

## HOME INITIATES GENDER INEQUALITY

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*In the overwhelming society we come across many practises which are still not being enlightened to the world. One of them is gender inequality which has been experienced by many women from the very beginning of their life i.e. from home.*

*With the view of this, we present the paper which emphasizes on gender inequality taking place in home and through which we shape/mould our character accordingly. Thus to illuminate the issues of gender disparity in the grass root level, we decided to do the study, to point out how family acts as a cause of gender inequality. Through this research, we claim that parents themselves live in a gender wise unequal environment and reinforce their children to play the same stereotyped roles framed by such an environment. Additionally the text explores the gender stereotyped aspects of certain norms like **“Woman’s name is supposed to be followed by her husband’s name once she gets married.”***

*The universe for this study is a set of couples who have children. Participants were asked to answer questions about their lifestyle before and after marriage and their expectations and plans for their children ( boy and girl ).*

**Introduction**

***“Action speaks louder than words.”***

***“Exercising Gender Equality is more significant than just proposing it.”***

Every human being, born as a new member of this world gains knowledge about all the personal and social practises from their first environment i.e. HOME. Personal practises such as how to eat, how to walk, how to talk are learned by the children from the elders of their family, especially parents as **“Parents are a child’s first teacher.”** Similarly, the social term **“Gender”** is also introduced to a child from his/her parents. As a child grows, parents play an important role in moulding the child’s thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

According to Dr. R.H.Dave, infants learn through imitation, manipulation, precision, articulation and naturalisation i.e. .All the acts of parents are first observed and repeated by their children roughly and gradually those acts and attitudes become the nature of the child.

Further, David.R.Krathwohl, says that a child receives the stimulus from its environment and learns to respond to them. Later the child values those ideas, organises them into a system and builds a character for itself. However literate or illiterate parents are, they live in gender inequality and transmit the same to their children.

For instance, (i) A wife never allows her husband to get involved in household chores. (ii) The decision of the father is always the final. (iii) A mother is supposed to reach home before 10pm, but a father is not prohibited from coming late at night.

Many such practises are followed by parents and also transmitted to their children based on their gender, through a stimulus -reinforcement strategy. (proposed by B.F.Skinner)

For instance,

(i) If any electrical work is to be done at home, parents expect the boy child to do it, rather than the girl child ( although she has the ability to do it ).

(ii) If the boy child likes cooking by his nature, he is restricted from doing such chores; but a girl child is encouraged if she is involved in cooking.

Moreover these stereotyped activities that take place in home are not brought to the sight of the society as they are considered normal by such a value complexed society, family and children.

To enlighten these hidden issues of gender inequality, we have conducted a research through a survey in which parents who have children were taken as the sample.

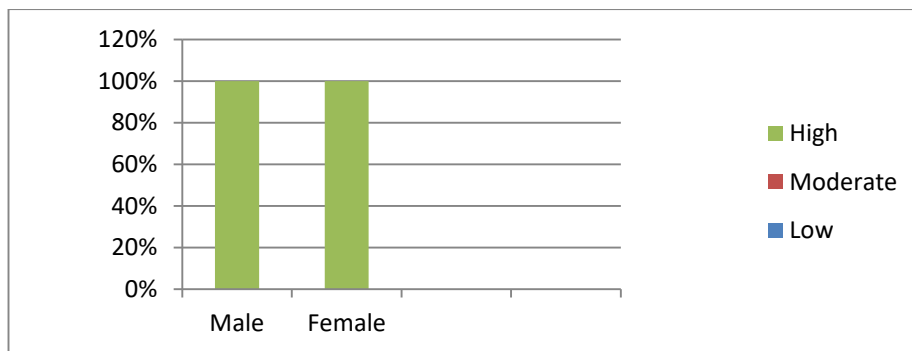
**Analysis of Research**

1)What is your name?

