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In the current generation of 21st Century, gender is often misunderstood as promotion of women who have taken more active role in different sectors and careers despite some traditions still hold women inferior in their society like numerous cases reported in Indian cultures women still come from traditional strict households, they have accepted their roles and feel comfortable in their decisions or lack thereof. Feminist movement gained momentum in the 1960’s and 70’s in the United States together with other Human Right groups that advocated for equal rights among all genders in recent centuries after observing women gender being domesticated by cultural norms, religious believes, traditional marginalisation yet for the few women who were out speaking role models showed great hope. Gender roles in communities changed lately whereby women now play equal role as men in owning lead large companies, very active in their families and communities, own personal businesses, manage big organisations, head political groups, earn higher academic degrees from all sectors equal to men, to mention but few as compared to early centuries. Both genders actively attend sporting events; go to bars and all other outdoor activities that were dominated by men alone. The 21st century demonstrates equal participation of both genders in different activities as compared to early centuries that kept women behind by being responsible for domestic chores. Gender being a central organising principle of society in social construction which governs the process of production, reproduction where consumption and distribution are elements in that setting, gender has remained a critical and major focus of society despite equal rights. Young genders both males and females are groomed up with knowledge of man being head of family. Religions across all denominations still hold believe of man being a superior being from woman gender. This naturally has left a gap between the two genders where by man still carries weight of being the head of the household though women headed families also perform equal roles but the family still remains incomplete without a man due to title, security, and other duties that women can’t perform.

Gender relations have typically been driven by several factors simultaneously. Of these, education, economic change, exposure to new ideas and political and social mobilisation have often been the most critical. The bibliography also highlights some texts discussing processes of backlash against egalitarian gender norms.

Globalisation and economic change:

The WDR summarises the growing body of evidence on the relationship between women’s economic activity and empowerment – much of it based on women’s involvement in formal sector manufacturing in South and South East Asia and on analysis of women’s involvement in export-oriented agriculture. Based on this evidence, it argues ‘expand economic opportunities, and human capital investments in girls will increase. Markets can affect private household decisions, even with slow-moving social norms.’

Greater economic opportunities for women and girls can also promote women’s exercise of agency by broadening their networks – from mostly kin-related networks – and thus expanding their sources of information and support. The increased physical mobility that often comes with employment puts women in contact with a new set of individuals at work and in other places. This, in turn, contributes to changing gender norms and relations. However, where information flows associated with globalisation are perceived as leading to pressure to adopt ‘western’ social norms, there can be backlash. For example, the WDR cites evidence of more conservative attitudes in Jordan to women working outside the home among younger men than among middle-aged men. The WDR also highlights factors that limit women’s capacity to benefit from globalisation, including male appropriation of technology and norms concerning care as a female responsibility.

Migration:

Migration can be associated with changing gender norms (as in the case of adolescent girls’ and young women’s large-scale migration into manufacturing industries in South East Asia and Bangladesh. However, in other cases, migrant communities conserve older social norms, even where these have shifted in their location of origin.

Technological change:

The WDR largely discusses the implications of technological change for gender relations via two routes: its impacts on economic opportunities and its impacts on exposure to information. There is some evidence of expanding opportunities in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector in India leading to greater investment in girls’ education and changing norms about unmarried and married women’s employment outside the home. Evidence from Brazil and India also indicates changes in gender norms (concerning fertility, gender-based violence and mobility) related to exposure to cable television.

Legal change. There is a substantial discussion of the potential contribution of legal change to gender equality, although less discussion of the barriers to accessing legal justice that many disadvantaged people of both genders face. The WDR highlights the role of laws that increase control over income and assets in increasing women’s position, bargaining power and exit options within their household. It also argues improvements in the legal status of girls can also, by increasing their value, induce other changes, and cites evidence indicating reforms to inheritance laws in India have resulted in delays in marriage for girls, more education (increasing the number of years of schooling by an average of 11-25%) and lower dowry payments.

Public investment:

The report makes a strong case for public investment – in health, education and water and sanitation – as a route towards gender equality. For example, expanding access to secondary schooling has helped shift norms in favour of both boys’ and girls’ attendance.

Education:

In some contexts, education is strongly associated with greater decision-making power. ‘In South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, women with more education are not as likely to have to ask their husbands or family for permission to seek medical care. Education gives them more freedom than earnings.’

Political mobilisation:

The WDR also highlights the transformative role of women’s collective agency – in both formal settings and informal associations – which both depends on and determines their individual agency. Mandating quotas for political representation has also help shift norms concerning women’s leadership capacity – for example in India. There is evidence this has helped girls increase their aspirations and led to changed perceptions of the value of girls’ education.

Access to information:

Drawing on social norms theory, the WDR argues inegalitarian norms sometimes persist because of misinformation, either about the costs of adhering to a norm or about the extent to which others are doing so. It argues that, sometimes, simply providing more information is the key to shifting sticky norms. For example, Indian villagers’ exposure to women political leaders led to less gender stereotypical views within households and concerning the effectiveness of male and female leaders.

On some issues/in some contexts, urbanisation and demographic change have been important factors. For example, in South Korea the formally most skewed sex ratio in Asia has now normalised, largely as a result of a change in social values associated with urbanisation. By contrast, increasing gender parity in education has played a much greater role in increases in women’s labour force participation in Latin America.