

## MODULE 1 INTRODUCING GENDER

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### SEX

- Sex and gender are terms that are often used interchangeably but they are in fact two different concepts, even though for many people their sex and gender are the same. And people get confused with the types of sex.

Sex is defined as,

- The biological differences between male and female and it is determined by biology or by birth.
- Sex is the physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics such as height and muscularity.
- Also, sex is the biological aspects of an individual as determined by their anatomy, which is produced by their chromosomes, hormones and their interactions. Sex is usually categorized as female or male and sex is something that is assigned to an individual at birth.
- There are only two sexes i.e., Male and female. So, an individual will be born either as male or female.

### GENDER

- Gender refers to the social and cultural differences between men and women/ it is the socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people.
- Gender can be said as the way societies distinguish men and women and assign them different roles, where male and female are expected to do certain jobs which matches their sex.

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- Gender is usually defined as the social status associated with a person's sex and is mainly used to characterise the traits within a person. Gender is how you see/ consider yourself.

### SEX AND GENDER

- As male and female are the two major categories of sex, Gender has two main categories: i.e., Masculine and feminine. So, gender is a social construction relating to behaviors and attributes based on labels of masculinity and femininity and, it can change overtime and also, it identifies social relations between men and women.
- Gender is a man-made concept and it changes from one culture to another culture, society to society and even family to family. It can be changed overtime.

### TYPES OF GENDER

- ▶ Male
- ▶ Female and
- ▶ Third Gender/ Transgender (Transgender's gender identity is different from the sex assigned at birth). They fall under the LGBT group ie, (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender)

### GENDER ROLES

- Gender role/ sex role can be defined as the role or behaviour learned by a person as appropriate to their gender, determined by the prevailing cultural norms.
- Usually, this gender roles are been adopted during a person's childhood and normally it continues into adulthood.
- Gender roles are set of roles, characteristics, and expectations of how a man or woman should feel, think and act as influenced by parents, peers and society. This can influence men and women in almost every aspect of life.
- Gender roles in society means how we're expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex.



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- “The problem with gender roles is that it prescribes how we should be, rather than recognizing how we are” and it creates a lifelong cycle of inequality. Therefore, it should be understood that, everyone deserves to grow and achieve their dreams regardless of their gender. But unfortunately, the inequitable gender norms destroy the lives of millions and millions of people.

### GENDER IDENTITY

- The personal conception of oneself as male or female. It includes physical expressions such as person’s clothing, hairstyle, makeup etc.
- Gender identity refers to a personal identification with a particular gender and gender role in society. This typically develops in stages. Around age two: children become conscious of the physical differences between boys and girls. Before the three years of age, most children can easily label themselves as either a boy or a girl. Then by age four, most children have a stable sense of their gender identity. During this same time of life, children learn gender role behaviour-ie, “things that boys do or things that girls do. Therefore, Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender or it is self-identified. The person himself/herself identifies his/her gender.
- When we consider the case of transgenders, majority transgenders have to struggle deep inside from their childhood as they couldn’t reveal their gender or what they feel about their gender. Most children from a young age itself, know what their gender identity is and find it really hard to think about themselves in another way. People who don’t fit into the gender binary, and are pressurized to follow it, can experience an extreme form of distress, which can be termed as gender dysphoria-the distress a person feels due to a mismatch between their gender identity—their personal sense of their own gender—and their sex and it can increase the risk of mental and physical health problems.
- On the other side, feeling able to show one’s true gender identity can definitely enhance a person’s emotional and mental health.

### GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR



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- The delegation of different tasks between males and females is called Gender Division of Labour. The gender division of labor refers to the allocation of different jobs or types of work to women and men.
- ▶ Discrimination against women in this sense means that women are likely to get most of the burden of labour, and most of the unpaid labour, whereas men collect most of the income and rewards resulting from the labour.
- ▶ The most obvious pattern in the gender division of labour is that women are mostly confined to unpaid domestic work and unpaid food production, while men dominate in cash crop production and wage employment. The way work is divided between men and women according to their gender roles is usually referred to as the 'gender division of labour'.
- ▶ Men and women have different roles in society. Sadly, men's roles are considered productive and more important. While traditionally women's roles are considered passive and less important.

### GENDER STEREOTYPE

- ▶ According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), a gender stereotype is a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by women and men or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women.

*Gender Stereotype can be Identified in Four ways*

- Stereotype regarding physical appearance of an individual.