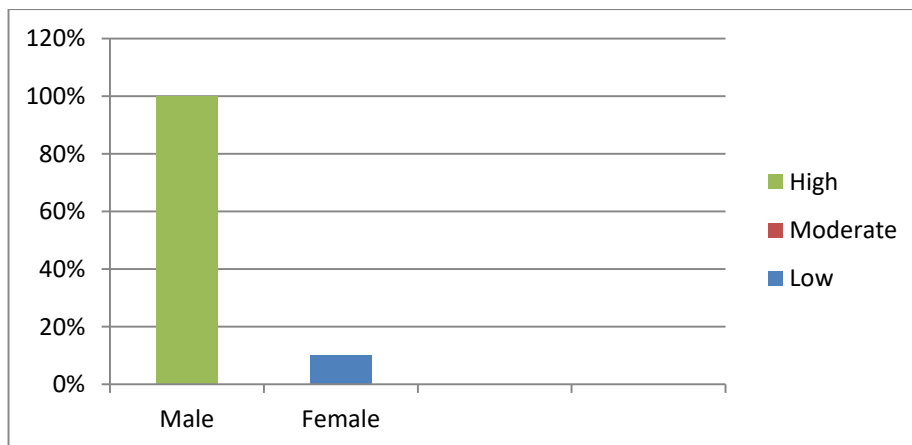
HUSBAND’S NAME	WIFE’S NAME
Mr.Thangakumar	Mrs. Thangakumar
Mr. Anthony	Mrs.Anthony
Mr.Udaya Suriyan	Mrs.Udaya Suriyan
Mr. Rajan	Mrs.Rajan
Mr.Chelladurai	Mrs.Chelladurai
Mr.Raj	Mrs.Raj
Mr.Ramesh	Mrs.Ramesh
Mr.Francis	Mrs.Francis
Mr.Michael	Mrs.Michael
Mr.Shashank	Mrs.Shashank

It is still not clear to anyone that why a woman is referred by her husband’s name.

2)How many friends do you have?

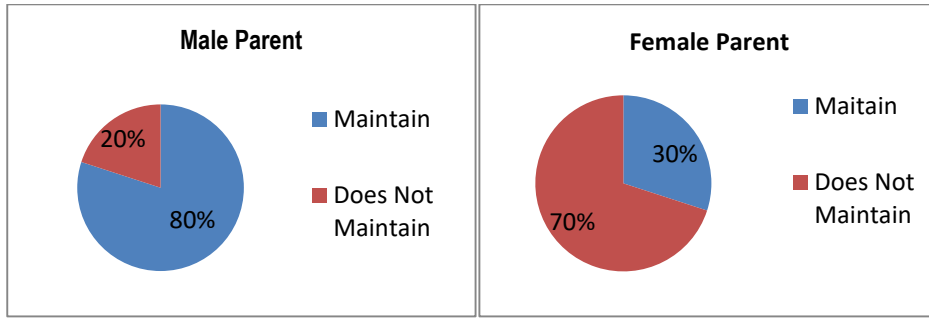


3)Are you maintaining your friendship?



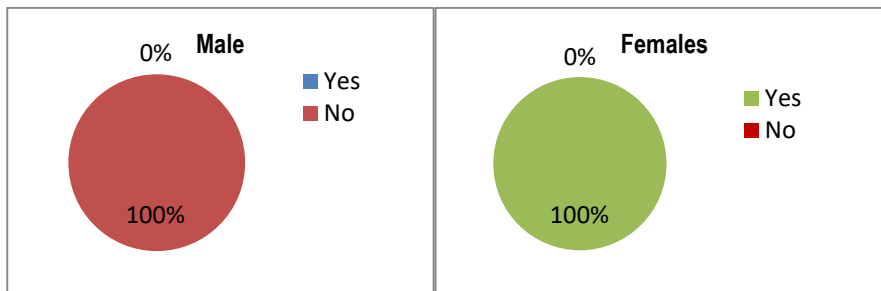
Human being (both men and women) is a social being who likes to build social relations and maintain them. According to the survey, both male and female have built friendships but only males are maintaining them. This implies that females are not provided with enough time and opportunity to maintain.

4)Are you maintaining your health properly?



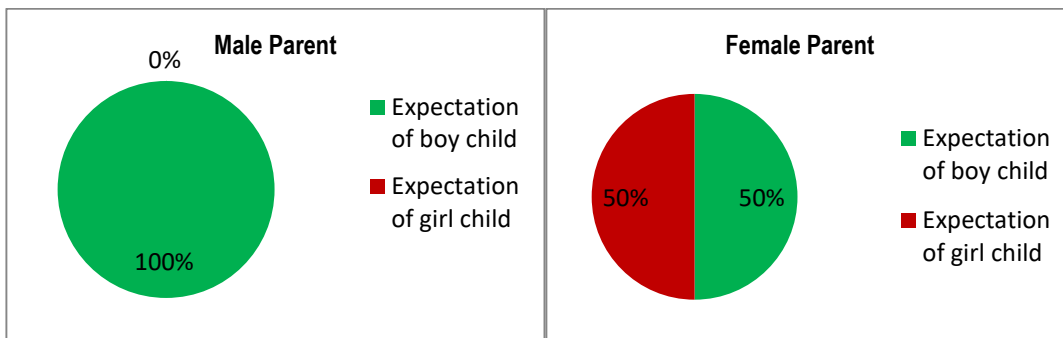
We think that the reason for the above conditions may be that women give more priority to their family and household chores than their own health. In a face to face talk with a girl (age 20), we got to know that the girl was not allowed to go for a fitness gym, instead she was told to do all the household work to stay fit.

5) Have you ever done something that you don't like just for the sake of others?



