

How Societal Expectations on Men Contribute to Gender Oppression

Thesis Statement: Societal expectations on men contribute to gender oppression by exerting rigid roles and perpetuating power dynamics. However, some suggested measures are necessary to reduce the gender oppression.

Outlines:

I. Introduction

II. The dark side of masculinity expectations — an Overview

III. How societal expectations on men contribute to gender oppression

A. Discouragement of emotional expression

(a) 75% Pakistani men feeling pressured to hide emotions to maintain masculine image.

B. Pressure to prioritize work for being the breadwinner

(a) Indian men ^{average} working of 52 hours/week, impacting work-life balance.

C. Rigid Expectations to objectify women

(a) 77% of men in US admit objectifying women (NSVRC, 2020)

D. Normalization of aggression and dominance

(a) 60% of men worldwide engage in aggressive behavior (WHO, 2019)

E. Expectations on men to lead decision-making

sole

(a) Pakistani workplace, men dominate decision-making position even in politics.

(b) 80% of leadership positions globally are held by men (Global Gender Gap Report, 2022)

F. Marginalization of men deviating from societal norms

(a) 55% of LGBTQ+ individuals face discrimination (Human Rights Watch, 2020)

(b) Boy in Pakistan discriminated for wearing pink colored shirt and playing with dolls.

G. Stigma for men holding strong mental capabilities

(a) 64% of men hide mental health issues.

H. Marginalization of Intersex individuals

I- Denial of male ^{being} victims of sexual harassment
harassment.

(a) 1 in 6 men experience sexual harassment

J- Tag on men as perpetrators of sexual relations

(a) Young boy drinking recklessly.

IV. Some suggested measures to counter

Social oppression

A- Promote a system of shared responsibilities

B- Encourage emotional expression for men

C- Organize events to support gender equality

V- Conclusion

As a child, Alex loved drawing and painting. He used to spend hours creating colorful drawings, with an aim to become an artist one day. However, as he grew up, his passion faced resistance. His father discouraged him by saying **Boys don't waste time with art, focus on something practical, like engineering or business.** At school, his fellows teased him for pursuing a hobby. Feeling pressured from family, peers and society, Alex gave up his passion and pursued as an engineer which he didn't enjoy. Alex's story reflects rigid expectations of society on men. These expectations contribute to gender oppression in the form of emotional suppression, breadwinner expectations, objectification, normalization of aggression, decision-making roles, marginalization and stigma around mental capabilities and risk-taking. These expectations of society from men ^{not only} ~~not~~ ^{impacts} ~~imp~~ both the genders. However, promoting a system of shared responsibilities, emotional expression and gender equality will help to mitigate the oppression. Infact, societal expectations contribute

to gender oppression by exerting rigid roles and perpetuating power dynamics impacting both men and women. Therefore, some suggested measures are necessary to counter the gender oppression.

Societal expectations on men perpetuate gender oppression, harming mental health, relationships and ultimately enhancing the patriarchal culture. Therefore, challenging the traditional masculinity norms is crucial.

Societal expectations discourage men from expressing emotions. Since it is in the societal norm that men are strong and they don't cry. The social stigmas like Marsdeta nahi ha impact the mental health of men resulting into increasing anxiety, depression and frustration. On average, 75% 75 per cent Pakistani men feel pressured to hide emotions to maintain masculine image. Thus, men are not degraded from expressing their emotions.

Societal expectations also pressurize men to work and find a hand-some salary

job as he is the only bread-winner of the family. It not only affects the mental and physical health of men but also lays deep impacts on his psychology. He never allows the women in his home to do any kind of business or job and considers her salary as a back-up. Due to this reason, **Indian men work on an average of 52 hours/week.** It impacts their health and relationship with the family. Thus, ^{society's pressure on} man being a breadwinner under the pressure of society negatively impacts his own and family's needs.

Moreover, society's rigid expectations promote objectification of women. Society encourages ^{view and} men to treat women as an object for sexual gratification, rather than an individual with a separate identity, autonomy and dignity. **77 percent of men in the US admit objectifying women (NSVRC, 2020).** The women objectification leads to gender based violence. The UN women (2020) report highlights that objectification leads to violence. Hence, society's expectation of objection lead to major issues.

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In the end of all the above made discussion, it maybe concluded that societal expectations perpetuate gender oppression. It is important to promote and encourage the tradition of shared responsibilities, allowing men to express emotions, and organizing events to support the gender equality. The reason is that societal expectations discourage men from expressing emotions, encourage to objectify and dominate women and lead in taking decisions. It also discourages him to pursue his goal if they are not only societal norms. Resultantly, these stigmas and expectations impacts both the genders. Therefore, by taking all the above discussed steps we can counter the gender oppression. As in the words of Malala Yousafzai:

"We cannot all succeed when
half of us are held back."

~ Malala Yousafzai