In this, we expect women to be short, delicate with smaller body frames whereas men are expected to be tall with broad shoulders, act macho, stronger and more muscular than women.

- Stereotypes regarding behaviour:



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For example, if men do household chores, they should engage in activities like repairing taps, appliances like mixer, juicer etc. And even, they can take important decisions of their family.

Whereas women are expected to do cooking/ housework, better at raising children, stay at home rather than working mothers etc.

Another stereotype that commonly exist is men discuss matters, whereas women gossip.

- Stereotypes regarding occupation:

In this, women/ girls are expected to do jobs like teaching, nursing, secretaries, librarians etc. Also, there are Expectations that women are not good at maths, supposed to make less money than men, and also, as a politician, society cannot accept women

While considering the case of men, they are expected to do jobs like engineers, doctors, police, political leaders. etc. Also, they are expected to be good at mathematics, make more money than women, and are better politicians.

- Stereotype regarding personality traits,

In this, women are expected to be sensitive, docile, obedient, shy and submissive, where men are expected to be aggressive, tough, dominant, confident etc.

Gender stereotyping has its own negative impacts. It harms/ limits the women's and men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives. Gender stereotyping is wrongful when it results in violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of individual. It affects the positive development of an individual.

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### GENDER DISCRIMINATION

- Gender disparity still exists in India. Being born as women in Indian society, one has to face gender discrimination at all levels.
- Discrimination faced by a person because of their gender can be termed as 'Gender Discrimination'. It is the unequal or disadvantageous treatment which is inflicted on someone because they belong to a specific gender. In society, women are facing more gender discrimination than men.
- Gender discrimination describes the situation in which people are treated differently simply because they are male or female, rather than on the basis of their individual skills or capabilities.
- Indian constitution provides equal rights and privileges for both men and women, but most women across India don't enjoy these rights and opportunities guaranteed to them. The reason behind that can be considered as, poverty, illiteracy, patriarchal setup in our Indian society where men dominate societal and family life in India, social customs, beliefs and practices which give more preference for a male child and disfavour towards daughters, and lack of awareness among women as majority women are unaware of their fundamental rights and capabilities.

### GENDER NEEDS

- ▶ Women and men have differing roles based on their gender. Same like that they have differing gender needs too.
- ▶ The gender needs are classified as Practical Gender Needs (PGN) and Strategic Gender Needs (SGN).
- ❑ Practical Gender Needs (PGN) - The needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society.

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- ❑ Strategic Gender Needs (SGN) - The needs women identify due to their subordinate position in society.

### PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS

For the survival of people, they need basic amenities such as food, shelter, clothing etc. and the availability of these amenities leads to the survival of human. And the availability of such basic needs for an individual is called PGN/Practical Gender Needs or otherwise called as the (Human Survival Needs).

- Every human are expected to have the basic amenities in their life such as
  - ★ *Good housing*
  - ★ *Safe drinking water*
  - ★ Maintenance of hygiene and sanitation
  - ★ Adequate lighting
  - ★ Regular employment
  - ★ Wages
  - ★ Transportation facilities
  - ★ Adequate water for domestic and other immediate consumption
  - ★ Child care facilities
  - ★ Health care and insurance coverage for women
  - ★ Availability of nutritional supplement
  - ★ Electricity
  - ★ Fuel for cooking
  - ★ Income

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- ★ Availability of provision
- ★ *PGN* relates to the physical conditions and immediate or basic needs of an individual like food, shelter, work, water, and so forth. And these needs are considered as most essential for the existence of humans.

### STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS

- Women identify their needs because of their subordinate position in society. They change according to particular contexts, related to gender division of labour, power and control and may include issues such as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies.
- Meeting the Strategic Gender Needs assists women to achieve greater equality and change existing roles, thereby challenging their subordinate position.
- Some indicators of Strategic Gender Needs are as follows:
  - ★ Access to capital investment
  - ★ Land rights
  - ★ Ownership of assets
  - ★ Equality in wages
  - ★ Political equality
  - ★ Sharing of domestic labour and child care by men
  - ★ Reproductive rights
  - ★ Control over their body
  - ★ Legislations to challenge the abuse of women
  - ★ Entry of women in non-traditional occupational sectors
  - ★ Equal status of women



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- ★ Gender budgeting- in order to ensure that benefits of development reach women as much as men
- ★ Therefore, addressing strategic gender interests assists women and men to achieve greater equality and to change existing gender roles and stereotypes.

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