

Topic : "One is not born a woman, but becomes one"

— Simone de Beauvoir

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"one is not born a woman, but becomes one"

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One is not born a woman but becomes one. is a powerful representation of the fact that woman is a socially and culturally constructed term. Along with term, it is also expectations of society that shapes a woman's experiences and lifestyle. Simone de Beauvoir was a active figure in 18th century who advocated for gender equality in first wave of feminism. His quotation represents the deep stereotypes and misconceptions ^{with} the term "women" in society. ^{He says that} One is made woman by entrenched social norms and taboos in one's society. "Women" is result of persistent patriarchal dominance and pre-defined gender roles. One becomes a woman by being suppressed under structural and non-structural gender based violence. The existing educational disparities, unavailable economic rights and lack of political representation shapes a woman's life in a community. Furthermore, this socially constructed woman face several consequences in life because of her gender. she bears burden of constant unpaid carework. This unpaid carework becomes a chain in his feet to restrict her participation in society. Additionally,

the ignored healthcare rights become reason for high child and mother mortality rates. The social construction of women also becomes a major cause for women illiteracy and gender based poverty. Therefore, careful considerations are needed to address problems related with being a woman. Governments, societies and individuals must collaborate to address gender based discrimination which is persistent throughout centuries.

"One is not born a woman, but becomes one" is a powerful quotation but Simon de Beauvoir who was a social activist in 18th century. He played a significant role by publishing his book on social construction of gender in society. Simon shifted the focus of society from directly advocating rights of women to entrenched systematic inequalities in a society. He shed light on the historical deep rooted discrimination that women face in this world. His main concern was the structural inequalities such as healthcare, reproductive rights, political underrepresentation, education and economic disparities that are entrenched in a society through several centuries.

The entrenched stereotypes and social norms make a woman - a woman in society. Stereotypes are fixed narratives of society that are unchanged for centuries even if the circumstances are changed. Historically, society has been defining women as weak, frail, delicate and soft hearted being. This perspective of women is defined in literature of earlier centuries where women is thought as an emotional and sensitive being who needs constant provider for her. These taboos then becomes ingrained in young girls and boys who think women needs constant caretaker and decision maker for her life. Women are considered as unable to make tough choices and independent decisions based on their emotional and sensitive nature. However, this emotionality and sensitivity is not biologically defined but socially constructed that shape women of today.

These entrenched stereotypes and taboos then become a constant cause for persistent patriarchal dominance. Society teaches a girl to be submissive and obedient while men are taught to be provider and dominant. This dominance becomes routine in regular

life, where women are restricted to take any decisions for their life. This persistent patriarchy restrains a women to make choices about employment, education, or marriage. Furthermore, this male dominance becomes constant in all social structures such as politics, economy and community. Women are unable to pursue any career opportunities or participate in decision making because of restrictions from father, brother or husband. In outside world women is suppressed by male dominant institutions from pursuing economic and political opportunities hence shaping women's life in this world.

Collectively these stereotypes and patriarchy predefine gender roles in society, that further make a women a social construct in society. Girls are appreciated when they play with dolls, do household chores, wash clothes, dishes and play with kitchen sets. While boys are supposed to play with cars, trucks and become caretaker and provider for girls. These gender roles are predefined historically that oppose any vice versa acts. Women is educated particular subjects like home economics, sewing, poetry and nursing while men is encouraged to study business, mathematics

and engineering. This childhood education and expectations from genders make a significant difference between two genders. In this regard media also plays a significant role by portraying women as delicate and fragile being who always needs to be saved while men is seen as powerful being to protect a women. These predefined roles and expectations with genders to react and live according to society also shape "women" as a "women".

The predefined gender roles become important reason for gender based violence. Gender based violence can be categorized into two forms, structural and nonstructural. The non-structural gender based violence includes physical violence, forced, early and child marriages, Assault, sexual violence and honor killings. When men are defined as sole caretaker and decision maker of women, they cross all the limits of dominance. They feel it their duty to forcefully make a women to agree for marriage and do household chores. Women is forcefully made agreed to be in relationships and give birth's even if she is not willing to do so, because of a gender norm or societal

or shaping a woman like this. This is further represented in structural gender based violence when women are isolated into four walls of house. They are denied of any mobility or financial excess because they are deemed of being obedient and under men's protection and cover. Hence, the gender based violence both structural and non structural also shapes a woman what is not born like that.

