

# The Literature Review of Gender Discriminations in Schools, Families, and Workplaces

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## ABSTRACT

This paper investigates gender discriminations in schools, families and workplaces. The main conclusion can be drawn is that female is received discrimination to some extent, which is a serious problem. The aim of this research is to review the recent progress of gender discriminations and remind people that the existence of gender bias will influence female's rights and interests, and then lead to social injustice. In the family, the conventional concept is that females are less capable than males. Hence, males play a more important roles in the family issues that will have a disadvantageous impact on females. To solve this issue, female need to learn to defend their equities through legal means and related committees. In addition, the findings about gender discriminations in the workplace are mainly due to females' special physiological processes, such as the inconvenience brought to the company by giving birth to children. It also makes companies more likely to choose male employees. In school, boys get more attentions and education from teachers, so that girls receive an inequitable education at school. The purpose of this review paper is to raise people's awareness of the importance of correcting gender discrimination. If there is a law which can restrain gender discrimination, then the atmosphere of gender discriminations will be weaker and weaker until it disappears. It makes a lot of sense to help females recognize the existence of gender discriminations and learn how to solve it.

**Keywords:** Gender Discrimination, Families, Schools, Workplaces, Inequity

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Gender discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of members of one gender against members of another one. From a sociological point of view, gender discrimination means that the social system does not provide equal opportunities for upward mobility of men and women [1]. The inequality between the sexes results in social gender discriminations. Gender discrimination is a common phenomenon in our society, which often happens at schools, families, and the workplaces. This article will summarize the main findings of researches on gender discriminations in schools, families, and the workplaces. This review paper aims to clarify the recent progress on the gender discriminations and introduce the organizational structure of this review.

## 2. GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Gender discrimination is a general phenomenon all over the world that is researched by many studies [1], [2], [3]. From the perspective of physiological reasons, women need time to have children and take care of

children, which makes women may be distracted at work, resulting in a gap in work. Another reason is about the traditional views: women are requested to do the laundry, the dishes and the cooking, while men drive to work. This discrimination against women has produced a stereotypical image of women, leading to the low status and unimportance of women, who account for more than 50% of population all over the world [2], [4], [5]. In this research, the discrimination against women is particularly prominent in the following three aspects:

### 2.1 Gender Discriminations in families

Gender discriminations in families is one of the main problems to be considered. Traditionally, females have less attentions from parents or grandparents, because in agriculture, females cannot take the same duty as men to carry heavy work in many Asian countries. This society lack of the recognition of females. From the origins of ancestor worship in the second and third millennia BC, China has had a great preference for males [4]. The researcher further defines that during the imperial state the patrilocal and patrilineal familial systems developed

strengthened this eccentric because only a son can award an identity to the new-born child and look after the old parents as well as offer economic support for them [6][7][8][9]. What's more, Prenatal sex testing and sex-selective abortion have been widely condemned by international observers as harmful and immoral. These practices are complete gender discriminations [10]. Screening of unborn children is an inhuman outrage and an act of defiance and wanton destruction of the laws of nature, which will disorder the balance of sex ratio all over the world.

For families facing chronic poverty, the female's futures may be well supported by marriage, which can also decrease the economic load. According to the high costs of raising children, education, and the low possibility of female to become the breadwinner [2]. In general, parents would push females out of their homes and schools, and in order to let the female get married. School-aged girl's marriage was considered to be the dominant obstacle to achieving universal primary education and improved gender equality for girls [11]. Education-based interventions can disrupt and prevent early and forced marriage [2]. Generally speaking, the early marriage will cause the shortage of knowledge. This research argues that the lack of education for women will deprive women of the opportunity to receive a better education. Being short of access to higher-level knowledge makes it difficult for a woman to stand out in the competitive modern workplace and realize her potentials (e.g., promotion).

