

SOC209

LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY & CULTURE



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Course code: SOC 210

Course title: Gender and Society

Course credit load: 2 Units

Series 1 Foundations of Sex and Gender

Series Outline

- **Part 1 (1.1): Understanding Sex and Gender**
 - 1.1.1 Definition of Sex
 - 1.1.2 Definition of Gender
 - 1.1.3 Distinction between Sex and Gender
- **Part 2 (1.2): Social Construction of Gender**
 - 1.2.1 Gender as a Social Category
 - 1.2.2 Cultural Influences on Gender Roles
 - 1.2.3 Gender Identity and Expression
- **Part 3 (1.3): Relevance of Studying Gender in Society**
 - 1.3.1 Gender and Social Relationships
 - 1.3.2 Gender and Power Structures
 - 1.3.3 Contemporary Importance of Gender Studies

Series 1 Foundations of Sex and Gender

Introduction

In everyday life, people often use the terms **sex** and **gender** interchangeably, yet they carry distinct meanings that shape how individuals experience society. While sex refers to biological differences, gender reflects social expectations, cultural norms, and personal identity. Understanding this distinction is crucial because it influences how roles are assigned, how opportunities are distributed, and how inequalities emerge. This Series sets the stage for exploring these foundational concepts, which are central to the entire course on Gender and Society.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the ability to clearly differentiate between sex and gender, to explain how gender is socially constructed, and to evaluate why studying gender is essential for understanding social relationships and structures.

We shall commence this Series by examining the basic definitions of sex and gender, highlighting their differences and implications. Next, we will explore the social construction of gender, focusing on how cultural influences and identity shape gender roles. Finally, we will



wrap up by considering the relevance of studying gender in society, linking it to social relationships, power structures, and contemporary issues.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 1.1** define the concept of sex and identify its biological basis,
- **SLO 1.2** define the concept of gender and explain how it differs from sex,
- **SLO 1.3** analyse how gender is socially constructed through cultural influences and identity,
- **SLO 1.4** evaluate the relevance of studying gender in relation to social relationships and power structures.

1.1 Understanding Sex and Gender

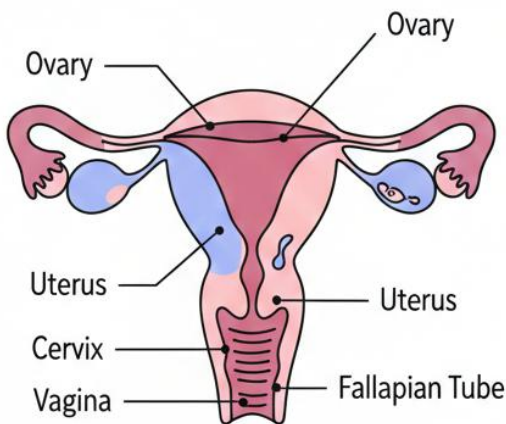
1.1.1 Definition of Sex

The term **sex** refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish males from females. These include reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormonal profiles. Sex is typically assigned at birth based on observable physical traits. It is important to note that while sex is biological, it does not automatically determine social roles or identity.

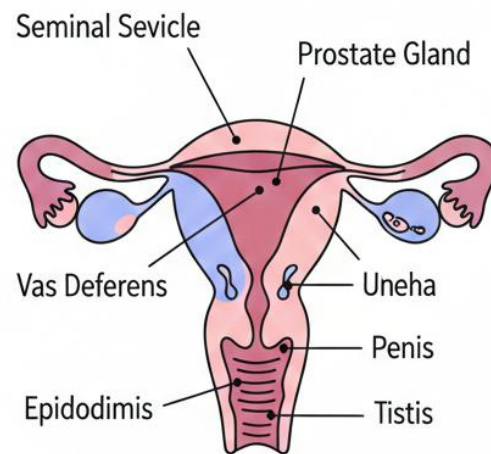


HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS

FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM



MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM



OER - Open Educational Resource

Diagram showing biological differences between male and female reproductive systems
Figure 1.1: Biological basis of sex

Fill in the blank: Sex refers to the _____ characteristics that distinguish males from females.

1.1.2 Definition of Gender

The term **gender** refers to the social, cultural, and psychological attributes associated with being male or female. Unlike sex, gender is not fixed biologically but is shaped by societal expectations, traditions, and norms. For example, in many cultures, men are expected to be



assertive while women are expected to be nurturing. These expectations vary across societies and historical periods.



Image showing cultural representations of gender roles (e.g., men at work, women caring for children)

Plate 1.1: Cultural depictions of gender roles

Fill in the blank: Gender refers to the _____ attributes associated with being male or female.

1.1.3 Distinction between Sex and Gender



It is essential to distinguish between sex and gender because they influence different aspects of human life. Sex is biological, while gender is socially constructed. For instance, being born female (sex) does not automatically mean one must take on caregiving roles (gender). This distinction helps us analyse how inequalities arise when societies impose rigid expectations based on gender rather than recognising individual capabilities.

Feature	Sex	Gender
Definition	Refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define humans as female, male, or intersex.	Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender-diverse people.
Categorization	Typically categorized as Male, Female, or Intersex .	Typically categorized as Masculine, Feminine, Non-binary, etc.
Origin	Biological: Determined by chromosomes, hormones, and internal/external anatomy.	Socially Constructed: Learned through socialization, culture, and history.
Stability	Generally constant across different cultures and time periods.	Fluid: Concepts of "manhood" or "womanhood" vary significantly between cultures and eras.
Examples	\$XY\$ or \$XX\$ chromosomes; presence of ovaries or testes; testosterone or estrogen levels.	Expectations of clothing, career choices, domestic roles, and emotional expression.

Box 1.1: Key distinctions between sex and gender

Fill in the blank: While sex is biological, gender is _____ constructed.

Pilot questions 1.1

1. Which of the following best defines sex?
2. Which of the following best defines gender?
3. Which statement correctly distinguishes sex from gender?
4. Fill in the blank: Gender roles are shaped by _____.
5. Which of the following is an example of a gender expectation?



1.2 Social Construction of Gender

1.2.1 Gender as a social category

The concept of **gender** as a social category refers to the way societies organise and classify individuals based on expectations of masculinity and femininity. Unlike sex, which is biological, gender is shaped by cultural norms, traditions, and social institutions. For example, in some societies, men are expected to be breadwinners while women are expected to manage the household. These roles are not biologically determined but socially assigned.



Diagram showing how social institutions (family, education, religion, economy) influence gender roles

Figure 1.2: Social institutions shaping gender categories



Fill in the blank: Gender as a social category is shaped by _____ norms and traditions.

1.2.2 Cultural influences on gender roles

Cultural influences refer to the traditions, beliefs, and practices that define what is considered appropriate behaviour for men and women. These influences vary across societies and historical periods. For instance, in some cultures, women are expected to wear specific clothing or avoid certain professions, while men are encouraged to take leadership roles. Such cultural expectations reinforce gender roles and often perpetuate inequality.





Image showing cultural practices influencing gender roles (e.g., traditional dress codes for men and women)

Plate 1.2: Cultural practices shaping gender roles

Fill in the blank: Cultural influences on gender roles often perpetuate _____.

1.2.3 Gender identity and expression

Gender identity refers to an individual's internal sense of being male, female, both, or neither.

Gender expression is how a person outwardly presents their gender through behaviour, clothing, speech, and mannerisms. While identity is deeply personal, expression is often judged by society



against cultural expectations. For example, a man who chooses to wear clothing traditionally associated with women may face social stigma. Recognising the difference between identity and expression helps us appreciate diversity and challenge stereotypes.

Feature	Gender Identity	Gender Expression
Definition	A person's deep-seated, internal sense of their own gender (e.g., being a man, a woman, non-binary, etc.).	The external way a person presents their gender to the world through behavior, clothing, and appearance.
Where it exists	Internal (in the mind and heart).	External (physical and social manifestation).
Is it visible?	No, not unless a person chooses to share it.	Yes, it is generally observable by others.
Examples	Identifying as male, female, genderqueer, agender, or bigender.	Choice of clothing, hairstyle, use of cosmetics, mannerisms, and name/pronoun preference.
Key Question	"Who do I know myself to be?"	"How do I want to present myself to others?"

Box 1.2: Key points on gender identity and expression

Fill in the blank: Gender identity refers to an individual's _____ sense of self.

Pilot questions 1.2

1. What does it mean to describe gender as a social category?
2. How do cultural influences shape gender roles in society?
3. What is the difference between gender identity and gender expression?
4. Fill in the blank: Gender expression is how a person _____ presents their gender.
5. Why is it important to distinguish between gender identity and gender expression?

1.3 Relevance of Studying Gender in Society

1.3.1 Gender and social relationships



Social relationships are the connections and interactions individuals form within families, communities, and wider society. Gender plays a significant role in shaping these relationships because expectations about masculinity and femininity influence how people behave and interact. For example, in many cultures, women are expected to take on nurturing roles within families, while men are expected to provide financial support. These expectations affect friendship patterns, marriage dynamics, and workplace interactions.

GENDER ROLES: INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

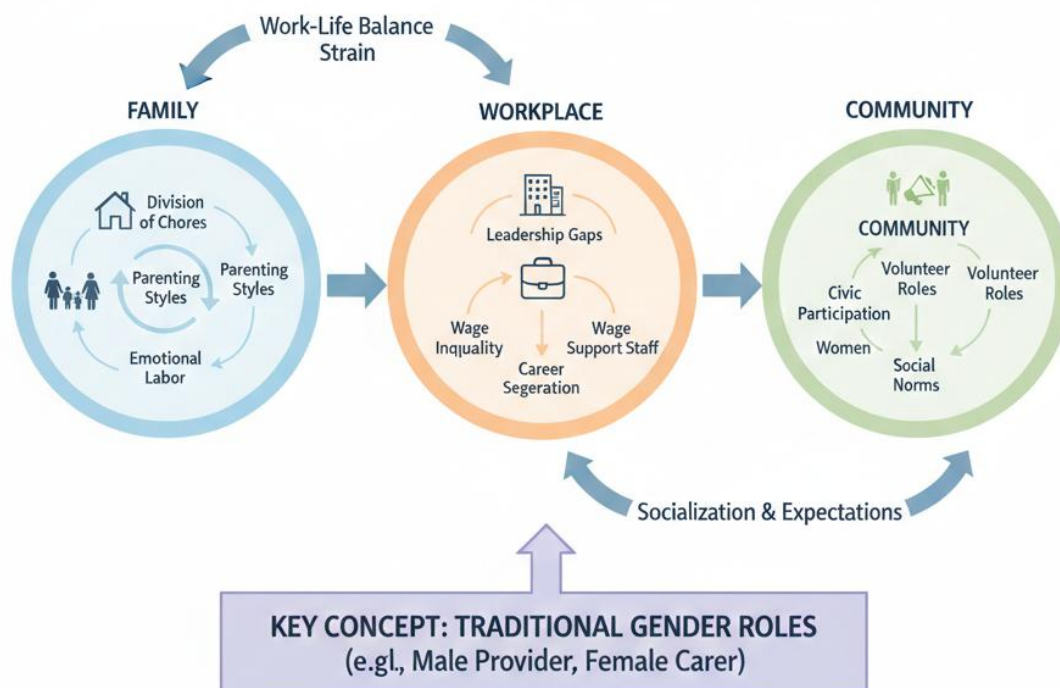


Diagram showing how gender roles influence family, workplace, and community relationships
Figure 1.3: Gender shaping social relationships

Fill in the blank: Gender expectations influence how individuals form _____ within society.

1.3.2 Gender and power structures

Power structures refer to the systems and hierarchies that determine who holds authority and influence in society. Gender often shapes access to power, with men historically occupying leadership positions in politics, religion, and business, while women have been marginalised. Analysing gender in power structures helps us understand why inequalities persist and how they can be challenged. For instance, affirmative action policies aim to increase women's representation in leadership roles.



Image showing men and women in leadership positions across different sectors



Plate 1.3: Gender and leadership in power structures

Fill in the blank: Power structures determine who holds _____ and influence in society.

1.3.3 Contemporary importance of gender studies

The **contemporary importance of gender studies** lies in its ability to highlight inequalities and propose solutions for achieving equity. In today's world, issues such as workplace discrimination, unequal pay, and limited access to education for women remain pressing concerns. Studying gender equips learners with the tools to critically evaluate these challenges and advocate for fairness. It also fosters inclusivity by recognising diverse identities beyond the traditional male-female binary.

Issue	Gender Dimensions & Key Impacts
Workplace Discrimination	Includes the "glass ceiling" preventing promotion, sexual harassment, and hiring biases that favor one gender over others for specific roles.
Unequal Pay (The Wage Gap)	Statistical differences in earnings often attributed to occupational segregation, the "motherhood penalty," and undervalued "care work."
Education Access	Disparities in literacy rates globally, gendered barriers to STEM fields, and social norms that may prioritize one gender's education over another's.
Political Representation	Significant underrepresentation in legislative bodies and leadership positions, often due to structural barriers and gendered expectations of leadership.
Healthcare Disparity	Differences in medical research focus (often centered on male biology) and varying access to reproductive health services.

Box 1.3: Contemporary issues addressed by gender studies

Fill in the blank: Studying gender equips learners to critically _____ social inequalities.

Pilot questions 1.3



1. How does gender influence social relationships within families and communities?
2. What role does gender play in shaping power structures in society?
3. Why is it important to study gender in contemporary times?
4. Fill in the blank: Affirmative action policies aim to increase women's _____ in leadership roles.
5. What are some contemporary issues that gender studies seeks to address?

Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the foundational concepts of sex and gender, highlighting their importance in understanding social relationships and inequalities. The purpose was to help you distinguish between biological and social dimensions, and to appreciate why studying gender is central to the wider course on Gender and Society.