These structural gender based violence further manifests as educational disparity. Women is culturally and socially not considered as important for economy. Hence, many parents refuse to educate a girl in comparison to a boy - who is considered as bread earner of house. Women education is seen as waste of money because of socially constructed gender roles of women that require women to be at home to cook, wash and give birth to a child that may further be either useful in economy as men or useless as a girl. Women are globally restricted from education also because of family honour and inlaws expectations who want her to be housewife rather than a earning independent woman.

The educational disparity between men and women results in suppressed economic rights. Women who is already uneducated is hard to compete in economic activities of nation. An uneducated women first suffers from earning a job opportunity and later on she faces issues like wage gap, maternity leaves, harassment in workplace and exploitation. Women jobs are difficult to grab even in 21st century and when she gets a job she is exploited with over time^{work}, lack of security measures and low wages. These employment challenges make women subjugated and dependent on men even after gaining the employment rights. A person without financial autonomy is unable to make complete independent decisions in life.

Furthermore, these structural inequalities in society hamper women's participation in politics and decision making. A women who is uneducated, unable to earn and make independent decisions can never be a part of country's politics. In world many nations advocate for democracy and call their governments as largest democracies; however their women also lack full representation in their government.

making. Women may have selected representation in assemblies, parties or cabinets but they lack real authority to make any policy changes to challenge male dominance in structures. An uneducated woman is unable to participate in elections or voting because of her unawareness about her political rights in country. Therefore, a woman who is educated and represented in politics through quota and an uneducated woman both remain same by unable to make any informed decisions in society.

Last but not the least, ignored healthcare rights of women becomes a major hurdle in her overall participation in life affairs. A women healthcare is important subject that is ignored in many realms of world. Women is sole creature to give birth to human body. A women health is neglected more than a men's health - as men are perceived to be financial provider. Women who herself faces childbirths, menstruation cycles and hormonal imbalances four times a month, neglects the fact that she needs care and rest rather than providing 24/7 carework. It is medically proven that a women

needs two years of rest after giving a birth to child. However, this health care right is often neglected even in today's age of information. This healthcare neglect shapes a woman's life experiences based on her weak and fragile body.

This social construction of women has myriad consequences on her personal life. A woman is never born with all these ills that world provides her. First of all, predefined gender roles make women unpaid careworkers for life time. Women is considered as only creature to take care of elderly, child and unhealthy men. This caretaking has also ^{became} part of women's profession. The nursing, teaching and homecare jobs are predefined for women throughout the centuries. This makes women unable to involve in any other social and physical activity. Even she forgets to take care of her physical and mental health eventually being a woman in this world.

Moreover, these predefined gender roles, entrenched stereotypes and persistent patriarchal dominance restrict a woman's participation

in society. Women do not get enough time and space out of her family and chooses to engage in community building, participating in leadership or earning opportunities. It makes a women isolated and bound to her relations and homes rather than with herself and society. This further makes women dependent for anything in this universe. She is unaware of worldly affairs that hamper her decision making and critical thinking skills in real world.

• Additionally, this ignorance in health and worldly affairs cause high rates of child and mother mortality rates. Women education, health and participation in world is ignored on many bases that make her unaware of hygiene, basic education of living, healthcare treatments, mental health issues and environmental aspects. Not only women is unaware but also neglected when she is aware of her basic rights. In many places where women is educated of her basic rights, the governments and law enforcement agencies suppress her rights because of the prejudice and misconception that it is not important issue.

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be challenged by providing biological and historical facts that women is ^{not} born as this or created like this but it is the people who shape her in this mold. The awareness campaigns should portray successful women figures and their male partners who encouraged them to pursue life opportunities beyond their social construction.