In this situation, we must recognize the need to facilitate women's education and empower countless women to play a positive role. The saying "If we educate a boy, we educate one person. If we educate a girl, we educate a family and a whole nation. (a popular African proverb). This might be relevant to the traditional agricultural view that we have discussed before. It reflects the significance of female education, as there is an indescribably wonderful affection between mother and offspring. A mother's pregnancy brings her child into the world. This is a rock-solid bond that cannot be replaced by anything else. Another quote from Napoleon about education for women was: "Give me an educated mother and I will give you an educated country". In comparison with uneducated women, educated women have better cognition and social interaction, because they are familiar with how to balance work and family.

We need to take measures to effectively solve these problems. Here are some solutions that are suggested by this research: 1) The national government promulgated some laws or policies to protect women's right to receive education and help them safeguard their own rights and interests. For example, nine-year compulsory education in China is non-discriminatory. Both males and females can have the same right and chances to get to school [12]. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the

fundamental law of the state, clearly states in its general provisions that women enjoy equal rights with men in all aspects of political, economic, cultural, social and family life [4]. 2) Classes and lectures on equality between men and women should be set up in the society, with the purpose of making people change the dregs of traditional views. The idea of gender equality should be formed; 3) The law provides a way for females to appeal, by which females can use legal methods to defend their rights and interests when they encounter infringement. For examples, the institution in China called All-China Women's Federation can protect women from being discriminated in some ways. Therefore, these solutions should be considered in the future from the perspectives of family.

## ***2.2 Gender Discriminations in Workplaces***

There are a lot of issues about gender discriminations in the workplace. Despite regulations that attempt to promote equality within the workplace, discrimination against certain social groups such as women still occurs, with women faring worse than men on most measures of economic equity, including incomes, unemployment and occupational distribution. Although gender discrimination is illegal in many countries it is still evident. For example, the data from Europe illuminate that females earn on average 20% less than men [13]. More than 50% of women surveyed reported experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace in the UK [14].

Gender discriminations in the workplace has several aspects. We can see that the issue that women always get more inequity in interview and workplace. Even though women make more efforts to get superior academic achievements, while they could not gain the job or payment they deserve. Even if male and female interviewees have equal academic achievements, interviewers generally tend to recruit males [1].

Another discrimination of female is that female who are married but haven't had children are difficult to find a job. It means the female worker can be forced to leave for extended periods of time because of pregnancy at any time, which will damage the company's profits. No one knows when a female will have a child. Once she has a kid, the corporation requires to approve her paid maternity leave, which may leave the boss with some financial losses.

What's worse, it's difficult for females to get into leadership in a corporation. It seems to be a conventional phenomenon. Discrimination exists when these social tradition and attitudes compulsive demand that female should hold a subordinate position. Based on their gender within a society or subculture where a gender power imbalance occurs, female may hold a 'minority' status. Though females representing approximately half of the

population [1]. Based on these situations, it may be that female's inherent fertility makes them less competitive than male in the workplace. Due to factors such as physical discomfort during pregnancy, distraction, and the availability of paid maternity leave. What's more, there is a work vacancy for female to offset, which may not be easy to repair. Although the number of females in managerial and executive positions is increasing, these positions are still generally occupied by male [15]. As the century draws to a close, it remains a fact that men make up 95 percent of the top executives of the 1,000 largest public companies in the United States [16]. In addition to discrimination, females who do not act up to the socio-cultural traditions of their gender can face disgrace, social exclusion and violence. Females will go through hardship of discriminations from lots of aspects, which result in greater stress and worse mental health aftermath [1]. It is clear that female who earn less than male have a higher rate of depression than male [17].

Here are some solutions that are advised by this research: 1) The state should enact laws and policies to protect female's rights and interests in the workplace. For instance, the equal employment rights. It means that with the exception of jobs and posts that are not suitable for female, companies are not allowed to refuse to employ female on the basis of gender and raise the recruitment standards for females [19]; 2) Males and females should undertake the responsibilities and obligations together, and male should provide female more understanding and consideration.