We began by defining sex and gender, making clear the distinction between biological characteristics and socially constructed roles. We then explored how gender is shaped by cultural influences, identity, and expression, showing how these factors vary across societies and time. Finally, we examined the relevance of studying gender in society, linking it to social relationships, power structures, and contemporary challenges. By completing this Series, you should now be able to define sex and gender, explain their differences, analyse how gender is socially constructed, and evaluate the importance of gender studies in addressing inequalities, as outlined in the Series Learning Outcomes.

Glossary of Terms

- **Gender:** The social, cultural, and psychological attributes associated with being male or female, shaped by norms and expectations rather than biology.
- **Gender expression:** The outward presentation of gender through behaviour, clothing, speech, and mannerisms, often judged against cultural expectations.
- **Gender identity:** An individual's internal sense of self as male, female, both, or neither, regardless of biological sex.
- **Power structures:** Systems and hierarchies in society that determine who holds authority and influence, often shaped by gender.
- **Sex:** The biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish males from females, such as chromosomes, hormones, and anatomy.
- **Social relationships:** Connections and interactions between individuals within families, communities, and society, often influenced by gender roles.
- **Social category:** A classification created by society to organise individuals based on shared attributes, such as gender roles and expectations.



Concept Check Questions Series 1

Objective questions

1. Define sex as used in sociology. (Linked to SLO 1.1)
2. Identify one key difference between sex and gender. (Linked to SLO 1.2)
3. Which of the following best describes gender identity? (Linked to SLO 1.3)
 - A biological classification
 - An internal sense of self
 - A cultural tradition
 - A physical characteristic
4. Evaluate why studying gender is important in understanding power structures. (Linked to SLO 1.4)

Short-answer questions

5. Explain how cultural influences shape gender roles in society. (Linked to SLO 1.3)
6. Describe one way gender expectations affect social relationships. (Linked to SLO 1.4)
7. Provide an example of gender expression and explain how it may differ from gender identity. (Linked to SLO 1.3)

Long-answer questions

8. Analyse the distinction between sex and gender, and discuss why this distinction is important in sociology. (Linked to SLO 1.2)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain sex as biological and gender as social, with examples.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by discussing implications for policy, equality movements, or cross-cultural comparisons.
9. Evaluate the relevance of studying gender in contemporary society, focusing on social relationships and power structures. (Linked to SLO 1.4)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain how gender influences relationships and access to power.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by connecting to current debates such as workplace equity, political representation, or global gender issues.

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 1]

1. Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish males from females.
2. Sex is biological, while gender is socially constructed.
3. Gender identity is an internal sense of self as male, female, both, or neither.



4. Studying gender helps us understand how power is distributed unequally, often marginalising women and minorities.
5. Cultural influences shape gender roles by prescribing behaviours, dress codes, and occupations considered appropriate for men and women.
6. Gender expectations affect social relationships by influencing roles within families, workplaces, and communities.
7. An example of gender expression is clothing choice. A person may identify as male but express themselves through traditionally feminine clothing.
8. **Basic response:** Sex is biological, gender is social. Distinguishing them helps sociologists analyse inequality.
Value-added response: Beyond the basics, this distinction informs debates on gender identity, rights, and cultural diversity.
9. **Basic response:** Studying gender reveals how relationships and power are shaped by expectations.
Value-added response: It also connects to contemporary issues such as workplace discrimination, unequal pay, and representation in leadership.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 1]

Part 1 (1.1 Understanding Sex and Gender)

1. Biological characteristics
2. Social and cultural attributes
3. Sex is biological, gender is social
4. Cultural norms
5. Women being expected to care for children

Part 2 (1.2 Social Construction of Gender)

1. Gender as a social category refers to roles shaped by society
2. Cultural influences define expectations of men and women
3. Gender identity is internal, gender expression is outward presentation
4. Outwardly
5. To appreciate diversity and challenge stereotypes

Part 3 (1.3 Relevance of Studying Gender in Society)

1. Gender influences family roles, workplace dynamics, and community interactions
2. Gender shapes access to authority and leadership positions
3. It highlights inequalities and proposes solutions for equity



4. Representation
5. Workplace discrimination, unequal pay, limited education access, underrepresentation in leadership

References and Attributions [Series 1]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and open educational resources (OERs) suggested in **Series 1: Foundations of Sex and Gender**. Entries are presented in APA style for clarity and consistency.

Textual references

- Andersen, M. L., & Collins, P. H. (2019). *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*. Cengage Learning.
- Connell, R. W. (2009). *Gender: In world perspective*. Polity Press.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125–151.

Illustrations

- *Figure 1.1: Biological basis of sex*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram male female reproductive system biology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a labelled diagram comparing male and female reproductive systems in a simple educational style.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Plate 1.1: Cultural depictions of gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER image traditional gender roles culture”.
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image showing traditional gender roles in society, such as men working and women caring for children.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 1.1: Key distinctions between sex and gender*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table sex vs gender sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a comparative table highlighting differences between sex and gender in an educational format.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 1.2: Social institutions shaping gender categories*



- Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram social institutions gender roles sociology”.
- AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing family, education, religion, and economy as institutions influencing gender roles.”
- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Plate 1.2: Cultural practices shaping gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER image cultural practices gender roles”.
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image showing traditional clothing and roles for men and women in a cultural setting.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 1.2: Key points on gender identity and expression*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table gender identity vs gender expression sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a comparative table explaining gender identity and gender expression with examples.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 1.3: Gender shaping social relationships*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram gender roles social relationships sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing family, workplace, and community relationships influenced by gender roles.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Plate 1.3: Gender and leadership in power structures*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER image gender power structures leadership”.
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image showing men and women in leadership roles in politics, business, and education.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 1.3: Contemporary issues addressed by gender studies*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table gender studies contemporary issues sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table listing contemporary issues such as workplace discrimination, unequal pay, and education access with their gender dimensions.”



- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.

Course code: SOC 210

Course title: Gender and Society

Course credit load: 2 Units

Series 2 Theories of Gender Inequality

Series Outline

- **Part 1 (2.1): Classical Perspectives on Gender Inequality**
 - 2.1.1 Functionalist views: gender roles in maintaining social order
 - 2.1.2 Conflict perspectives: gender inequality as a product of power relations
 - 2.1.3 Critiques of classical perspectives
- **Part 2 (2.2): Feminist Theories and Social Constructionist Approaches**
 - 2.2.1 Waves of feminism and their contributions
 - 2.2.2 Symbolic interactionist perspectives: inequality in everyday interactions
 - 2.2.3 Social construction of inequality through language and symbols
 - 2.2.4 Critiques of feminist and social constructionist approaches
- **Part 3 (2.3): Contemporary Theoretical Approaches**
 - 2.3.1 Intersectionality and multiple dimensions of inequality
 - 2.3.2 Postmodern and queer theories of gender inequality
 - 2.3.3 Relevance of contemporary approaches in modern society

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored the foundational concepts of sex and gender, distinguishing between biological characteristics and socially constructed roles. Building on that knowledge, this Series turns to the major theories that explain why gender inequality exists and how it is sustained in society. These theories provide frameworks for analysing everyday experiences, institutional practices, and broader social structures, making them essential for understanding the dynamics of gender and society.

The aim of this Series is to introduce you to classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives on gender inequality and to equip you with the ability to critically evaluate their relevance in explaining social realities.



We shall commence this Series by examining functionalist perspectives, focusing on how gender roles are seen as contributing to social order. Next, we will move on to conflict and feminist perspectives, where gender inequality is analysed as a product of power relations and struggles for equity. Following that, we will continue with symbolic interactionist and social constructionist perspectives, which highlight how inequality is reproduced through everyday interactions and cultural symbols. Finally, we will wrap up by considering contemporary approaches such as intersectionality, postmodernism, and queer theories, which broaden the scope of analysis to include multiple dimensions of inequality and diverse identities.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** explain functionalist perspectives on gender inequality and identify their limitations,
- **SLO 2.2** analyse conflict and feminist theories in relation to gender inequality,
- **SLO 2.3** describe symbolic interactionist and social constructionist perspectives on gender inequality,
- **SLO 2.4** evaluate contemporary approaches such as intersectionality, postmodernism, and queer theories in explaining gender inequality.

2.1 Classical Perspectives on Gender Inequality

2.1.1 Functionalist views: gender roles in maintaining social order

The **functionalist perspective** views society as a system where each part contributes to stability and cohesion. From this standpoint, gender roles are seen as essential in maintaining social order. For example, men have traditionally been associated with instrumental roles such as providing financial support, while women have been linked to expressive roles such as nurturing and caregiving. These divisions are believed to ensure balance within families and wider society.

Fill in the blank: The functionalist perspective sees gender roles as essential in maintaining

_____.



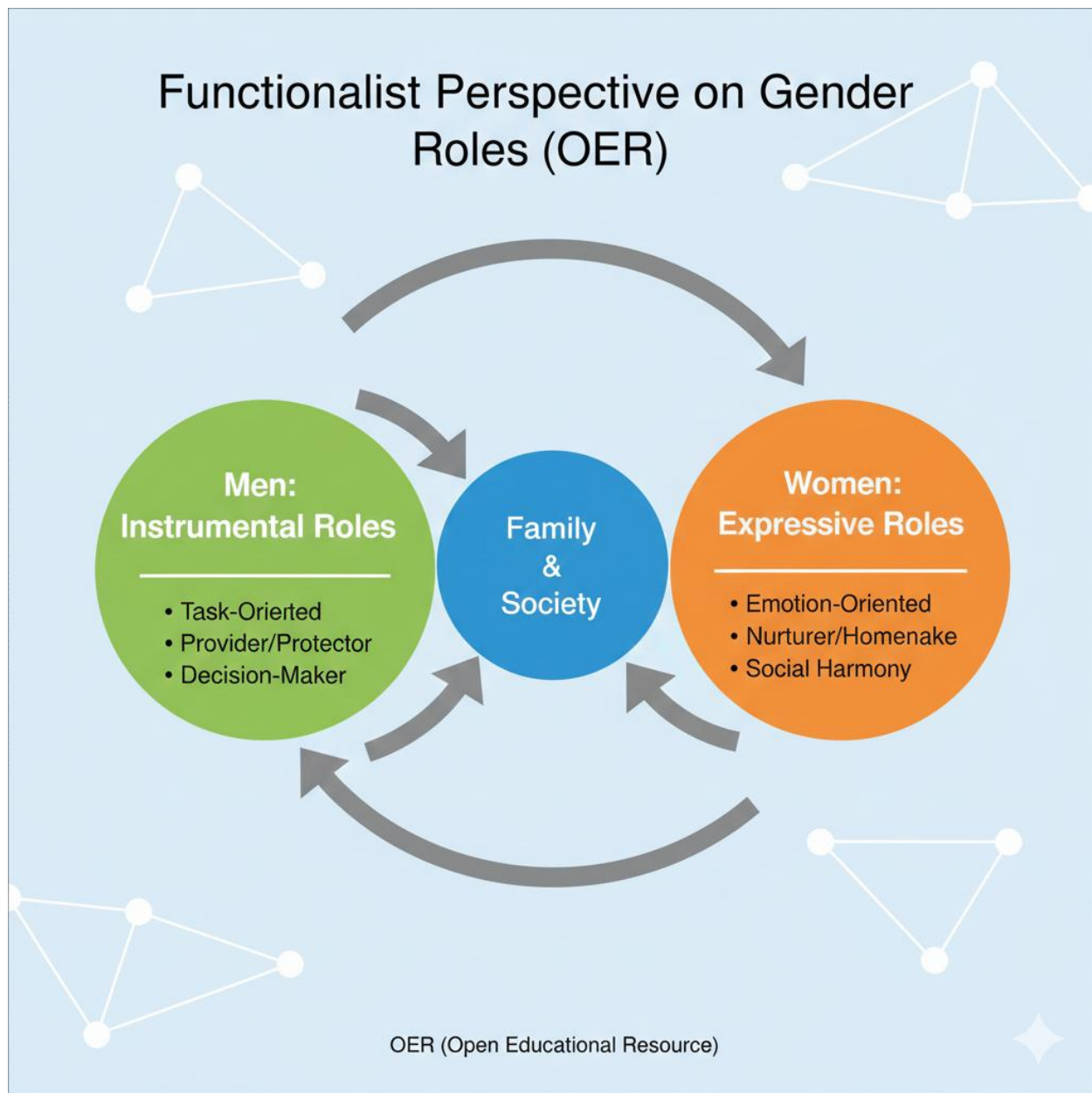


Diagram showing functionalist view of gender roles in family and society

Figure 2.1: Functionalist perspective on gender roles

2.1.2 Critiques of functionalist views

While functionalist theories highlight stability, critics argue that they overlook inequality and reinforce stereotypes. By assuming that men and women should occupy fixed roles, functionalism can legitimise discrimination and restrict opportunities. For instance, women may be excluded from leadership positions because of the belief that their primary role is caregiving.



Critics emphasise that these roles are not natural but socially imposed, and they often perpetuate inequality.

Fill in the blank: Critics argue that functionalist views reinforce _____ and limit opportunities.

2.1.3 Conflict perspectives: gender inequality as a product of power relations

The **conflict perspective** focuses on power and inequality, arguing that gender roles are not neutral but serve the interests of dominant groups. From this view, men historically hold more power and resources, while women are marginalised. Gender inequality is therefore seen as a product of competition and exploitation rather than social harmony. For example, unequal pay and limited access to leadership positions reflect structural inequalities maintained by those in power.

Fill in the blank: The conflict perspective sees gender inequality as a product of _____ relations.

Feature	Functionalist Perspective	Conflict Perspective
View of Society	A system of interrelated parts working together to maintain stability .	A struggle between social groups competing for limited resources and power.
Reason for Gender Roles	To create an efficient division of labor (Instrumental vs. Expressive roles).	To maintain male dominance (patriarchy) over women's labor and resources.
Social Change	Change should be slow; abrupt shifts can destabilize the family unit.	Change is necessary and achieved through activism and restructuring power.
Inequality is seen as...	A functional way to organize society and ensure all needs are met.	An unjust system that benefits the powerful at the expense of the marginalized.
Key Proponents	Talcott Parsons, Émile Durkheim.	Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Feminist theorists.

