Nutribeads to influence and help eradicate Malnutrition. These awards and achievements prove that daughters can also gain success in the world.

According to Article 8(1)(b) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, “states parties undertake to adopt immediate, effective, and appropriate measures to combat stereotypes, prejudice, and detrimental behaviors regarding persons with disabilities, which include those based on sex, age, and all areas of life.” In order to eradicate practices that are predicated on the notions of inferiority or superiority because of either sex or stereotyped roles for men and women, States Parties are required by CEDAW's article 5(a) to take all reasonable steps to alter men's and women's social and cultural patterns of conduct. To eradicate the root cause of wrongful gender stereotypical beliefs, one should train the teachers as well as the students from the very beginning about gender issues, creating awareness and building the social stigma on women's participation, eliminating occupational segregation based on gender stereotypes. One of the 17 sustainable development goals, women's equality and empowerment (SDG 5), is essential to all aspects of inclusive and sustainable development. “Naturist and sexist terminology are frequently used to characterize women, nature, and nuclear weapons. Pets, cows, foxes, chicks, snakes, bitches, beavers, old bats, old hens, mother hens, pussycats, cats, cheetahs, birdbrains, and harebrains are among the animal words used to characterize women.” (Karren J Warren). Third-world women are oppressed by family structures that place the utmost importance on husbands, dads, and brothers, as well as by national and international injustices. Poor women frequently get little from economic progress, even in cases where it helps impoverished families, as exploitation and inequality occur both inside and between households. Women constitute the largest landless laborers in the world. They do much of their work in agriculture, and in the household, they are unpaid laborers. A survey in Zaire assessed women do 30 percent more work than men (Petra Kelly).

IV. CONCLUSION

This study finds that in the world of the digital era, women and men have equally been aware of their rights. Campaigns like #BringBackOurGirls, #EverydaySexism, #FeministFriday, #MeToo, #TimesUp, #womenShould, #HeForShe and so on have been held for the rights of women. Gender stereotypes have affected females throughout their lives and still exist. It is a deeply rooted cause that has engraved the patriarchal society the power and encouragement to rule. The children are

brainwashed from the very beginning of their existence. The sad part is many people don't realize that they are practicing the wrong practices over their lives. From the ancient sati system and dowry system to the chhaupadi system, this only reflects the Nepali women's status from the very beginning of the time till date. Until and unless these types of taboos are eradicated from society, gender stereotypes will prevail. Good education, equitable recognition, chances, and inspiration from parents can foster a gender-neutral view of society. Only implementing the policies for gender equality will not do justice; awareness and practice should be prevalent. The development only takes place when such social problems are eradicated.

It is believed that when a woman earns, her total income goes to her family, whereas men are the opposite. For a woman it is difficult to even start a business. 40% of the economy, women's early-stage entrepreneurial activity is half or less than half of the men. Women empowered socially and economically is a key factor in improving their sexual and reproductive health rights. It enhances their ability to make decisions about marriage and pregnancy. Different critics believe that if the power hierarchy changes then only development comes. Even though it still occurs, women's oppression remains unseen and normal because it is ingrained in both society and our psyches. Gender stereotypes are from both structural oppression and individual men. We as women should follow disobedience in our lives to get rid of the male systems of male domination to end the stereotype. Fighting gender stereotypes doesn't only mean that you disown the patriarchal society. It also means that women should put new ideas and thoughts across and make new policies, not adopt the old thoughts and patterns of the patriarchal society. Gender stereotype seems like a normal issue, but women fight little wars every day. Big movements definitely have made an impact on gender equality, but these restrictions, degradation and violence are embedded in our society, they appear natural, but they are not natural.

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