
GENDER – MAJOR CONCEPTS



Choice Joseph
Assistant Professor
Department of Social Work
St. Mary's College Thrissur



Major concepts

Gender is a neutral term, neither good nor bad, right nor wrong

For some, word “gender” has become associated with women’s issues and women’s programs, feminists,

For some, gender has become a negative word that connotes exclusion or hatred of men.

In fact, “gender” refers to both males & females



- Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female in a particular social setting at a particular point of time
- People are born female or male, but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. They are taught what the appropriate behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are for them, and how they should relate to other people. This learned behaviour is what makes up the gender identity, and determine gender roles.



Sex : Biological difference between males and females

The distinction between sex and gender is made to emphasise that everything women and men do, and everything expected of them, with the exception of their sexually distinct functions (child bearing, breast feeding, impregnation) can change, and does change , over time and according to changing and varied social and cultural factors



Sex and Gender

Sex	Gender
Biological Difference between men and women	Transformation of Biological difference to social difference
Determined at and by birth	Socially determined
Do not change	Can change and modify due to the influence of religion, education, culture through traditions and customs
Universal	Specific norms for men and women in different countries/cultures/ethnic groups



GENDER STUDIES

- Gender Studies is a transdisciplinary area of study which engages critically with gender realities, gender norms, gender relations and gender identities from intersectional perspectives.
- To study gender intersectionally means to focus on the ways in which gender interrelates with other social categorizations such as ethnicity, class, sexuality identity, nationality, age, dis/ability etc.

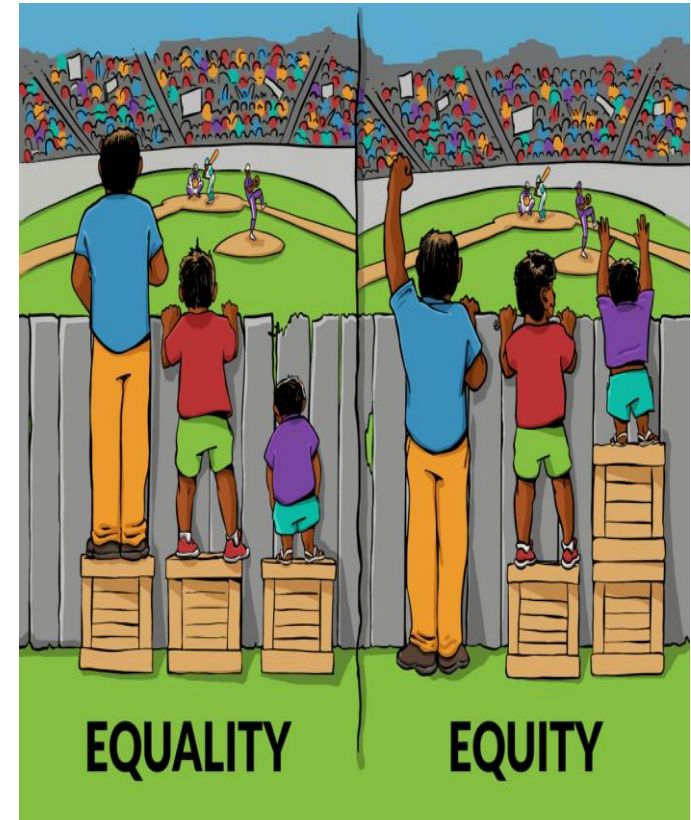
Gender Equality and Gender Equity

Gender equality

Equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society large.

Gender equity

Fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. It often requires women-specific programmes and policies to end existing inequalities





Gender Stereotyping

- A set of beliefs about the characteristics or attributes of a group (Judd & Park, 1993).
These beliefs distinguish a particular group from other groups by describing differences among groups.
- Gender stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics or attributes of men and women, boys and girls.



Gender Division of Labor

- The patterned ways productive and other economic tasks are allocated to men and women
- One aspect of a culture's gender roles
- The rights and duties individuals have because of their perceived gender identity
- Some have argued that gender roles and the division of labor are connected
- Highly similar division of labor based on gender (or is it sex?) cross-culturally
- Eg: males hunt large animals, conduct warfare, work wood, stone, and metal; women care for children, collect water, gather and prepare foods, and make



REFERENCE

- I. Anne Cranny Francis, Waring Pan
Stavropoulos, Gender Studies, palgrave
Mcmilan
- II. Mary E John. Women's Studies in india, A
Reader , Penguin Books, 2008