Box 2.1: Key differences between functionalist and conflict perspectives

Pilot questions 2.1



1. What does the functionalist perspective say about gender roles?
2. Why do critics argue that functionalist views are problematic?
3. How does the conflict perspective explain gender inequality?
4. Fill in the blank: Functionalist theories emphasise _____, while conflict theories emphasise _____.
5. What is one example of gender inequality explained by the conflict perspective?

2.2 Feminist Theories and Social Constructionist Approaches

2.2.1 Waves of feminism and their contributions

Feminist theories focus on understanding and challenging gender inequality. Historically, feminism has developed in waves. The **first wave** centred on legal rights such as women's suffrage. The **second wave** expanded to issues of workplace discrimination, reproductive rights, and family roles. The **third wave** emphasised diversity, intersectionality, and the experiences of women across different cultures. More recent discussions, sometimes referred to as a **fourth wave**, highlight digital activism and global gender justice. Each wave has contributed to reshaping society's understanding of gender inequality.

Fill in the blank: The second wave of feminism focused on issues such as _____ and reproductive rights.

2.2.2 Symbolic interactionist perspectives: inequality in everyday interactions

The **symbolic interactionist perspective** examines how gender inequality is reproduced through everyday interactions. It emphasises the meanings people attach to behaviours, roles, and symbols. For example, the way men and women are addressed in workplaces or classrooms can reinforce hierarchies. Small acts, such as interrupting women more often in meetings, contribute to broader patterns of inequality.

Fill in the blank: Symbolic interactionists argue that inequality is reproduced through everyday _____.

2.2.3 Social construction of inequality through language and symbols

The **social constructionist approach** highlights how language and cultural symbols shape perceptions of gender. For instance, terms like "chairman" or "fireman" imply male dominance in certain roles, while media representations often reinforce stereotypes. By analysing these constructions, we see how inequality is embedded in communication and culture.



LANGUAGE & SYMBOLS: REINFORCING GENDER INEQUALITY

WORDS & PHRASES

- 'MAN UP: Implies masculinity = strength /
- 'FEMALE DOCTOR: Marks gender as shames

OBJECTS & SYMBOLS

- 'BOYS WILL
"BOYFRIEND OF BOYS" Excuses
male misbehavior/origin to women
- 'MOTHER TONGUE" Reinforces
male-domination from birth
- BLUE/PINK FOR BABIES Reinforces
gender inequality
- DEFAULT MALE EMOJIS (3211) (3211°):
Professional FORMS: Limited/binary gender options

EXAMPLES & EXPLANATIONS

- GLASS CEILING: Invisible to female
shames emotion
- BOSS BABE" Infantilizes female
female leaders
- HIGH HEELS: Beauty > comfort/functionality
Often implies male-dominated hierarchy
- AI VOICE ASSISTANTS
Often female tone to default
(subservience)
- ONLINE MALE EMOJIS: Often
female toned gender connotations
options

KEY CONCEPT:

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION: Meanings given by society, not inherent. Can be changed.

Box 2.2: Examples of social construction of gender inequality

Fill in the blank: Social constructionist approaches show how _____ reinforces inequality.

2.2.4 Critiques of feminist and social constructionist approaches

Critics argue that feminist theories sometimes generalise women's experiences without accounting for differences such as race, class, or culture. Similarly, social constructionist approaches may overemphasise language and symbols while neglecting structural inequalities like economic systems. These critiques remind us to balance theory with diverse lived realities.



Fill in the blank: Critics of feminist theories argue they may overlook differences such as _____ and culture.

Pilot questions 2.2

1. What were the main concerns of the first and second waves of feminism?
2. How do symbolic interactionists explain the reproduction of gender inequality?
3. Give one example of how language reinforces gender inequality.
4. Fill in the blank: Feminist theories highlight _____, while social constructionist approaches highlight _____.
5. What is one critique of feminist or social constructionist approaches?

2.3 Contemporary Theoretical Approaches

2.3.1 Intersectionality and multiple dimensions of inequality

Intersectionality is a framework that examines how different forms of inequality—such as gender, race, class, and sexuality—intersect to create unique experiences of oppression. For example, a woman of colour may face discrimination not only because of her gender but also due to racial bias. Intersectionality highlights the importance of considering multiple dimensions when analysing inequality.

Fill in the blank: Intersectionality shows how different forms of _____ overlap to shape experiences.

2.3.2 Postmodern and queer theories of gender inequality

Postmodern theories challenge the idea of fixed categories, arguing that gender is fluid and socially constructed in diverse ways. **Queer theory** builds on this by questioning heteronormativity and highlighting the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals. These approaches emphasise diversity, fluidity, and the rejection of rigid binaries, offering new ways to understand inequality.

Fill in the blank: Queer theory challenges _____ and highlights LGBTQ+ experiences.

2.3.3 Relevance of contemporary approaches in modern society

Contemporary approaches are highly relevant today as they address complex realities of identity and inequality. They encourage us to move beyond traditional frameworks and recognise diversity in experiences. For instance, policies promoting inclusivity in workplaces or education often draw on intersectional and queer perspectives. These theories help us understand modern challenges and propose solutions for equity.



Theory	Core Focus Area	Key Concept
Intersectionality	How multiple social identities (race, class, gender, disability) overlap to create unique modes of discrimination or privilege.	Interlocking Oppressions: You cannot understand a person's experience of "womanhood" without also considering their race or socio-economic status.
Postmodernism	Challenging "grand narratives" and the idea of absolute objective truths. It views reality as something constructed through language and power.	Deconstruction: Breaking down established categories (like "man" or "woman") to show they are products of specific historical and cultural contexts.
Queer Theory	Deconstructing the "normative" categories of gender and sexuality. It focuses on the mismatch between biological sex, gender identity, and sexual desire.	Heteronormativity: Challenging the societal assumption that heterosexuality and the gender binary are the "natural" or default states of being.

Box 2.3: Contemporary approaches to gender inequality

Fill in the blank: Contemporary approaches encourage us to move beyond _____ frameworks.

Pilot questions 2.3

1. What does intersectionality emphasise in the study of inequality?
2. How do postmodern theories view gender categories?
3. What is the main focus of queer theory?
4. Fill in the blank: Intersectionality considers overlapping forms of _____.
5. Why are contemporary approaches relevant in modern society?

Series Summary

In this Series, we have explored a comprehensive range of theoretical frameworks used to understand the origins and persistence of gender inequality. We began with the functionalist perspective, which views gender roles as a necessary division of labor for social stability, though we noted critiques regarding how this can reinforce limiting stereotypes. We then examined the



conflict perspective, which shifts the focus to power struggles and the exploitation of marginalized groups.

Moving into more modern interpretations, we discussed the waves of feminism and the symbolic interactionist perspective, which highlights how inequality is reproduced through our daily communication and the meanings we attach to symbols. Finally, we analyzed contemporary approaches, including intersectionality, which looks at overlapping identities like race and class, as well as postmodern and queer theories that challenge rigid gender binaries.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to explain functionalist views, analyse conflict and feminist theories, describe social constructionist perspectives, and evaluate the relevance of contemporary intersectional and queer frameworks in modern society.

Glossary of Terms

- **Conflict perspective:** A sociological approach that views gender inequality as a result of power struggles and domination by one group over another.
- **Feminist theories:** Analytical frameworks that focus on understanding, challenging, and overcoming gender-based inequality and oppression.
- **Functionalist perspective:** A sociological approach that sees gender roles as necessary for maintaining social stability and order.
- **Gender inequality:** Unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender, often reflected in access to resources, opportunities, and power.
- **Heteronormativity:** The societal assumption that heterosexuality and the binary division of gender are the "natural" or default states of being.
- **Intersectionality:** A framework that examines how different forms of inequality (such as gender, race, and class) overlap to create unique experiences of oppression.
- **Postmodernism:** A perspective that challenges "grand narratives" and views gender as a fluid category constructed through language and power.
- **Power relations:** The dynamics of control and influence between groups or individuals, often shaping inequality.
- **Queer theory:** A theoretical approach that questions normative categories of gender and sexuality, highlighting diversity and fluidity.
- **Social constructionism:** An approach highlighting how meanings, language, and cultural symbols shape our perceptions of reality and gender.
- **Social order:** The organised and stable functioning of society, maintained through shared norms, roles, and institutions.
- **Stereotypes:** Oversimplified and fixed ideas about groups of people, often reinforcing inequality.



- **Symbolic interactionism:** A perspective that examines how gender inequality is reproduced through everyday social interactions and the meanings attached to them.

Concept Check Questions 2

Objective questions

1. Define the functionalist perspective on gender inequality. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
2. Identify one critique of the functionalist view of gender roles. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
3. Which perspective views gender inequality as a product of power relations? (Linked to SLO 2.2)
4. State one example of gender inequality explained by the conflict perspective. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Short-answer questions

5. Explain how functionalist theories interpret the division of gender roles in society. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
6. Describe how critics argue functionalist views reinforce inequality. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
7. Analyse how the conflict perspective explains unequal pay between men and women. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Long-answer questions

8. Compare and contrast functionalist and conflict perspectives on gender inequality. (Linked to SLO 2.1 and SLO 2.2)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain functionalism as focusing on stability and conflict theory as focusing on power.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by discussing how these perspectives influence policies, workplace practices, or debates on equality.
9. Evaluate the usefulness of classical perspectives in explaining modern gender inequality. (Linked to SLO 2.1 and SLO 2.2)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to show that functionalism explains stability while conflict theory highlights inequality.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by connecting to contemporary issues such as leadership representation, wage gaps, or global gender debates.

Answers to Concept Check Questions 2

1. The functionalist perspective sees gender roles as necessary for maintaining social order and stability.
2. Critics argue that functionalist views reinforce stereotypes and limit opportunities for women.
3. The conflict perspective.



4. Unequal pay between men and women.
5. Functionalist theories interpret gender roles as divisions that ensure balance, with men in instrumental roles and women in expressive roles.
6. Critics argue functionalist views legitimise discrimination by assuming fixed roles for men and women.
7. The conflict perspective explains unequal pay as a structural inequality maintained by those in power.
8. **Basic response:** Functionalism focuses on stability, conflict theory focuses on power.
Value-added response: These perspectives influence debates on equality, workplace policies, and social reforms.
9. **Basic response:** Functionalism explains stability, conflict theory highlights inequality.
Value-added response: They remain useful when connected to modern issues such as wage gaps, leadership representation, and global activism.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 2]

Part 1 (2.1 Classical Perspectives on Gender Inequality)

1. Gender roles are seen as essential for maintaining social order.
2. They reinforce stereotypes and limit opportunities.
3. Gender inequality is explained as a product of power relations.
4. Functionalist theories emphasise stability, while conflict theories emphasise inequality.
5. Unequal pay between men and women.

Part 2 (2.2 Feminist Theories and Social Constructionist Approaches)

1. The first wave focused on legal rights such as suffrage, while the second wave addressed workplace discrimination and reproductive rights.
2. Through everyday interactions that reinforce hierarchies.
3. Terms like “chairman” or media portrayals of women as caregivers.
4. Feminist theories highlight inequality, while social constructionist approaches highlight language and symbols.
5. They may overlook differences such as race, class, and culture.

Part 3 (2.3 Contemporary Theoretical Approaches)

1. It emphasises overlapping forms of inequality such as gender, race, class, and sexuality.
2. They view categories as fluid and socially constructed.
3. Queer theory focuses on challenging heteronormativity and recognising LGBTQ+ identities.



4. Inequalities.
5. They address modern challenges by recognising diversity and proposing inclusive solutions.

References and Attributions [Series 2]

Textual references

- Andersen, M. L., & Collins, P. H. (2019). *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*. Cengage Learning.
- Connell, R. W. (2009). *Gender: In world perspective*. Polity Press.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125–151.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139–167.

Illustrations

- *Figure 2.1: Functionalist perspective on gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram functionalist perspective gender roles sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a simple diagram showing men in instrumental roles and women in expressive roles within family and society.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 2.1: Key differences between functionalist and conflict perspectives*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table functionalist vs conflict perspective sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a comparative table showing functionalist vs conflict perspectives on gender inequality.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 2.2: Examples of social construction of gender inequality*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table social construction gender inequality sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of language and symbols that reinforce gender inequality.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 2.3: Contemporary approaches to gender inequality*



- Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table intersectionality postmodern queer theory sociology”.
- AI prompt: “Create a table summarising intersectionality, postmodernism, and queer theory with their focus areas.”
- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.

Course code: SOC 210

Course title: Gender and Society

Course credit load: 2 Units

Series 3 Cultural Practices and Gender Dynamics

Proposed Outline

- **Part 1 (3.1): Cultural definitions and practices shaping gender**
 - 3.1.1 Understanding culture and its role in gender
 - 3.1.2 Examples of cultural practices influencing gender roles
- **Part 2 (3.2): Traditional practices and gender inequality**
 - 3.2.1 Marriage customs and family structures
 - 3.2.2 Practices affecting education and work opportunities
 - 3.2.3 Critiques of traditional practices
- **Part 3 (3.3): Religion, beliefs, and gender dynamics**
 - 3.3.1 Religious teachings and gender roles
 - 3.3.2 Cultural beliefs reinforcing inequality
 - 3.3.3 Changing interpretations and reforms
- **Part 4 (3.4): Contemporary cultural shifts and globalisation**
 - 3.4.1 Media and popular culture shaping gender norms
 - 3.4.2 Globalisation and cross-cultural influences
 - 3.4.3 Emerging inclusive practices

Introduction

Culture plays a powerful role in shaping how societies view and organise gender. From family traditions and marriage customs to religious teachings and media portrayals, cultural practices influence expectations about masculinity and femininity, often reinforcing inequality. At the



same time, globalisation and contemporary shifts are challenging these norms, creating opportunities for more inclusive practices. This Series is designed to help you critically examine how cultural practices and beliefs shape gender dynamics and their impact on everyday life.

