



# Gender Stereotypes In Natural World And Human Civilization

Sreemoyee Bhattacharyya & Sreeparna Bhattacharyya

University of Kalyani, Berhampore Girls College

## Abstract:

Masculinity is first noticed in primitive wild animal society. Later the same thing happened in the case of primitive human being. In the course of evolution man has formed a modern civilized society. Masculinity is flowing in the same way there. However instead of using force, women are suppressed in the society by applying intellect. This gender stereotype has also flowed through literature at different times. Attempts are being made to establish gender stereotype where literature continues to play a significant role.

## Keywords:

Masculinity, Gender stereotype, Civilization, Evolution, Fetus, Domesticated.

## Introduction:

About 2 million years ago when Homo was able to stand straight, they converted to Homo erectus, lived with other animals in the forest. In that case each wild-life species formed its own society of animals now be observed in the similar way. But in the course of evolution Homo erectus has transformed itself into "Homo sapiens". It is a matter of concern how much gender stereotype has affected the society of those primitive animals.

Even in today's animal society, a tiger can easily hunt the necessary animals because of their more strength and agility than a tigress. After fulfilling their appetite, he left the rest for his partner and his children to eat. When the mother bird gives incubation to the eggs, the male bird goes out in search of its own food and fills his stomach. While the primitive men are busy hunting and collecting food in the forest, the women are in charge of protecting their cave and responsible for children rearing. As a result, men are more likely than women to interact with the environment and use intelligence. The man has accumulated new experience and gradually adopted innovative techniques by applying the experience. So apparently men seem to be more intelligent rather than women from the primitive age. In this evolutionary process gender discrimination and masculine superiority has been seen in humans from the stone age, in the same way as in animals. Because according to the laws of nature, a man is physically stronger than a woman. As a result, in almost all cases women have to subjugate themselves to that physical power.

But science says, the number of nerve cells in the brains of both women and men is same. According to Monroe W. Strickberger, "In regard to man's most distinguished possession, his brain, there has been no change in size in homo sapiens in the last one hundred thousand years and there is no clear indication that there has been any qualitative change as well." (Strickberger 775). In the course of social evolution, man has passed through the Stone age, Metal age and entered the modern age. This is made possible by the fact that at every step human increases the number of his unused brain cells. Yet humans use only 10% as an average of their intelligence cells, leaving the remaining 90% unused. If one uses only a few percent of those unused

cells, ze will be irresistible in society, whether one is male or female. That is, an intelligent woman has the power to drive a stronger man.

Today's human society is patriarchy. Here the predominance of men is more there in everything. From birth to death, men have more rights than women. Such an idea has been stuck like a large stone in the heart of the society for ages. But it is not real, it's just an idea. However, in modern society not only men but also a large number of women think that women will lag behind men in all respects. Swami Vivekananda says that if a tiger cub is reared with the lambs of the mother sheep, it will lose its inherited violence and get a humble sheep. And that is actually happened in Simlipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district in Odisha. The Legendary IFS officer, Saraj Raj Chowdhury, adopted a tigress named 'khairi' as his own daughter. He would feed her with his hands, play with her and even sleep with her mighty paws on his chest. Khairi used to go to the forest everyday but no animal was injured by her. She became a domesticated, meek quadruped. In the same way, our society has made women dependent on men without informing them about their natural abilities. In animal's society male masculinity is maintained by relying solely on muscle strength, but in human society this masculine masculinity continues to flow through the ages, trampling on gender equality in a new twist. In the language of literature, this is called gender stereotype. Even in our present society, women are deprived of the opportunity to exercise their natural brain power on various pretext. The ways to suppress this woman are as follows –

- (1) The female fetus is killed by determining the sex of the fetus before birth.
- (2) Girls spend most of their time under parental supervision at home for fear of being abused by men, while boys spend most of their time playing in the outdoors.
- (3) The boys will help to earn money for the household in the future but the girl will have a family in another house in future, that's why the sons need more nutritious food than the daughters.
- (4) Men receive more family support than women in school education and higher education because men will strengthen the economic base of household by entering working life after education.
- (5) Males maintain the lineage but females only conceive. So, males need to be healthy and well-treated more than females.

Even in this gender stereotype, the research paper compelled to mention the names of some women who have developed themselves in different ways, suppressing or equating men at the national and international level. None of these women are not exceptions, rather they are representative of many such women. For example,

**Margaret Elizabeth Nobel** popularly known as Sister Nivedita for her tremendous contribution for Indian people in the time of British India. She established a girls' school in Bagbazar for adult women and widows. During the plague epidemic in 1899 she served for the poor patients. She had active contribution in the field of India Nationalism.

