



Mains Practice Question

Q. What is gender role stereotyping? Discuss its implications on women in Indian society. (150 words)

11 Apr, 2022 GS Paper 1 Indian Society

Approach:

- Explain the concept of Gender role stereotyping.
- Discuss its impacts on women in Indian society.
- Conclude by suggesting some measures to remove gender stereotyping.

Body:

- Gender role stereotyping is the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men.
- For example, women are supposed to be nurturing and avoid dominance, and men are supposed to be agentic and avoid weakness.
- Gender role stereotyping is wrongful when it results in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Impacts of Gender role stereotyping on women in Indian society:

- Gender role stereotyping attributed to women have generally led to prejudice and discrimination against women. For example, women may be considered to be less reliable as workers because of their child-rearing functions.
- Gender stereotypes act as a barrier for girls to access quality education. For example, stereotypes about the role of women as confined to the domestic and family sphere underpin all obstacles to girls' equal access to quality education.
- The 42 per cent "digital gender gap" in India is often linked to social norms, bias and gender stereotypes which perceive girls as 'inherently not tech savvy' and may discourage girls to pursue education and occupation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields.
- Women are often held back from high status positions in society.
- It also affects a woman's self-image and may hold some women back as they count themselves out of pursuing prestigious roles in professions they believe they won't excel in, despite having the skills to succeed.
- The persistent gender gap in education, employment and wages is due in part to gender stereotyping.
- One pervasive stereotype is that because women are considered vulnerable and emotionally volatile, they are incapable of making rational decisions about their reproductive capacity. It denies women information to make informed decisions about their health care in general, and reproductive health care in particular.
- Harmful gender stereotypes, rigid constructions of femininity and masculinity and stereotyped gender roles are a root cause of gender-based violence against women.

To eliminate gender-based violence against women, it would be crucial to transform discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes and to promote non-violent, respectful and equal gender relations between men,

women and non-binary persons. Measures such as gender-responsive early childhood education and development; the integration of gender equality content into curricula at all levels of education; promoting equal sharing of responsibilities in unpaid care and domestic work etc. must be promoted.

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