The aim of this Series is to explore the relationship between culture and gender, highlighting both traditional practices that sustain inequality and contemporary changes that promote inclusivity.

We shall commence this Series by examining cultural definitions and practices that shape gender roles. Next, we will move on to traditional practices such as marriage customs, family structures, and access to education and work, considering how they perpetuate inequality. Following that, we will continue with religion and cultural beliefs, exploring how they reinforce or challenge gender dynamics. Finally, we will wrap up by analysing contemporary cultural shifts, including the influence of media, globalisation, and emerging inclusive practices.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** define culture and explain how cultural practices shape gender roles,
- **SLO 3.2** analyse traditional practices such as marriage customs and family structures in relation to gender inequality,
- **SLO 3.3** evaluate the role of religion and cultural beliefs in reinforcing or challenging gender dynamics,
- **SLO 3.4** assess the impact of contemporary cultural shifts and globalisation on gender norms and inclusivity.

3.1 Cultural Definitions and Practices Shaping Gender

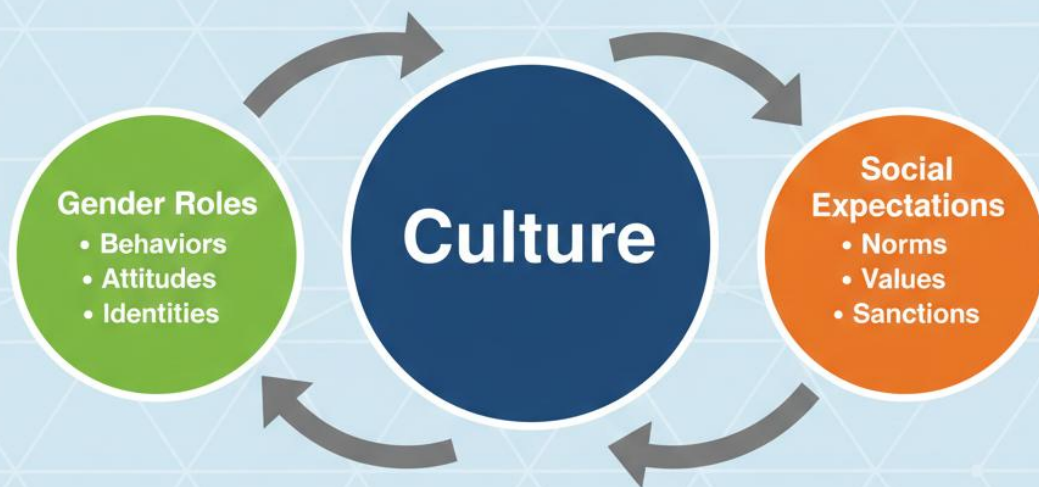
3.1.1 Understanding culture and its role in gender

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, and practices that shape the behaviour of individuals within a society. It provides a framework through which people interpret the world and interact with one another. When applied to gender, culture influences expectations about how men and women should behave, dress, and participate in social life. These expectations are not biologically determined but socially constructed, meaning they vary across societies and historical periods.

Fill in the blank: Culture provides a framework through which people interpret the _____ and interact with one another.



Culture, Gender Roles & Social Expectations



OER (Open Educational Resource)

Diagram showing the relationship between culture, gender roles, and social expectations

Figure 3.1: Culture shaping gender roles

3.1.2 Examples of cultural practices influencing gender roles

Cultural practices are everyday traditions and customs that reinforce gender roles. For instance, in some societies, men are expected to inherit property while women are excluded from ownership. In others, women may be expected to wear specific clothing as a sign of modesty, while men are encouraged to display authority through decision-making roles. These practices shape opportunities and limitations for individuals, often perpetuating inequality.



Gender roles are the behaviours and responsibilities that society considers appropriate for men and women. They are learned through socialisation and reinforced by cultural institutions such as family, religion, and education.

Fill in the blank: Gender roles are learned through _____ and reinforced by cultural institutions.

Cultural Practice	Description	Impact on Gender Roles
Inheritance Laws	Customs governing how property and wealth are passed down (e.g., patrilineality).	Often reinforces male economic dominance; limits women's financial independence and bargaining power.
Dress Codes	Social norms or legal requirements regarding clothing (e.g., modesty standards).	Can symbolize and enforce gender distinctions; often places a higher burden of "reputational" maintenance on women.
Decision-Making	Norms regarding who holds authority in the household or community (e.g., patriarchy vs. matriarchy).	Defines power dynamics; instrumental roles are often assigned to men, while expressive or supportive roles are assigned to women.
Division of Labor	Social expectations regarding "men's work" (e.g., hunting, manual labor) vs. "women's work" (e.g., caregiving, domestic tasks).	Solidifies the public/private divide, where men occupy the public sphere and women are relegated to the private sphere.

Box 3.1: Examples of cultural practices shaping gender roles

Pilot questions 3.1

1. What is culture and how does it influence gender roles?
2. Give one example of a cultural practice that shapes gender inequality.
3. Fill in the blank: Gender roles are reinforced by _____ institutions.
4. Why are cultural practices considered socially constructed rather than biologically determined?
5. How do property inheritance traditions affect gender dynamics?



3.2 Traditional Practices and Gender Inequality

3.2.1 Marriage customs and family structures

Marriage customs often reflect cultural expectations about gender roles. In many societies, men are expected to be heads of households while women are assigned caregiving responsibilities. Family structures reinforce these roles by placing authority in the hands of men and limiting women's decision-making power. Such practices can perpetuate inequality by restricting women's autonomy and reinforcing dependency.

Fill in the blank: Marriage customs often place authority in the hands of _____.

3.2.2 Practices affecting education and work opportunities

Cultural traditions can also influence access to education and employment. In some communities, boys are prioritised for schooling while girls are expected to remain at home. Similarly, women may be discouraged from pursuing careers outside the household, reinforcing economic dependence on men. These practices limit opportunities and contribute to long-term inequality.

Fill in the blank: In some communities, boys are prioritised for _____ while girls remain at home.

Traditional Practice	Description	Impact on Inequality
Prioritizing Boys' Education	Investing family resources (tuition, books) primarily in male children while expecting girls to perform domestic work.	Education Gap: Leads to higher illiteracy rates among women and limits their access to high-skilled, high-paying labor markets.
Discouraging Women's Careers	Social pressure for women to leave the workforce after marriage or childbirth to focus on "home-making."	Economic Dependency: Creates a "career gap" and reduces women's lifetime earnings, making them financially dependent on male relatives.
Gendered Division of Labor	Assigning unpaid domestic tasks (cooking, cleaning, elder care) exclusively to women and girls.	Time Poverty: Women have less time for professional development, rest, or civic participation compared to men.



Traditional Practice	Description	Impact on Inequality
Patrilineal Inheritance	Customs or laws where land and wealth are passed down only to male heirs.	Wealth Gap: Prevents women from owning collateral, which limits their ability to take out loans or start businesses.
Child Marriage	Formal or informal unions where a girl is married before age 18.	Health & Agency: Often ends a girl's education abruptly and leads to early pregnancy, increasing maternal mortality and reducing life autonomy.
Son Preference	A cultural bias that values male children over female children for lineage or economic security.	Demographic Imbalance: Can lead to skewed sex ratios and reinforces the idea that female lives have less intrinsic value.

Box 3.2: Examples of traditional practices affecting education and work

3.2.3 Critiques of traditional practices

Critics argue that traditional practices are not natural but socially constructed, and they often perpetuate inequality. While traditions may provide cultural identity, they can also restrict opportunities for women and reinforce stereotypes. Reformers advocate for practices that respect culture while promoting equality, such as inclusive marriage customs and equal access to education.

Fill in the blank: Critics argue that traditional practices are socially _____ rather than natural.

Pilot questions 3.2

1. How do marriage customs reinforce gender inequality?
2. Give one example of a traditional practice that limits women's opportunities.
3. Fill in the blank: Household labour is often assigned to _____.
4. Why do critics argue that traditional practices perpetuate inequality?
5. What reforms can make cultural practices more inclusive?

3.3 Religion, Beliefs, and Gender Dynamics



3.3.1 Religious teachings and gender roles

Religious teachings often shape cultural expectations about gender. In many traditions, men are given leadership roles while women are expected to be submissive or nurturing. These teachings influence family life, community organisation, and even political participation. While some interpretations reinforce inequality, others promote fairness and respect.

Fill in the blank: Religious teachings often assign leadership roles to _____.

3.3.2 Cultural beliefs reinforcing inequality

Beyond formal religion, cultural beliefs and myths also shape gender dynamics. For example, beliefs that women are naturally weaker or less rational can justify excluding them from leadership. These ideas are passed down through generations and embedded in everyday practices, making inequality seem normal.

Fill in the blank: Cultural beliefs that women are less _____ can justify exclusion from leadership.

3.3.3 Changing interpretations and reforms

In recent times, many religious and cultural communities have begun reinterpreting traditions to promote equality. For example, some faith groups now encourage women's leadership in religious institutions, while cultural reformers challenge stereotypes through education and activism. These changes show that beliefs are not fixed but can evolve to support inclusivity.

Reform Area	Specific Action / Reform	Impact on Gender Dynamics
Institutional Leadership	Ordination of women (e.g., female Rabbis in Reform Judaism, female Bishops in Anglicanism).	Challenges the "stained glass ceiling"; shifts the image of divine authority from exclusively masculine to inclusive.
Theological Reinterpretation	Feminist Hermeneutics: Re-reading sacred texts to highlight egalitarian messages and female figures (e.g., Mary Magdalene or Aisha).	Deconstructs patriarchal justifications for subordination; empowers women to claim spiritual agency and authority.
Cultural Norms & Traditions	Anti-FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) Activism: Community-led reforms and legal bans on harmful traditional practices.	Increases women's bodily autonomy and health; shifts the cultural definition of "purity" and "womanhood" away from physical control.



Reform Area	Specific Action / Reform	Impact on Gender Dynamics
Language & Liturgy	Gender-inclusive language: Replacing "He/Him" with gender-neutral terms for the Divine or "Mankind" with "Humankind."	Reduces the symbolic marginalization of women; fosters a sense of equal belonging in spiritual and communal spaces.
Social Activism	Faith-based feminism: Religious groups advocating for social justice, equal pay, and reproductive rights.	Bridges the gap between secular human rights and religious values; mobilizes large, grassroots networks for gender equity.

Box 3.3: Examples of reforms in religion and culture

Fill in the blank: Changing interpretations of religion and culture can promote _____.

Pilot questions 3.3

1. How do religious teachings influence gender roles?
2. Give one example of a cultural belief that reinforces inequality.
3. Fill in the blank: Some reforms encourage women's _____ in religious institutions.
4. Why are cultural beliefs considered powerful in shaping gender dynamics?
5. How can reinterpretations of religion and culture promote inclusivity?

3.4 Contemporary Cultural Shifts and Globalisation

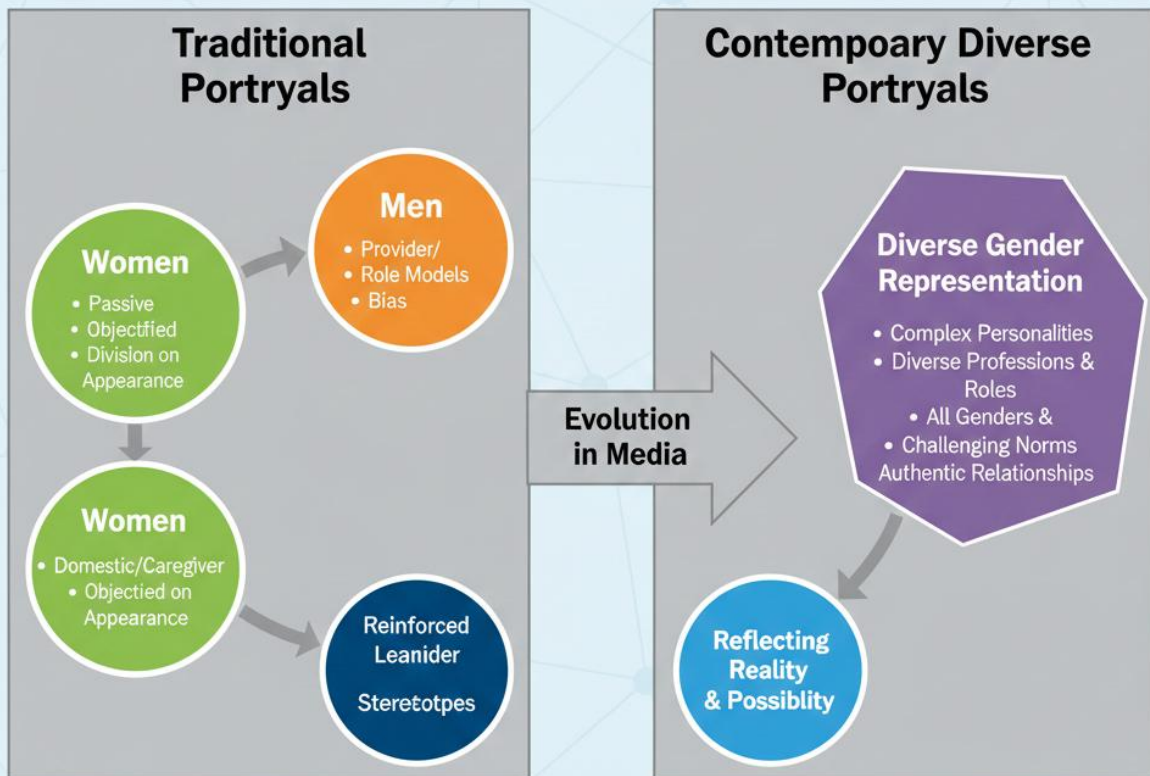
3.4.1 Media and popular culture shaping gender norms

Media refers to communication channels such as television, film, music, and social media that influence public opinion and behaviour. Popular culture, which includes trends, entertainment, and everyday practices, plays a significant role in shaping gender norms. For example, advertising often portrays women as caregivers and men as decision-makers, reinforcing stereotypes. However, contemporary media also challenges these roles by promoting diverse representations, such as women in leadership or men in caregiving roles.

