

## GENDER ROLES: WHAT A MISTAKE!

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**Abstract.** *One important thing we want to portray in this article is that gender equality is critical to avoiding abuse against women. From the moment we are born, our given sex (male or female) shapes how we should be treated, what chances we should have, and how we must act in accordance with dominant gender stereotypes in our culture. We will discuss why gender stereotypes make it more difficult to achieve economic equality, and why they have a significant impact on young people's academic success/career choices. A deep dive into the history and negative effects of this social issue is taken.*

**Key words:** *sexism, disorder, discrimination, controversial, discrepancy.*

### Introduction

For decades, gender roles have been a controversial topic in our society. It is described as the gender-appropriate role or behavior that a person learns as a result of established cultural standards [1]. Based on research and analytical surveys, it can be concluded that gender roles are predominant in domains including religion, employment, education, culture, etc. The majority of people, particularly women, are concerned about social norms. As a consequence, they face discrimination based on their gender, which has a major impact on mental and physical health around the world. It has the power to restrict people's access to healthcare, increase rates of illness, and reduce life expectancy.

Gender equality is critical to avoiding abuse against women. It is essential for economic growth. In secure and healthy countries, men and women are treated with equality. In a modern society, we must seek to eliminate discrepancies between different categories of people [2].

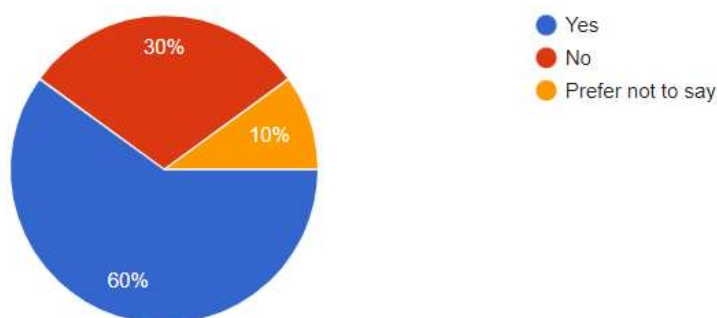
### Sex-role Development and Education

From childhood, parents tend to treat boys and girls differently from a young age, encouraging children to participate in gender-appropriate activities. For example, boys play with trucks while girls play with dolls, or football for boys and dance for girls. According to the conducted survey, Fig. 1, 60% of the people who answered said they have faced discrimination, while 10% preferred not to say. This is due to the fact that many of them are embarrassed and hesitant to discuss the subject.

Most teenagers experience gender discrimination in school and in their families due to stereotypes. Also, in most families, girls are expected to do the cleaning, washing, and cooking while boys are supposed to handle "the heavy work" or marry and have children at a certain age. Children's future growth is restricted owing to gender constraints, which tend to limit and prohibit their alternatives and achievements. Therefore, numerous people are doing jobs they don't desire and have yet to discover their passions or paths in life.

In order to see whether the standards deeply embedded in our society have a harmful impact on both men and women, we have decided to undertake a survey on 60 random people on said topic.

*Have you ever experienced gender discrimination?*



**Figure 1. The statistics of people that have experienced gender discrimination**

When it comes to development, gender stereotypes and role expectations have an impact on career choice and dedication to the field. As a consequence, the workforce is highly segregated by gender. In some areas (e.g., secretaries, receptionists, and kindergarten teachers), women make up over 90% of the workforce, whereas in others, they make up less than 5%. (e.g., mechanic, airplane pilot) [4]. Women's jobs typically offer fewer prospects for growth, less prestige, and lower incomes than jobs primarily inhabited by men. The salary discrepancy between men and women is 30–40% worldwide, and it shows no signs of narrowing. Part-time work is almost solely a female phenomenon, yet top positions in the economy, politics, and sciences are virtually entirely filled by men. Both men and women have an unfavorable view of women in positions of leadership. Males adopting feminine occupations (e.g., nursing) are easily accepted and encouraged, whereas females entering male occupations (e.g., nursing) are questioned [5].

#### **How did gender inequality start?**

Glen Elder, a research professor of sociology, a prominent figure in life course theory, states that the creation of gender inequality is a subtle, life-long and partly unconscious process, fuelled among other things, implicit cognitions regarding men and women's roles in society, as well as gendered stereotyped images.