### **2.3 Gender Discriminations in Schools**

Even in school education, the gender discrimination still exists. Victims of gender bias are negative. They bear so much psychological pressure that they are not willing to stand up and speak out for their injustice in public [1]. Girls are in such an unfair educational environment. The result is that generations of female have been trained to be the "perfect female" in traditional society or people's mind. "Over the course of years, the uneven distribution of teacher time, energy, attention, and talent, with boys getting the lion's share, takes its toll on girls" [18]. Teachers are often unaware that their teaching behavior is biased because they are simply teaching what they are supposed to teach, and subtle gender inequalities found in teaching materials are often overlooked [1]. "Boys and girls have different educations, although they enjoy the same classrooms, books and the same teachers" [18]. During the period of time, girls are continuous receive an unfair education.

In addition, girls' good communication is regarded as a bad morality [1], [19]. However, when the same performance exists in another gender, people's evaluation is very dissimilar. The girl was complimented for being neat, quiet and calm. It can be seen that teachers are trying to bring girls closer to the ideal image of

female. On the other hand, boys are encouraged to develop independent thinking, be active and express their ideas boldly and passionately. Girls are socialized in school and are taught the importance of popularity and the wrong idea that performance and ability are not that important [1]. Bailey argues that "Girls in grades six and seven rate being popular and well-liked as more important than being perceived as competent or independent. Boys, on the other hand, are more likely to rank independence and competence as more important." [1]. This method of education is unreasonable. They do not respect children's nature and talents but imprison children's free development and imagination. This kind of practice will undoubtedly stifle the child's talent.

According to statistics, almost all teachers in nurseries and kindergartens are females, and this female advantage may have some negative effects on students because, in schools with many female teachers, girls and female teachers identify with each other and get better personality development, while boys have psychological anxiety due to difficulty in identifying with female teachers. Hence, they are prone to aggressive behavior and uncooperative attitudes with the school [19]. In this situation, boys tend to be more negative and don't have enough chance to progress themselves, which I think is a very unfair and serious problem. In addition, school education is influenced by many traditional ideas of gender. Many teachers always think that girls are obedient and shy, however, their brains are not flexible enough and they will only study hard [19]. Teachers will attribute girls' poor grades to intellectual problems, while attitude towards boys is that they are naughty and mischievous, and if boys do not perform well, it leads to motivation problems and other non-intellectual factors [19].

Based on the above, here are some solutions and suggestions: 1) Provide the girl more opportunity to receive the equal education, which can help to break the norm of gender discriminations in school; 2) More compulsory ideological construction classes on gender equality for in-service teachers should be set up in schools [1]; 3) The department of education should provide ways for students to complain and maintain equal rights in education; 4) In school education, teachers should not import the discriminated career notions to students that females tend to work more steadily (e.g. teachers), whereas males should try more challenging work with higher risks (e.g. business work).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

This paper reviews the gender discriminations in workplaces, schools, and families. To summarize, the main arguments of this paper are: 1) The traditional family concept will have a negative impact on females. Measures need to be taken to change people's traditional idea, or to protect female's rights through legal methods and relevant committees; 2) Females are also treated

differently in the workplace because of their particular physiological characteristics. Female have a hard time reaching the leadership in the workplace due to the stereotype, which refers that male's innate strength is good leadership, while female lack team drive. Females also lack an advantage over males in the interview process, because companies may prefer not to choose female as employee for the sake of avoiding the loss of female's maternity leave; 3) In schools, boys are more likely to get the attention of teachers while girls are continuous receive an unfair education. The schools, workplaces, and families are the environment where the gender discriminations exist. There are lots of instances happened in these three contexts. There is no limit to the reader of this article, while it is more helpful to sociological researchers and females. By reading this article, they can learn more about gender discriminations and get corresponding solutions. From the perspective of the family, some traditional families will change their prejudice against female; From the perspective of students, girls in school can change the unequal teaching phenomenon through the solutions provided in the paper. For workers, female can protect their rights and interests through laws and seeking help from institutions. At the same time, it will also inspire future researchers to do more specific and in-depth research on gender discrimination, which will play some enlightening role. Therefore, in the future, the researchers are encouraged to research more on eliminating gender discrimination.

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