Fill in the blank: Popular culture influences public opinion and behaviour by shaping _____ norms.



Media Portrayals of Gender: Traditional vs. Contemporary



OER (Open Educational Resource)

Diagram showing media influences on gender norms (traditional vs contemporary portrayals)
Figure 3.4: Media shaping gender norms

3.4.2 Globalisation and cross-cultural influences

Globalisation is the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies worldwide. It allows ideas, practices, and values to spread across cultures, influencing gender dynamics. For instance, global campaigns for women's rights and education have challenged restrictive traditions in many societies. At the same time, globalisation can also reinforce inequality when dominant cultural models overshadow local practices.



Fill in the blank: Globalisation is the process of increasing _____ between societies worldwide.

Influence Category	Examples of Impact	Gender Dimensions
Global Campaigns	Movements like #MeToo or the HeForShe campaign.	Creates a transnational platform for addressing sexual harassment and involving all genders in the fight for equity.
Media & Entertainment	Global streaming of diverse content (e.g., films with strong female leads, queer narratives).	Challenges local stereotypes by introducing alternative gender roles and diverse cultural models.
Economic Shifts	The rise of the Global Assembly Line and digital nomadism.	Increases female labor force participation but can also lead to the "feminization of poverty" in exploitative industries.
International Policy	Adoption of UN mandates like the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women).	Pressures nations to modernize legal frameworks regarding marriage, property rights, and protection from violence.
Digital Activism	Use of social media for gender-based advocacy in restrictive regimes.	Bypasses traditional state-controlled media to give a voice to marginalized gender groups and activists.

Box 3.4: Examples of globalisation influencing gender dynamics

3.4.3 Emerging inclusive practices

Contemporary cultural shifts have led to **inclusive practices**, which promote fairness and equality across gender identities. These include workplace policies supporting equal pay, educational reforms encouraging girls' participation, and campaigns challenging stereotypes. Inclusive practices are often driven by activism, policy changes, and global awareness, showing that culture is dynamic and adaptable.

Fill in the blank: Inclusive practices promote fairness and equality across _____ identities.



Pilot questions 3.4

1. How does media influence gender norms in society?
2. Give one example of how globalisation has promoted gender equality.
3. Fill in the blank: Globalisation increases _____ between societies.
4. What are inclusive practices, and why are they important?
5. How do contemporary cultural shifts challenge traditional gender roles?

Series Summary

This Series has examined how cultural practices and beliefs shape gender dynamics, emphasising their importance in sustaining or challenging inequality. The purpose was to guide you in critically exploring the role of culture in defining gender roles, reinforcing traditions, and influencing everyday life, while also recognising opportunities for reform and inclusivity.

We began by looking at cultural definitions and practices that shape gender roles, then moved on to traditional customs such as marriage, family structures, and access to education and work, noting how these perpetuate inequality. Following that, we considered religion and cultural beliefs, identifying how they reinforce or challenge gender dynamics. Finally, we analysed contemporary cultural shifts, including the influence of media, globalisation, and emerging inclusive practices. By completing this Series, you should now be able to define culture and explain its role in shaping gender, analyse traditional practices in relation to inequality, evaluate the role of religion and beliefs, and assess the impact of contemporary cultural shifts and globalisation, as outlined in the Series Learning Outcomes.

Glossary of Terms

- **Beliefs:** Accepted ideas or convictions within a culture that influence behaviour and perceptions, often shaping gender expectations.
- **Culture:** The shared values, customs, traditions, and practices that guide behaviour and social interactions within a society.
- **Family structures:** The organisation of roles and responsibilities within households, often reinforcing authority and caregiving expectations.
- **Gender dynamics:** The ways in which relationships and interactions between men and women are shaped by cultural, social, and institutional factors.
- **Gender roles:** The behaviours and responsibilities considered appropriate for men and women, learned through socialisation and reinforced by cultural institutions.
- **Globalisation:** The process of increasing interconnectedness between societies worldwide, influencing cultural practices and gender norms.



- **Inclusive practices:** Contemporary cultural shifts that promote fairness and equality across diverse gender identities, often through reforms, activism, and policy changes.
- **Marriage customs:** Cultural traditions and practices surrounding marriage, often defining authority and responsibilities between men and women.
- **Media:** Communication channels such as television, film, and social media that influence public opinion and shape gender norms.
- **Popular culture:** Everyday trends and entertainment that reflect and shape societal expectations, including those related to gender.
- **Religion:** Systems of faith and worship that often prescribe roles and expectations for men and women within communities.
- **Socialisation:** The process through which individuals learn cultural norms and roles, including expectations about gender.
- **Traditional practices:** Long-established customs within a culture that often sustain inequality by limiting opportunities for certain groups.

Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

Objective questions

1. Define **culture** in relation to gender roles. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
2. Identify one **traditional practice** that reinforces gender inequality. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
3. Which institution often prescribes roles for men and women through **teachings**? (Linked to SLO 3.3)
4. State one **contemporary influence** that is reshaping gender norms globally. (Linked to SLO 3.4)
5. What term describes **reforms that promote fairness and equality** across diverse gender identities? (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Short-answer questions

6. Explain how **cultural practices** shape gender roles in everyday life. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
7. Describe how **marriage customs** can reinforce inequality within family structures. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
8. Analyse how **religious teachings** can both reinforce and challenge gender dynamics. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
9. Assess how **globalisation** influences cultural practices related to gender. (Linked to SLO 3.4)
10. Illustrate how **media and popular culture** contribute to reshaping gender norms. (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Long-answer questions

11. Compare **traditional practices** affecting education and work opportunities with **contemporary cultural shifts** that promote inclusivity. (Linked to SLO 3.2 and SLO 3.4)



- **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain how traditions limit opportunities while contemporary shifts encourage inclusivity.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by discussing examples such as reforms in education, workplace policies, and global media influence.
12. Evaluate the role of **religion and cultural beliefs** in shaping gender dynamics, considering both restrictive and reformist interpretations. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
- **Basic response:** Use Series content to show how religion and beliefs reinforce inequality but can also promote fairness.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by connecting to modern reforms such as women's leadership in religious institutions and activism for inclusivity.
13. Discuss how **media, popular culture, and inclusive practices** are reshaping gender norms in contemporary society. (Linked to SLO 3.4)
- **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain how media and popular culture challenge stereotypes and inclusive practices promote equality.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by analysing global campaigns, digital activism, and workplace reforms that reflect these cultural shifts.

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

1. Culture refers to shared values, customs, and practices that shape behaviour and expectations, including gender roles.
2. Property inheritance favouring men.
3. Religion.
4. Media and globalisation.
5. Inclusive practices.
6. Cultural practices shape gender roles by prescribing behaviours, dress codes, and responsibilities considered appropriate for men and women.
7. Marriage customs often place authority in men's hands, reinforcing inequality in family structures.
8. Religious teachings may reinforce inequality by assigning leadership to men, but reformist interpretations promote fairness and inclusivity.
9. Globalisation influences cultural practices by introducing new ideas, promoting inclusivity, and challenging traditional norms.
10. Media and popular culture reshape gender norms by challenging stereotypes and presenting diverse representations of men and women.



11. **Basic response:** Traditional practices limit women's education and work opportunities, while contemporary shifts promote inclusivity.
Value-added response: Reforms in education, workplace equality policies, and global media campaigns highlight inclusivity and challenge inequality.
12. **Basic response:** Religion and beliefs can reinforce inequality but also promote fairness through reinterpretation.
Value-added response: Modern reforms such as women's leadership in religious institutions and activism show how beliefs evolve to support inclusivity.
13. **Basic response:** Media and popular culture challenge stereotypes, while inclusive practices promote equality.
Value-added response: Global campaigns, digital activism, and workplace reforms demonstrate how contemporary shifts reshape gender norms.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 3]

Part 1 (3.1 Cultural definitions and practices shaping gender)

1. Culture influences gender roles by shaping expectations and behaviours.
2. Property inheritance favouring men.
3. Cultural institutions such as family, religion, and education.
4. Because they vary across societies and are not biologically determined.
5. They limit women's economic independence.

Part 2 (3.2 Traditional Practices and Gender Inequality)

1. They place authority in men's hands and reinforce caregiving roles for women.
2. Prioritising boys for schooling.
3. Women.
4. Because they restrict opportunities and reinforce stereotypes.
5. Inclusive marriage customs and equal access to education.

Part 3 (3.3 Religion, Beliefs, and Gender Dynamics)

1. They assign leadership roles to men and caregiving roles to women.
2. Beliefs that women are less rational or weaker.
3. Leadership.
4. Because they are passed down through generations and embedded in everyday practices.
5. By encouraging women's leadership, challenging stereotypes, and promoting equality.

Part 4 (3.4 Contemporary Cultural Shifts and Globalisation)



1. Media influences gender norms by portraying roles and challenging stereotypes.
2. International campaigns for women's rights and education.
3. Interconnectedness.
4. Inclusive practices that promote fairness and equality across identities.
5. They challenge traditional roles and promote diversity in representation.

References and Attributions [Series 3]

Textual references

- Andersen, M. L., & Collins, P. H. (2019). *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*. Cengage Learning.
- Connell, R. W. (2009). *Gender: In world perspective*. Polity Press.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139–167.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125–151.

Illustrations

- *Figure 3.1: Culture shaping gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram culture and gender roles sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing culture at the centre, with arrows pointing to gender roles and social expectations.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.1: Examples of cultural practices shaping gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table cultural practices gender roles sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table listing cultural practices such as inheritance, dress codes, and decision-making, with their impact on gender roles.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.2: Examples of traditional practices affecting education and work*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table traditional practices gender inequality sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing traditional practices such as prioritising boys’ education and discouraging women’s careers, with their impact on inequality.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.



- *Box 3.3: Examples of reforms in religion and culture*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table religion culture reforms gender equality sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing reforms in religion and culture, such as women’s leadership and activism, with their impact on gender dynamics.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 3.4: Media shaping gender norms*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram media influence gender norms sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing traditional media portrayals of men and women versus contemporary diverse portrayals.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.4: Examples of globalisation influencing gender dynamics*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table globalisation gender dynamics sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of globalisation influencing gender dynamics, such as campaigns, media, and cultural models.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.

References and Attributions [Series 3]

Textual references

- Andersen, M. L., & Collins, P. H. (2019). *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*. Cengage Learning.
- Connell, R. W. (2009). *Gender: In world perspective*. Polity Press.
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- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125–151.

Illustrations

- *Figure 3.1: Culture shaping gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram culture and gender roles sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing culture at the centre, with arrows pointing to gender roles and social expectations.”



- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.1: Examples of cultural practices shaping gender roles*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table cultural practices gender roles sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table listing cultural practices such as inheritance, dress codes, and decision-making, with their impact on gender roles.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.2: Examples of traditional practices affecting education and work*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table traditional practices gender inequality sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing traditional practices such as prioritising boys’ education and discouraging women’s careers, with their impact on inequality.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.3: Examples of reforms in religion and culture*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table religion culture reforms gender equality sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing reforms in religion and culture, such as women’s leadership and activism, with their impact on gender dynamics.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 3.4: Media shaping gender norms*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram media influence gender norms sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing traditional media portrayals of men and women versus contemporary diverse portrayals.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 3.4: Examples of globalisation influencing gender dynamics*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table globalisation gender dynamics sociology”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of globalisation influencing gender dynamics, such as campaigns, media, and cultural models.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.



Course code: SOC 210

Course title: Gender and Society

Course credit load: 2 Units

Series Outline

- **Part 4.1: Education and Gender Disparities**
 - 4.1.1 Access to schooling and enrolment gaps
 - 4.1.2 Curriculum bias and representation
 - 4.1.3 Gendered outcomes in higher education
- **Part 4.2: Healthcare and Gender Inequality**
 - 4.2.1 Access to healthcare services
 - 4.2.2 Gender bias in medical research and treatment
 - 4.2.3 Reproductive health and rights
- **Part 4.3: Political and Economic Institutions**
 - 4.3.1 Women in leadership and governance
 - 4.3.2 Barriers to political participation
 - 4.3.3 Gender wage gap and occupational segregation
 - 4.3.4 Workplace policies and reforms

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored how cultural practices and beliefs shape gender dynamics, noting how traditions, religion, and contemporary shifts influence everyday life. Building on that foundation, we now turn our attention to the role of social institutions, which are central to how societies function and distribute opportunities. Institutions such as education, healthcare, politics, and the economy often reflect and reinforce gender disparities, making this Series highly relevant to understanding inequality in practical contexts.

The aim of this Series is to help you critically examine how gender disparities manifest within key social institutions and to equip you with the ability to analyse their impact on access, participation, and outcomes.

We shall commence this Series by focusing on education, where we will explore enrolment gaps, curriculum bias, and outcomes in higher education. Next, we will move on to healthcare, considering issues of access, bias in medical research, and reproductive health. Finally, we will



wrap up by examining political and economic institutions, looking at representation in leadership, barriers to participation, wage gaps, occupational segregation, and workplace reforms.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 4.1** analyse gender disparities in access to schooling and educational outcomes,
- **SLO 4.2** explain how curriculum bias and representation influence gender roles in education,
- **SLO 4.3** evaluate the impact of gender inequality on access to healthcare services,
- **SLO 4.4** describe how gender bias affects medical research and treatment,
- **SLO 4.5** assess the significance of reproductive health and rights in addressing gender disparities,
- **SLO 4.6** examine barriers to women's political participation and representation in governance,
- **SLO 4.7** analyse the causes and consequences of the gender wage gap and occupational segregation, and
- **SLO 4.8** appraise workplace policies and reforms that promote inclusivity and reduce inequality.