According to a recent study from Queens College in New York City, gender inequality in China may have its roots in the Bronze Age, more than 2,500 years ago [6]. Scientists looked at Neolithic Age cemeteries from the Chinese Central Plains from around 5,000 years ago, as well as Bronze Age graves from more recently. They documented the wealth that accompanied male and female skeletons, as well as looking for evidence of stress in their bones. During the Neolithic Age, male and female diets were nearly identical, but this altered in the Bronze Age as new crops and domesticated animals were introduced. Women were anemic and dependent on wheat, a newer grain described as a "poor man's meal" in later historical documents, while men continued to eat traditional millet and animal items. Wheat isn't necessarily less nutritious than millet, but it does indicate that men and women began to eat and socialize apart.

Inequalities emerged in the Bronze Age, with males buried with more goods and female skeletons becoming disproportionately shorter, most likely due to childhood malnutrition. Girls were the first to go hungry if their family or community ran out of food.

Scientists aren't clear how the disparity arose, or whether this data is representative of the rest of the world. It is clear that gender inequality has its roots deeply embedded into our world's history, and this case above represents one example of many more. Presenting specimens like this one is important, especially in order to show beyond doubt to those who will never believe that this problem has existed for thousands of years and it is time, as a society, to fight against it.

### Does gender inequality affect us psychologically?

Yes. Women with mental health conditions outnumber men by as much as two or three times, according to a 2020 article, says Medical News Today.

Women, in comparison to men, are:

- twice as likely to suffer from generalized anxiety disorder
- twice as likely to suffer from panic disorder
- twice as likely to suffer from depression at some point in their lives
- an eating disorder is four to ten times more likely
- Post-traumatic stress disorder is more than twice as common in this category.

Males are 3.63 times more likely to die by suicide than women, although women are more likely to attempt suicide. While several factors, including biological variations between sexes, play a role in mental complications, women are overrepresented in these figures, as well as in statistics for chronic physical disorders [7].

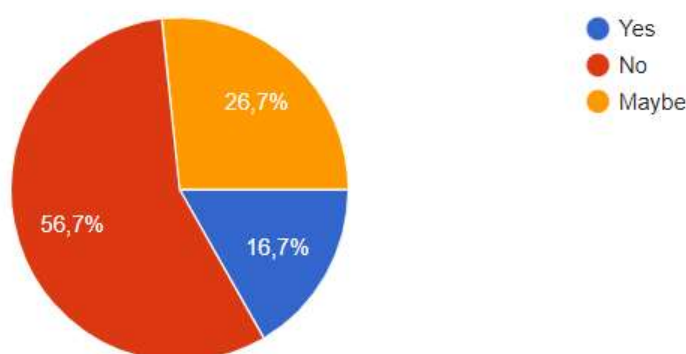
According to research, there really is a correlation between discrimination and mental health problems, according to studies. Sexism also exposes people to a number of mental health risk factors, such as chronic stress, low self-esteem, and trauma.

### Sexual equality is a one-way path

Next question in our survey aimed to find out whether people believe that they have to conduct upon their gender. Nowadays, most people do not believe it is necessary to behave in a certain way. The statistics can be found in the graphic below, Fig. 2. However, women have fought for their rights for centuries; now they have equal rights to men, and feminism has progressed significantly. In this way, our society has gotten used to it, and it is believed that it is more acceptable for females to be masculine than for males to be feminine.

People's opinions on this issue are divided. On the one hand, some feel that everyone has the right to be who they choose, while others say that society views masculinity as powerful and superior, while femininity is viewed as weak and inferior, and that males cannot be weak. This discrepancy was induced by the society that created unrealistic standards. Due to patriarchy, women are still considered more fragile, and when a man shows feminine features, he will be judged immediately.

*Do you think we should conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex?*



**Figure 2. The statistics of people that think we have to conduct based upon our gender**

According to Michael Kimmel, a professor of sociology and gender studies, "Women have changed what it means to be a woman and embraced a much larger human canvas. Men are still painting on half the canvas." [8]. His quote demonstrates that feminism has progressed and that, despite the efforts, girls now have the freedom to do whatever they want and, by helping one another, grow stronger. In contrast, no one is encouraging boys to develop feminine attributes, including caring for others or a desire for beauty to be something normal.

## **Conclusions**

Gender roles are a contentious topic in our society, and they have detrimental implications for those who are affected by them. Whether you are a woman or a man, prejudices will prevent you from freely expressing yourself without being criticized, despite the fact that the right to liberty is one of the fundamental human rights. To live in a healthy and peaceful society, we must be aware of the issues we face on a daily basis and work to solve them. The goal is not for women and men to become identical, but for them to have equal access to equal opportunities and to not be ashamed of their actions. If we eliminate these gender stereotypes, we will create a far safer and far better environment for us to live in and for future generations to grow up in.

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