In direct interviews, many women have reported that they agreed for marriage just for the happiness of their parents. Some other records also say that a woman who is vegetarian cooks non veg food for her husband.

6) Which gender child did you expect during the pregnancy period of your first baby?



Most females, being a woman wish for a boy child. One of the major reason for this is dowry. This states that Dowry Prohibition Act is not fully implemented.

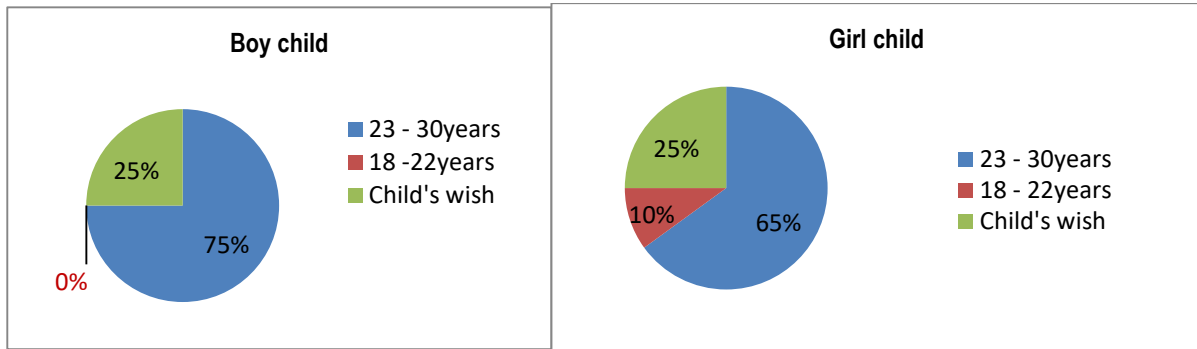
7) What profession would you prefer for your child?

Expectation of profession

BOY	GIRL
Police	--
Bank	Bank
Engineer	--
Doctor	Doctor
Airport job	--
--	Teacher
Their wish	Their wish

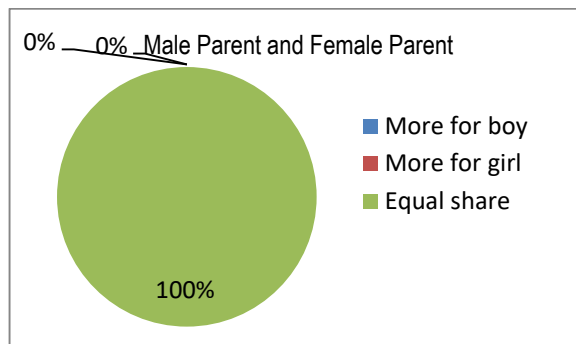
From the above analysis, it is clearly seen that professions like police, airlines are not encouraged for a girl child to opt, whereas teaching is not preferred for a boy child. Education and profession does not depend on gender but on the ability of the person.

8)At what age have you planned for the marriage of your children?



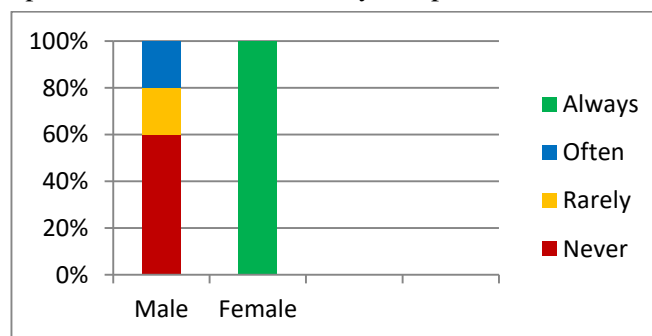
This change is needed in life. Likewise, girls are now married under the age group of 23 – 30 years like boys. Education has raised the marriage age of girl child to 23 – 30 years. We feel great to get this report, still 'when to marry' and 'whom to marry' should be left to the children ( both boys and girls ) with suggestions and guidance.

9)How would you share your wealth among your children?



According to the survey, male as well as female parents have chosen for the equal share of their wealth among their boy and girl child. This report raises our happiness as it proves that parents have gradually stopped showing partiality in distributing their wealth among their children.

10)Have you ever cooked/helped in household chores for your spouse?



From the above analysis, it is very clear that females cook most of the time, whereas males rarely help them in some household chores. This will slowly imply in the minds of the children that cooking and other household work are not to be done by men but only by women.

**Conclusion**

Thus, through this research we realized that education and modernization have brought certain upliftment in women’s life in areas like marriage age and share of wealth but needs to drastically improve in terms of stereotyped expectations and encouragements and we believe that such a change is possible only if all homes ( family ) initiate gender equality ( equal treatment for boys and girls ).

*“Do it yourself before suggesting to others.”*