4.1 Education and Gender Disparities

4.1.1 Access to schooling

Education is one of the most powerful tools for social mobility, yet **gender disparities** in access to schooling remain a challenge in many societies. **Access to schooling** refers to the opportunities available for boys and girls to enrol and remain in school. In some contexts, cultural norms prioritise boys' education, while girls are expected to take on domestic responsibilities. Economic constraints also play a role, as families with limited resources may invest in sons' education rather than daughters'.

Fill in the blank: Families with limited resources often prioritise the education of _____ over girls.



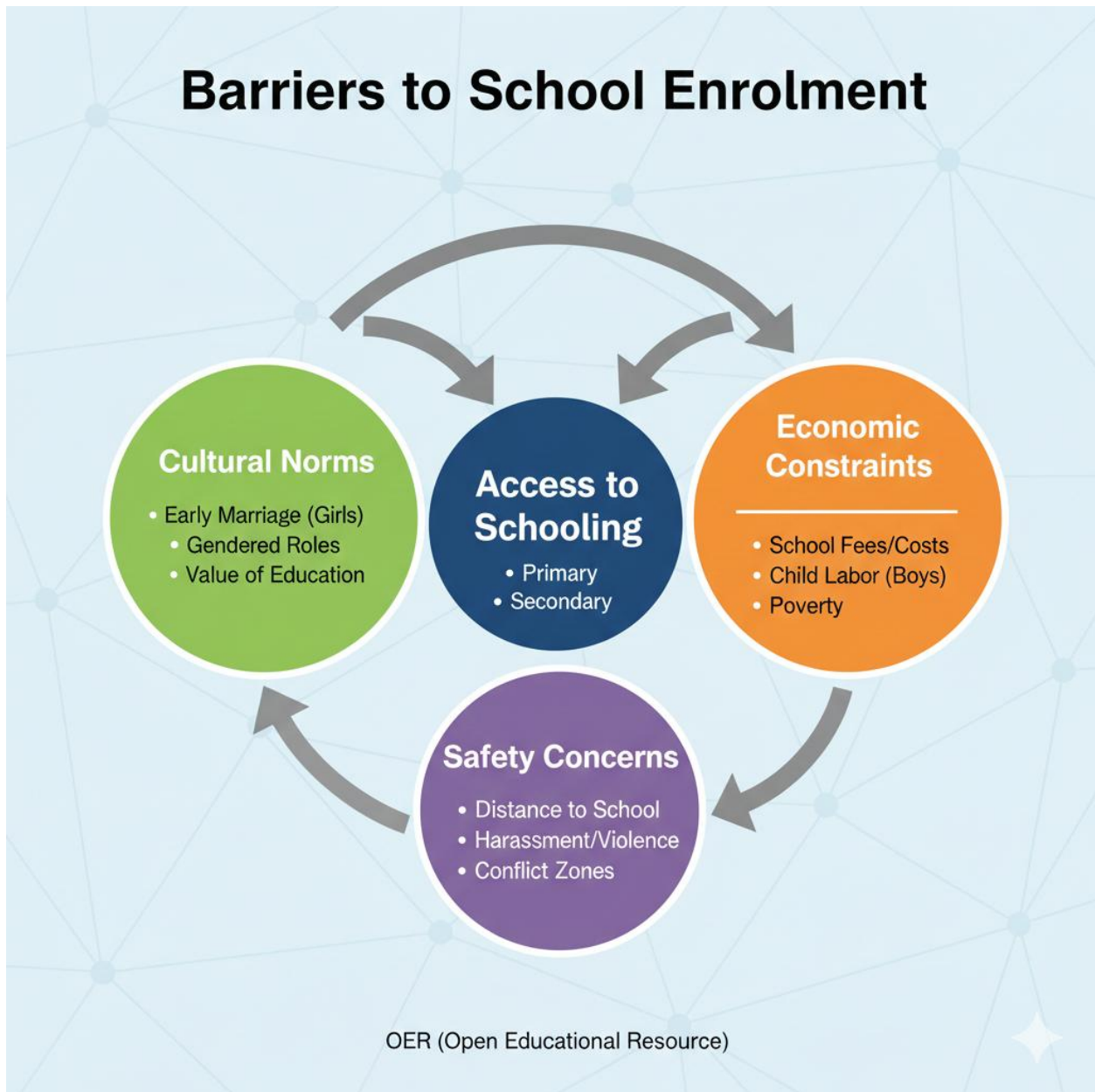


Diagram showing barriers to school enrolment for boys and girls
Figure 4.1: Barriers to access in education

4.1.2 Curriculum bias and representation

Beyond access, the **curriculum** itself can reinforce inequality. **Curriculum bias** occurs when teaching materials and examples reflect stereotypes, portraying men in leadership roles and women in caregiving roles. **Representation** refers to how diverse groups are included in educational content. When girls do not see themselves represented in science, technology, or leadership examples, they may feel discouraged from pursuing those fields.

Fill in the blank: Curriculum bias occurs when teaching materials reinforce _____ about gender roles.



Box 4.1: Examples of curriculum bias

Type of Bias	Definition	Examples
Stereotyping	Assigning traditional and rigid roles or attributes to a specific gender.	Science textbooks showing only men as lab researchers; literature depicting women solely as passive characters or caregivers.
Limited Representation	The "invisibility" or exclusion of certain groups from the narrative.	History curricula that focus almost entirely on male leaders/inventors, omitting the contributions of women and non-binary individuals.
Language Bias	The use of gendered terms to describe universal human experiences.	Using masculine pronouns (he/him) as the default; terms like "mankind," "firemen," or "forefathers" that exclude other genders.
Imbalance/Selectivity	Presenting only one interpretation of an issue or a narrow slice of a group's history.	Discussing the "Women's Suffrage Movement" as a side-note or a "special interest" topic rather than a central part of political history.

4.1.3 Gendered outcomes in higher education

Even when girls gain access to schooling, disparities often persist in **higher education outcomes**. **Gendered outcomes** refer to differences in enrolment, completion rates, and career paths between men and women. For example, women may be underrepresented in STEM fields, while men may dominate leadership positions in academia. These disparities are shaped by earlier biases in schooling, societal expectations, and workplace opportunities.

Fill in the blank: Women are often underrepresented in _____ fields at higher education level.

Field / Position	Female Representation	Male Representation	Key Trend / Observation
Global Tertiary Enrollment	51–53%	47–49%	Since 2005, women have outnumbered men in total



Field / Position	Female Representation	Male Representation	Key Trend / Observation
			university enrollment worldwide.
Humanities & Arts	~60–65%	~35–40%	Women dominate fields like Education, Arts, and Social Sciences.
Life Sciences (Biology)	~55–60%	~40–45%	One of the few STEM fields where women have reached or exceeded parity.
Engineering & Tech (STEM)	~25–30%	~70–75%	In the US/UK, Computer Science and Engineering remain heavily male-dominated.
Ph.D. Graduates	~46%	~54%	The gap narrows significantly at the highest research degree levels.
Tertiary Teachers	43%	57%	Women make up the majority of primary/secondary teachers, but a minority in higher ed.
Senior Leadership	~30%	~70%	Includes university presidents, rectors, and heads of institutions.
STEM Workforce	26%	74%	Only a quarter of the global STEM workforce are women, often due to the "leaky pipeline."

Table 4.2: Gendered outcomes in higher education

Pilot Questions 4.1

1. Define **access to schooling** and explain one factor that limits girls' enrolment.



2. Fill in the blank: Curriculum bias occurs when teaching materials reinforce _____ about gender roles.
3. Identify one example of **curriculum bias** that discourages girls from pursuing science or leadership roles.
4. Explain what is meant by **gendered outcomes in higher education** and give one example.
5. Fill in the blank: Women are often underrepresented in _____ fields at higher education level.

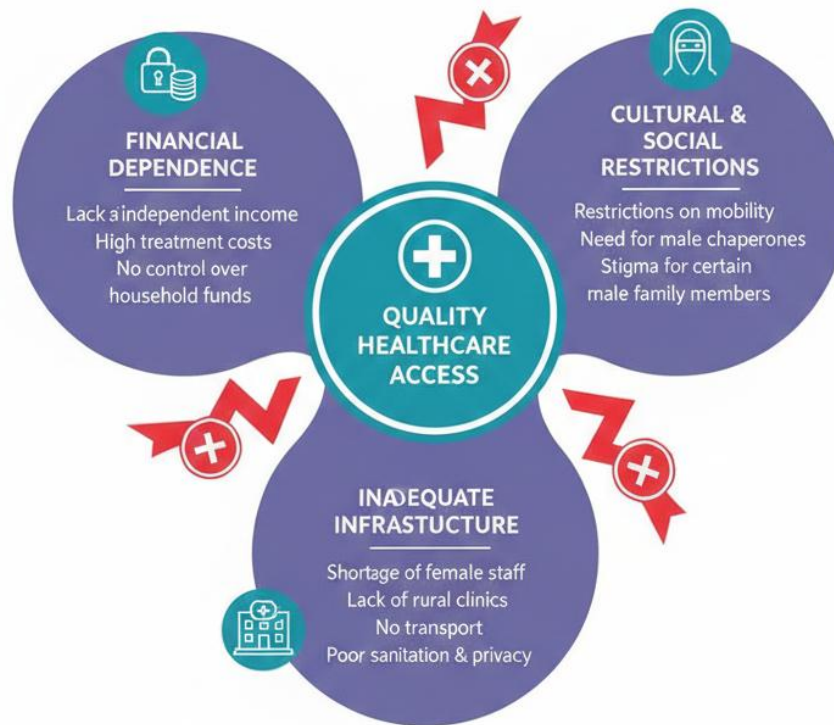
4.2 Healthcare and Gender Inequality

4.2.1 Access to healthcare services

Healthcare is a fundamental right, yet **gender inequality** often limits access to essential services. **Access to healthcare services** refers to the ability of individuals to obtain medical care when needed. In many societies, women face barriers such as financial dependence, cultural restrictions, and inadequate facilities. These barriers can result in delayed treatment, poor health outcomes, and increased vulnerability.

Fill in the blank: Limited access to healthcare services often results in _____ health outcomes for women.





OER: BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S HEALTH

Diagram showing barriers to healthcare access for women
Figure 4.2: Barriers to healthcare access

4.2.2 Gender bias in medical research and treatment

Another challenge is **gender bias in medical research and treatment**. This occurs when studies disproportionately focus on men, leading to gaps in understanding women's health needs. For example, clinical trials may exclude women, resulting in treatments that are less effective or even harmful for them. Gender bias also appears in diagnosis, where women's symptoms are sometimes dismissed or misinterpreted.



Fill in the blank: Gender bias in medical research occurs when studies disproportionately focus on _____.

Stage	Manifestation of Bias	Impacted Group & Examples
Medical Research	Historically, clinical trials have relied heavily on male subjects (and male lab animals), assuming results would apply equally to all.	Example: Heart disease studies often focused on men, leading to a lack of data on how symptoms differ in women.
Diagnosis	Symptoms reported by women are more frequently attributed to emotional or psychological factors rather than physical ones.	Example: Women are more likely to be diagnosed with "stress" or "anxiety" when presenting with physical symptoms of a heart attack.
Pain Management	The "trust gap" in pain reporting, where women's pain is often underestimated or undertreated compared to men's reported pain.	Example: Studies show women wait longer for pain medication in emergency rooms and are less likely to be prescribed "strong" analgesics.
Treatment	Differences in how medications are metabolized are often overlooked, leading to inappropriate dosing.	Example: The FDA eventually halved the recommended dose of Ambien for women because they metabolize the drug more slowly than men.

Box 4.2: Examples of gender bias in healthcare

4.2.3 Reproductive health and rights

Reproductive health and rights are central to gender equality. They include access to family planning, safe childbirth, and reproductive education. In many contexts, women lack autonomy over reproductive decisions, which can lead to health risks and limit their opportunities in education and employment. Promoting reproductive rights ensures that women can make informed choices about their bodies and futures.

Fill in the blank: Reproductive rights ensure that women can make informed choices about their _____.



Aspect	Description & Impact	Gender Equality Dimension
Family Planning	Access to various contraceptive methods and information to decide the number and spacing of children.	Reduces the "motherhood penalty" in careers and allows for continued personal and professional development.
Safe Childbirth	Access to skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric care, and postnatal support.	Directly reduces maternal mortality and ensures that biological differences do not lead to life-threatening disadvantages.
Comprehensive Education	Age-appropriate information on sexual health, consent, and bodily autonomy.	Empowers individuals to resist coercion, reduces adolescent pregnancy, and challenges harmful gender norms.
Right to Autonomy	The legal and social freedom to make decisions regarding one's reproductive life without discrimination or violence.	Ensures that reproductive choices are seen as human rights rather than state or communal obligations.

Table 4.3: Key aspects of reproductive health and rights

Pilot Questions 4.2

1. Define **access to healthcare services** and explain one barrier women face.
2. Fill in the blank: Gender bias in medical research occurs when studies disproportionately focus on _____.
3. Identify one example of **diagnostic bias** in healthcare.
4. Explain why **reproductive health and rights** are central to gender equality.
5. Fill in the blank: Reproductive rights ensure that women can make informed choices about their _____.