**Indira Gandhi** the former Prime Minister of India implemented the policy of Indian banks' Nationalization, and she mentored Indian's self-sufficiency in food and many sectors of agriculture owes to the Green Revolution. "In December, 1971, she intervened directly in the conflict to liberate Bangladesh. India emerged victorious following the war with Pakistan to become the dominant power of South Asia." (Kulke 359).

**Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi** "...is remembered for her valour during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58. During the siege of the fort of Jhansi, Bai offered stiff resistance to the invading forces and did not surrender even after her troops were overwhelmed. She was later killed in combat after having successfully assaulted Gwalior." (Britannica)

Now the question is how the progress of the entire women's society is possible? Man has built his society with some prohibitions, where excellence excels. Where men and women are supposed to have equal rights, but in reality, it is rarely reflected. As a result, a person with a sensitive brain is emotionally traumatized. So, we try to remove this inequality. That is why great people protest against this inequality through literature, religion, politics and science. All of these can be used as tools against gender stereotype. We have to create a lot of literature, where historical, courageous, intelligent female characters will be revealed. And create new female characters where women will be equal to men in various fields and in some cases, women will surpass men in courage and skill. This type of literature is frequently found in the creative writing of various authors. For example, Venus and Adonis and Draupadi.

In her short story Draupadi, Mahasweta Devi has portrayed Draupadi of Mahabharata in a new way. Now she has become an indigenous woman, Draupadi Majhen. Draupadi aka Droupdi day after day after being raped continuously, author concludes this story with the most powerful images of a woman in literature.

In Venus and Adonis, William Shakespeare has created a powerful female character like Venus, who does not fit a construct of patriarchy. She is so confident and out of any patriarchal conception. Shakespeare here subverts in to the stereotypical society.

### Conclusion:

Some of the successes of the male-dominated system in our society have been passed on to individuals through literature. This helps the literature to flow later as a gender stereotype. This genre of literature needs to be foreground. If literature does not reflect the suppressed aspects of society and reflect only the socially accepted practices, then the society will never reach a new stage in its development. Society then will be much more progressive as a result of the use of whole human resources (male and female) instead of half of human resources (male only) through gender equality. I hope that what Kazi Nazrul Islam has written about gender equality in his poem "NARI" may come true in future - "Biswe ja kichumohanshristi chiro kalyanakar, ardhek tar kariyache nari ardhek tar nor". (Islam 257) (All the great creations in the world are eternally good, half of them are made by women and half by men).

## References

1. Banerjee, Sambhu Nath. "NIVEDITA: RELIGION AND SAOCIETY – AN IMPECCABLE ACT OF CIVIL SERVICE BY THE SISTER DURING CALCUTTA PLAGUE PANDEMIC". Harvest (Online); Bi-Annual. May, 2022.
2. Bender, Nicole. Et.al. "Ongoing Human Evolution?". The Evolutionary Roots of Human Brain Diseases (pp. 472-490) July, 2024.
3. Gurpe, G. "On Stone Age Human diet" Human Evolution. July, 1995.
4. Islam, Kazi Najrul. "Kabita samagra". Calcutta. Society for Natural Language Technology Research.
5. Jain, Veenus. "Women's Leadership in India through the Ages". International Research Journal in Global Engineering and Sciences. June, 2016.
6. Kulke, Hermann. "A History of India". Routledge. 2004.
7. Ramesh, Tharmalingam. "Prey Selection and Food Habits of Large Carnivores: Tiger Panthera pardus and Dhole cuon alpinus in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu". Thesis PhD. Saurashtra University.
8. Reynolds, David. "One world divisible: a global history since 1945". W. W. Norton. 2001.
9. Scharping, Nathaniel. "Stone Age Humans Chose Their Rocks with Care". Eos Transactions American Geophysical union 105.
10. Strickberger, Monroe W.. "GENETICS" THIRD EDITION. New Delhi. September, 2001.
11. Stringer, C. "The Origin of our Species. London, UK. Penguin.
12. Stringer, Christopher Brain. "The origin and evolution of Homo sapiens". Philosophical Transactions B. 371 (1698): 20150237.
13. Tabassum, Naznin. Et.al. "Gender Stereotypes and Their Impact on Women's Career Progressions from a Managerial Prespective". IIM Kozhikode Society & Management Review. 2021.
14. Umer, Sarah. "RETRACTED ARTICLE: A brief history of human evolution: International Journal of Anthropology and Ethnology 2,6,2018.
15. Wangchuk, Rinchen. "The Legendary IFS officer who Adopted a Tigress As His Own Daughter". The Better India. 2020. News Portal.