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GENDER INEQUALITY: PAST CONCERNS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Gender inequality refers to unfair rights between males and females based on different gender roles leading to unequal treatment in life. These dissimilarities are from biological and anatomic factors, especially from differing reproductive roles in life. This misperception comes originally from the wrong understanding of the position of each gender in life. And from every angle of life, we all see the paradox that makes women suffer adversities and put women into an unpleasant situation. However, the method of gender discrimination in one place differs from that in others.

Gender roles are attitude and activities that a culture links to each sex. Gender roles are the active expression of gender identity. The first question people usually ask about a newly born child in Nigeria is: "Is it a boy or a girl?" Such a question carries a great deal of significance for the child's entire life. In the global perspective, the preference for boys is more pronounced in Africa and most Asia countries. Discrimination against females is likely in these continents.

In the past, men are prone to have more chances to do things like schooling. Young women seemed to have fewer opportunities for higher education than young men. And at the same time, the position of men and women were generally set. The growth of this situation is evident. According to a survey in America, a female's salary at work is 75% as low as males.

However, gender discrimination has made a big argument in society about whether equality among genders should be encouraged or not. Regarding this problem, American

people seem to appreciate the position of women; meanwhile, the Chinese tend to think of the higher power of men in life.

Regarding the reasons and the origin of gender inequality, Asia and Africa would be the places where gender discrimination has seemed to be a “tradition”. According to the General Office for population family planning, the idea of distinguishing men from women came from the impacts of Confucianism and the awareness of people about life. Men were thought to have a duty of continuing the ancestral line. In that society, not having a son meant to be disrespectful towards the ancestor. Going on with this wrong conception, women are more likely to lose the role in the community (Nguyen n.d.)

Initially, gender inequality has effects on the scale of the population. According to statistics of the General office for population family planning, because of the discrimination of genders, the number of new-born boys and girls is unequal. To some people, they hope to have a son and lose the balance between the two genders. Unfortunately, this situation has occurred for such a long time, so the impacts of it in the population are a lot. As a report of the Ministry of public health, it is estimated that, despite the attempt to reduce the fluctuation between the birth of boys and girls, in 2020 there will be 4.3 million men more than women. Minister of the ministry of public health statement (cited in Phuong 2012), said that if this trend keeps ongoing, it will lead to quite a few consequences in security and the order of society before the marriage age of children.

Secondly, the discrimination of genders leads to some consequences in education. Education is an important tool, the key to the growth of humans. And no matter what gender a person is, he/she has the right to be exposed to education as others. World Bank in 2001 reported that in almost all poor countries, there is a high trend of educational impacts of gender inequality. In poverty, girls are more likely to be influenced to approach education.

Finally, the economy is the field that is consequently affected, because there is a link between education and the economy. The impact of gender inequality on the economy is found through the number of male and female students in a primary and secondary school which is negative (Barro and Lee (1994) and Barro and Sala-i-Martin (1995), cited Stephan Klasen, p.4). And they claimed that “a large gap in male and female schooling may signify backwardness and may, therefore, be associated with lower economic growth” (Barro and Lee (1994) and Barro and Sala-i-Martin (1995)). Another economic impact of gender discrimination is unequal wages among males and females. According to Yang Juhua, a

professor with Renmin University, the wages of women is much lower than men's despite the same level of position (cited Tang 2010). Tang also mentioned the chances to get a job as a woman are smaller and there is more likelihood of being refused on applying for jobs.

Ninety-three years ago, people in some places in the world first officially celebrated the International women's day. In ninety-three years, there have been a lot of changes made in terms of changing attitudes of people about the inequality of genders. Nowadays we are living in a developed world which is contributed by both men and females so why do females have to suffer such that inequality which they don't deserve to?

The concept: gender inequality has been widely known in human history but not until the beginning the 20th century has the transformation of gender relations become "one of the most rapid, profound social changes" (Wright & Rogers 2009). Now it's time for the world together to make this out-of-date conception fade away. To some extent, the Nobel Committee stated that we cannot reach democracy and peace unless we wouldn't give equal rights and chances for women to have. For the sake of making an economic recovery, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton claimed that promoting women to participate in the economy and increasing their productivity is the key to economic growth (cited Sharma & Keefe 2011).

In the relationship between the economy and education, people cannot underestimate the importance of education. To flourish the economy system, people have to make an effort on schooling. Regarding the solutions to this, setting up gender-sensitive schools is a crucial step in alleviating an environment for learning and teaching. Helping female feel more confident in studying, improving a gender-sensitive curriculum which reflects national policy on gender equality to instruct is also necessary (Clarke 2005, p.11)

Fortunately, recently there are many positive responses toward gender equality, which make people optimistic about a fair world in the future.

Gender inequality is an urgent problem in the world. Although its volume much decreases, it still exists and makes a lot of people suffer its consequences every day. And many reasons are pointing to gender discrimination which cannot be solved easily. However, with education and progressive thoughts of people, there are also reasons to trust in the future of gender inequality being stopped. Then, hopefully, people can live in fairness no matter what gender they are.