4.3 Political and Economic Institutions

4.3.1 Women in leadership and governance

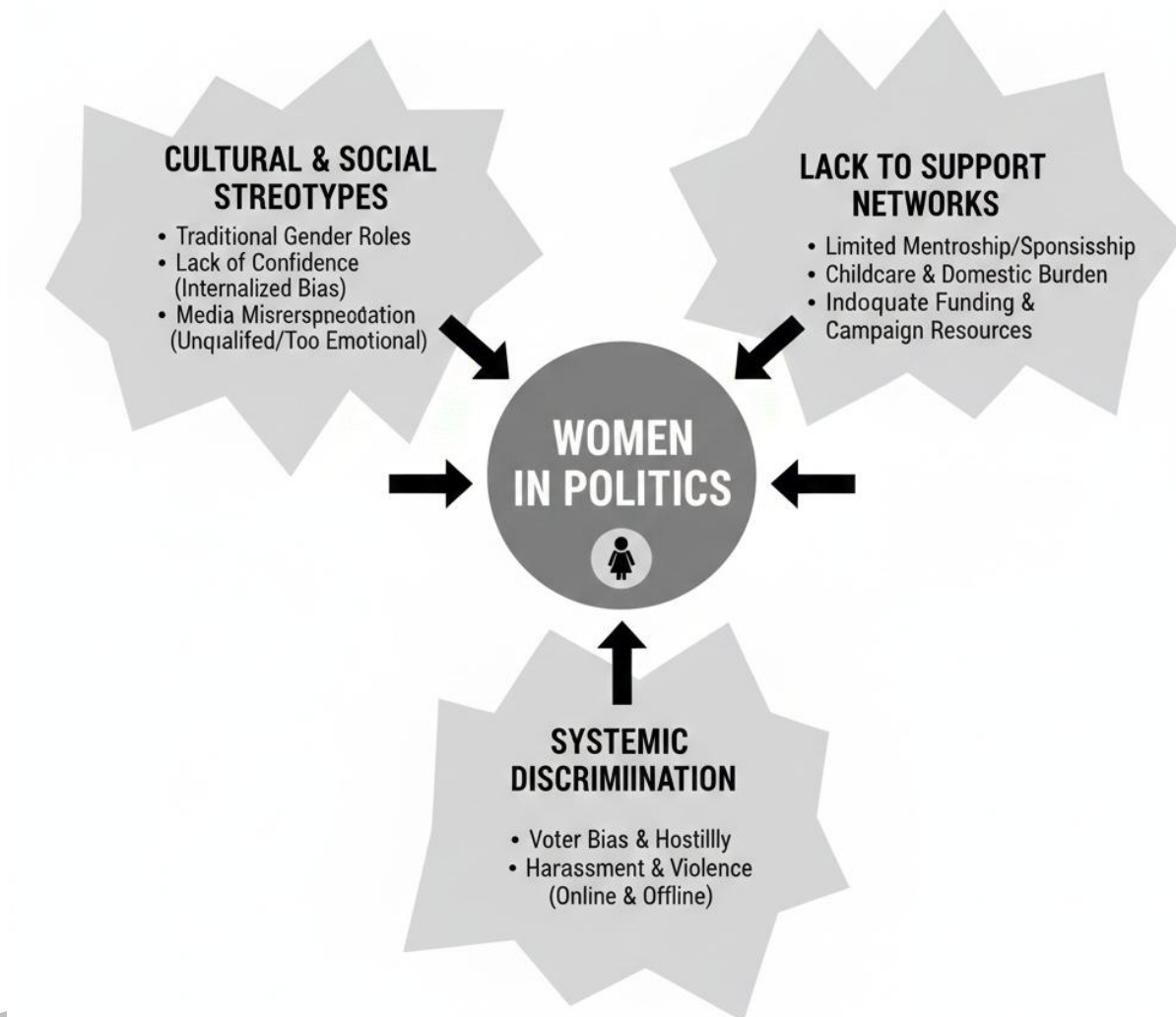
Political institutions shape decision-making, yet women remain underrepresented in leadership roles. **Leadership and governance** refer to positions of authority in government and



policymaking. Barriers such as cultural stereotypes, lack of support, and systemic discrimination limit women's participation. Increasing women's representation ensures diverse perspectives and more inclusive policies.

Fill in the blank: Increasing women's representation in governance ensures more _____ policies.

BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP



OER - Open Educational Resource

Diagram showing barriers to women's political leadership
Figure 4.3: Barriers to women's leadership

4.3.2 Barriers to political participation



Beyond leadership, women face challenges in **political participation**, such as limited access to resources, safety concerns, and restrictive laws. Participation includes voting, campaigning, and holding office. These barriers reduce women's influence in shaping policies that affect their lives.

Fill in the blank: Barriers to political participation reduce women's _____ in shaping policies.

4.3.3 Gender wage gap and occupational segregation

Economic institutions also reflect inequality through the **gender wage gap** and **occupational segregation**. The gender wage gap refers to differences in earnings between men and women, while occupational segregation occurs when men and women are concentrated in different types of jobs. These disparities limit women's economic independence and reinforce stereotypes.

Fill in the blank: The gender wage gap refers to differences in _____ between men and women.

Disparity Category	Definition	Current Example / Statistic (2025/2026)	Primary Drivers
Wage Gap	The difference in average or median earnings between men and women across the entire workforce.	Globally, women earn approx. 77–83 cents for every dollar earned by men.	The "motherhood penalty," unequal unpaid care work, and lack of pay transparency.
Occupational Segregation	The "clustering" of genders into different industries (horizontal) or different levels (vertical).	73% of clerical/admin workers are women, while only 12% of machine operators/drivers are women.	Gender stereotypes in education and "socially constructed" views of "men's work" vs. "women's work."
Leadership Gap	The underrepresentation of women in senior decision-making roles (the "Glass Ceiling").	Women hold only 29% of C-suite roles and approx. 27% of corporate board seats globally.	The "Broken Rung" (fewer women promoted from entry to manager) and lack of executive sponsorship.



Table 4.4: Examples of economic disparities

4.3.4 Workplace policies and reforms

Workplace policies and reforms are strategies to reduce inequality, such as equal pay laws, parental leave, and diversity initiatives. These reforms promote inclusivity and create fairer opportunities for all genders.

Fill in the blank: Equal pay laws are workplace reforms designed to reduce _____.

Pilot Questions 4.3

1. Define **leadership and governance** in the context of political institutions.
2. Fill in the blank: Barriers to political participation reduce women's _____ in shaping policies.
3. Explain what is meant by the **gender wage gap** and give one example.
4. Identify one workplace reform that promotes inclusivity.
5. Fill in the blank: Equal pay laws are workplace reforms designed to reduce _____.

Series Summary

This Series has examined how gender disparities are embedded within social institutions, highlighting their impact on access, participation, and outcomes. Its purpose was to help you critically explore how education, healthcare, politics, and the economy can both reinforce and challenge inequality, making the topic highly relevant to understanding everyday experiences and broader societal structures.

We began by considering education, focusing on access to schooling, curriculum bias, and gendered outcomes in higher education. We then moved on to healthcare, where we discussed barriers to services, gender bias in medical research, and reproductive health and rights. Finally, we explored political and economic institutions, analysing women's representation in leadership, barriers to participation, wage gaps, occupational segregation, and workplace reforms. By completing this Series, you should now be able to analyse disparities in education, explain healthcare inequalities, and evaluate political and economic challenges, as outlined in the Series Learning Outcomes.

Glossary of Terms

- **Access to healthcare services:** The ability of individuals to obtain medical care when needed, often limited by financial, cultural, or structural barriers.
- **Access to schooling:** Opportunities available for boys and girls to enrol and remain in school, which can be influenced by cultural norms and economic constraints.



- **Curriculum bias:** The reinforcement of stereotypes or exclusion of diverse groups within teaching materials and examples.
- **Economic institutions:** Structures such as labour markets and workplaces that organise economic activity and often reflect gender disparities.
- **Gender bias in medical research:** The tendency for studies to focus disproportionately on men, leading to gaps in understanding women's health needs.
- **Gender wage gap:** The difference in earnings between men and women, even when performing similar work.
- **Gendered outcomes:** Differences in enrolment, completion rates, and career paths between men and women in higher education.
- **Governance:** The processes and structures through which decisions are made and authority is exercised in political institutions.
- **Leadership:** Positions of authority in government or organisations, often underrepresented by women.
- **Occupational segregation:** The concentration of men and women in different types of jobs, often reinforcing stereotypes and inequality.
- **Political participation:** Involvement in political activities such as voting, campaigning, or holding office, which can be limited by systemic barriers.
- **Reproductive health and rights:** Access to family planning, safe childbirth, and reproductive education, enabling informed choices about one's body and future.
- **Workplace reforms:** Policies designed to reduce inequality, such as equal pay laws, parental leave, and diversity initiatives.

Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

Objective questions

1. Define **access to schooling** and explain why it is important for gender equality. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
2. Identify one example of **curriculum bias** in education. (Linked to SLO 4.2)
3. Which aspect of healthcare is most affected by **gender bias in medical research**? (Linked to SLO 4.4)
4. State one key component of **reproductive health and rights**. (Linked to SLO 4.5)
5. What term describes the difference in earnings between men and women performing similar work? (Linked to SLO 4.7)

Short-answer questions

6. Explain how **curriculum representation** influences girls' career choices. (Linked to SLO 4.2)
7. Describe one barrier that limits women's **access to healthcare services**. (Linked to SLO 4.3)



8. Analyse how **barriers to political participation** affect women's influence in policymaking. (Linked to SLO 4.6)
9. Assess how **occupational segregation** reinforces stereotypes in the labour market. (Linked to SLO 4.7)
10. Illustrate one example of a **workplace reform** that promotes inclusivity. (Linked to SLO 4.8)

Long-answer questions

11. Compare disparities in **education outcomes** with those in **healthcare access**, highlighting their impact on women's opportunities. (Linked to SLO 4.1 and SLO 4.3)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain how limited access to schooling and healthcare restricts women's opportunities.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by discussing how these disparities intersect with economic independence, social mobility, and long-term wellbeing.
12. Evaluate the role of **political institutions** in reinforcing or challenging gender inequality. (Linked to SLO 4.6)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to show how barriers reduce women's representation and influence.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by connecting to global examples of reforms, quotas, and activism that promote inclusivity.
13. Discuss how **economic institutions** perpetuate inequality through wage gaps and workplace practices, and suggest reforms. (Linked to SLO 4.7 and SLO 4.8)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain wage gaps, occupational segregation, and workplace reforms.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by analysing international policies, diversity initiatives, and corporate strategies that reduce inequality.

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

1. Access to schooling refers to opportunities for boys and girls to enrol and remain in school. It is important because it ensures equal opportunities for education and future careers.
2. Textbooks portraying men as leaders and women as caregivers.
3. Clinical trials and medical studies.
4. Family planning.
5. Gender wage gap.
6. Curriculum representation influences girls' career choices by either encouraging or discouraging them from pursuing fields such as science or leadership.
7. Financial dependence or cultural restrictions.



8. Barriers to political participation reduce women's influence in policymaking and limit their ability to advocate for inclusive policies.
9. Occupational segregation reinforces stereotypes by concentrating women in caregiving roles and men in leadership positions.
10. Equal pay laws or parental leave policies.
11. **Basic response:** Limited access to schooling and healthcare restricts women's opportunities in education, employment, and wellbeing.
Value-added response: These disparities also affect social mobility, economic independence, and long-term health outcomes.
12. **Basic response:** Political institutions reinforce inequality by limiting women's representation and participation.
Value-added response: Reforms such as quotas, activism, and leadership programmes challenge inequality and promote inclusivity.
13. **Basic response:** Economic institutions perpetuate inequality through wage gaps and occupational segregation, but workplace reforms can reduce these disparities.
Value-added response: International policies, diversity initiatives, and corporate strategies further promote inclusivity and fairness.

Answers to Pilot Questions [4]

Part 4.1 Education and Gender Disparities

1. Opportunities for boys and girls to enrol and remain in school; cultural norms or economic constraints.
2. Stereotypes about gender roles.
3. Textbooks showing men as leaders and women as caregivers.
4. Differences in enrolment, completion rates, and career paths.
5. STEM fields.

Part 4.2 Healthcare and Gender Inequality

1. The ability to obtain medical care when needed; financial dependence.
2. Men.
3. Women's symptoms dismissed as psychological.
4. They ensure women can make informed choices about their bodies and futures.
5. Their bodies.

Part 4.3 Political and Economic Institutions

1. Positions of authority in government and policymaking.



2. Influence.
3. Differences in earnings between men and women; women earning less for similar work.
4. Equal pay laws or parental leave.
5. Wage gaps.

References and Attributions [Series 4]

Textual references

- Connell, R. W. (2009). *Gender: In world perspective*. Polity Press.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender*. Yale University Press.
- Sen, G., & Östlin, P. (2008). *Gender inequity in health: Why it exists and how we can change it*. Global Public Health, 3(S1), 1–12.
- World Health Organization. (2020). *Gender and health*. WHO.
- World Bank. (2012). *World development report 2012: Gender equality and development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Illustrations

- *Figure 4.1: Barriers to access in education*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram gender disparities access to schooling”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing barriers to school enrolment for boys and girls, including cultural norms, economic constraints, and safety concerns.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 4.1: Examples of curriculum bias*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table curriculum bias gender education”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of curriculum bias in education, including stereotypes, limited representation, and language bias.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Table 4.2: Gendered outcomes in higher education*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table gender disparities higher education outcomes”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table comparing male and female representation in higher education fields such as STEM, humanities, and leadership positions.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 4.2: Barriers to healthcare access*



- Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram gender inequality healthcare access”.
- AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing barriers to healthcare access for women, including financial dependence, cultural restrictions, and inadequate facilities.”
- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 4.2: Examples of gender bias in healthcare*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table gender bias medical research treatment”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of gender bias in healthcare, including research, diagnosis, and treatment.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Table 4.3: Key aspects of reproductive health and rights*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table reproductive health rights gender equality”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing key aspects of reproductive health and rights, including family planning, safe childbirth, and education.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 4.3: Barriers to women’s leadership*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram women leadership barriers politics”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing barriers to women’s political leadership, including stereotypes, lack of support, and discrimination.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Table 4.4: Examples of economic disparities*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table gender wage gap occupational segregation”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of economic disparities, including wage gap, occupational segregation, and leadership gap.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.



Course code: SOC 210

Course title: Gender and Society

Course credit load: 2 Units

Series Outline for Series 5

Part 5.1: Policy and Legal Frameworks

- 5.1.1 International conventions and agreements
- 5.1.2 National laws and policies
- 5.1.3 Institutional enforcement and monitoring

Part 5.2: Educational and Community-Based Strategies

- 5.2.1 Gender-sensitive curriculum and pedagogy
- 5.2.2 Community awareness and advocacy programmes
- 5.2.3 Empowerment initiatives for girls and women

Part 5.3: Workplace, Economic, and Media Interventions

- 5.3.1 Equal pay and employment policies
- 5.3.2 Diversity and inclusion initiatives
- 5.3.3 Support for entrepreneurship and financial independence
- 5.3.4 Media campaigns and digital tools for advocacy

Introduction

In the last Series, we examined how gender disparities are embedded within social institutions such as education, healthcare, politics, and the economy. We saw how these structures can reinforce inequality but also provide opportunities for reform. Building on that foundation, this Series turns towards practical solutions, focusing on strategies and actions that can be implemented to promote gender equity across different contexts.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with knowledge of key frameworks, initiatives, and interventions that support gender equity, and to enable you to critically evaluate their effectiveness in real-world settings.

We shall commence this Series by exploring policy and legal frameworks, including international conventions, national laws, and institutional enforcement. Next, we will move on to educational and community-based strategies, considering gender-sensitive curricula, advocacy programmes, and empowerment initiatives. Finally, we will wrap up by examining workplace,



economic, and media interventions, such as equal pay policies, diversity initiatives, entrepreneurship support, and media campaigns that challenge stereotypes.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** define key international conventions and national policies that promote gender equity,
- **SLO 5.2** analyse how institutional enforcement mechanisms support or hinder gender equity,
- **SLO 5.3** explain the role of gender-sensitive curricula and community advocacy in promoting equity,
- **SLO 5.4** evaluate empowerment initiatives designed to support girls and women,
- **SLO 5.5** describe workplace policies such as equal pay and diversity initiatives,
- **SLO 5.6** assess how economic interventions, including entrepreneurship support, contribute to gender equity, and
- **SLO 5.7** appraise the impact of media campaigns and digital tools in challenging stereotypes and advancing equity.

5.1 Policy and Legal Frameworks

5.1.1 International conventions and agreements

One of the most important foundations for promoting gender equity is the adoption of **international conventions**. These are formal agreements between countries that set standards for protecting rights and promoting equality. For example, the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** is a landmark treaty that requires signatory states to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life. Such conventions provide a global framework that guides national policies and actions.

Fill in the blank: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is commonly referred to as _____.



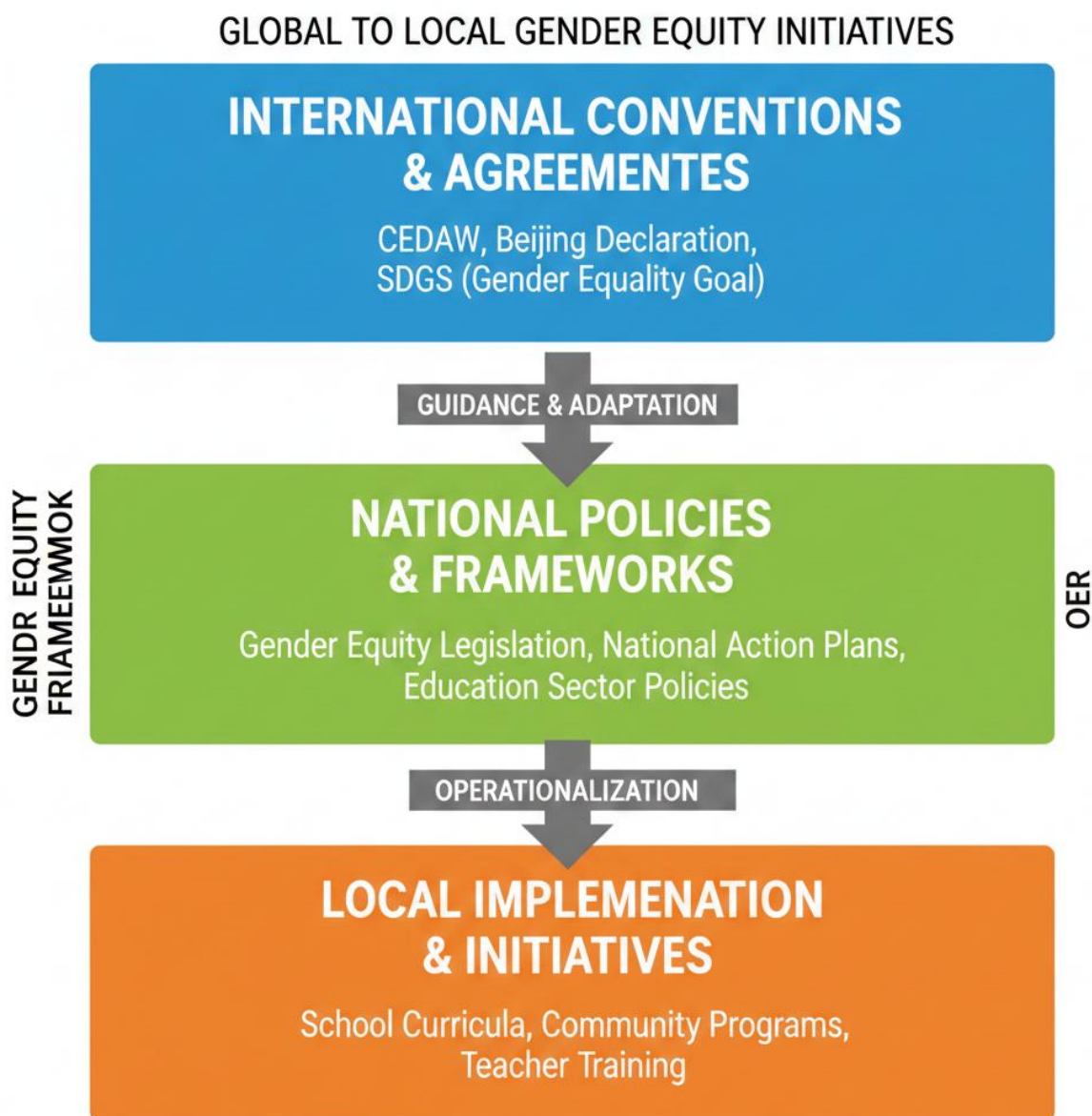


Diagram showing the relationship between international conventions, national policies, and local implementation

Figure 5.1: Framework for promoting gender equity through conventions

5.1.2 National laws and policies

While international conventions set broad standards, **national laws and policies** translate these commitments into action within each country. National laws may include constitutional provisions guaranteeing equality, labour laws mandating equal pay, or policies promoting women's participation in leadership. Policies are effective when they are clear, enforceable, and supported by adequate resources.



Fill in the blank: National laws are effective when they are clear, enforceable, and supported by adequate _____.

Country	Category	Law / Policy	Key Provisions
Iceland	Equal Pay	<i>Equal Pay Certification (2018)</i>	Requires companies with 25+ employees to prove they pay men and women equally for work of equal value or face daily fines.
Norway	Gender Quotas	<i>Public Limited Liability Companies Act (2003)</i>	Mandates that at least 40% of the board of directors in public limited companies must be women.
Rwanda	Gender Quotas	<i>Constitution of Rwanda (2003)</i>	Reserves 30% of seats in all decision-making bodies (including Parliament) for women; currently, over 60% of its parliament is female.
United Kingdom	Equal Pay	<i>Equality Act 2010</i>	Requires employers with 250+ employees to publish their gender pay gap data annually to increase transparency.
United States	Anti-Discrimination	<i>Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964)</i>	Prohibits employment discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, or national origin.
Mexico	Gender Quotas	<i>Constitutional Reform "Parity in Everything" (2019)</i>	Mandates 50% representation of women in all branches of government and autonomous bodies.
Germany	Equal Pay	<i>Act on Transparency of Pay (2017)</i>	Gives employees in companies with 200+ workers the right to request information on the criteria used to determine their pay compared to colleagues of the opposite sex.



Country	Category	Law / Policy	Key Provisions
Nigeria	Policy	<i>National Gender Policy (2021-2026)</i>	Sets a target of 35% "Affirmative Action" for women in elective and appointive positions and aims to mainstream gender in all sectors.
France	Anti-Discrimination	<i>Rixain Law (2021)</i>	Imposed quotas for senior management and executive committees (30% women by 2027, 40% by 2030) in large companies.

Box 5.1: Examples of national laws and policies promoting gender equity

5.1.3 Institutional enforcement and monitoring

Even with strong laws, progress depends on **institutional enforcement and monitoring**. This refers to the role of government agencies, commissions, and watchdog organisations in ensuring compliance. For example, labour ministries may monitor workplaces for equal pay, while electoral commissions enforce gender quotas. Monitoring also involves collecting data to track progress and identify gaps.

Fill in the blank: Institutional enforcement and monitoring ensure that laws and policies are _____ in practice.

Institution	Core Responsibility	Key Enforcement Mechanisms
Labour Ministries	Ensuring equity in the workforce and protecting workers' rights.	- Enforcing equal pay for equal work. - Monitoring compliance with maternity and paternity leave laws. - Implementing anti-harassment regulations in the workplace.



Institution	Core Responsibility	Key Enforcement Mechanisms
Electoral Commissions	Guaranteeing fair participation and representation in democratic processes.	• Enforcing gender quotas for candidate nominations. • Providing sex-disaggregated data on voter registration. • Creating safe environments for female candidates (e.g., addressing violence against women in elections).
Human Rights Commissions	Protecting fundamental rights and investigating systemic discrimination.	• Investigating complaints of gender-based discrimination. • Monitoring state compliance with international treaties (like CEDAW). • Advancing legislative reforms to protect vulnerable groups.
Ministries of Women/Gender Affairs	Coordinating and mainstreaming gender policy across all government sectors.	• Developing the National Gender Policy. • Coordinating gender focal points in other ministries.



Institution	Core Responsibility	Key Enforcement Mechanisms
		• High-level advocacy for gender-responsive budgeting.

Table 5.2: Institutions responsible for enforcing gender equity

Pilot Questions 5.1

1. Define **international conventions** and give one example that promotes gender equity.
2. Fill in the blank: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is commonly referred to as _____.
3. Explain why **national laws and policies** are important in translating international commitments into local action.
4. Fill in the blank: Institutional enforcement and monitoring ensure that laws and policies are _____ in practice.
5. Identify one institution responsible for enforcing gender equity and describe its role.

5.2 Educational and Community-Based Strategies

5.2.1 Gender-sensitive curriculum and pedagogy

A **gender-sensitive curriculum** is one that recognises and addresses the different needs, experiences, and aspirations of boys and girls. It avoids stereotypes and ensures equal representation of genders in teaching materials. **Pedagogy** refers to the methods and practices of teaching, and when it is gender-sensitive, it encourages participation from all learners, challenges bias, and promotes inclusivity.

Fill in the blank: A gender-sensitive curriculum avoids _____ and ensures equal representation of genders.





Diagram showing elements of a gender-sensitive curriculum
Figure 5.2: Components of a gender-sensitive curriculum

5.2.2 Community awareness and advocacy programmes

Community awareness programmes are initiatives designed to educate communities about gender equity. They may include workshops, campaigns, and public discussions. **Advocacy programmes** go further by actively promoting policy changes and mobilising support for gender equity. These strategies are effective because they engage people at the grassroots level, where cultural norms and practices are most influential.



Fill in the blank: Advocacy programmes actively promote _____ changes to support gender equity.

Strategy Type	Definition	Core Examples	Intended Impact
Awareness Campaigns	Public initiatives designed to change attitudes, challenge stereotypes, and educate on rights.	* HeForShe (UN Women): Mobilizing men and boys as allies. * Community Theatre: Using storytelling to address domestic violence and early marriage. * "Light of Saltanat": Digital alerts and street screens to highlight domestic violence risks.	Shifting social norms and increasing public empathy and understanding of gender issues.
Advocacy Programmes	Organized efforts to influence local decision-makers, laws, and institutional policies.	* Faith Leaders Initiatives: Equipping religious leaders to publicly commit to ending GBV. * Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Communities lobbying for local funds to support	Achieving systemic change, such as more inclusive laws and improved access to justice.



Strategy Type	Definition	Core Examples	Intended Impact
		women's health and safety. * Legal Advocacy: Training paralegals to help women navigate property and divorce laws.	
Empowerment Initiatives	Direct support to build individuals' skills, confidence, and economic independence.	* Vocational Training: Workshops for tailoring, handicrafts, or tech skills for women and trans individuals. * Financial Literacy: Teaching women to manage credit, savings, and microloans. * Safe Space Groups: Peer-led support networks for survivors of violence or young girls.	Building individual agency, economic autonomy, and leadership capacity.

Box 5.2: Examples of community-based strategies

5.2.3 Empowerment initiatives for girls and women



Empowerment initiatives are programmes that provide girls and women with skills, resources, and opportunities to improve their lives. These may include vocational training, scholarships, mentorship, and leadership development. Empowerment is crucial because it enables women to participate fully in society and challenge systemic inequalities.

Fill in the blank: Empowerment initiatives provide women with skills, resources, and _____ to improve their lives.

Pilot Questions 5.2

1. Define **gender-sensitive curriculum** and explain why it is important.
2. Fill in the blank: A gender-sensitive curriculum avoids _____ and ensures equal representation of genders.
3. Explain the difference between **community awareness programmes** and **advocacy programmes**.
4. Fill in the blank: Empowerment initiatives provide women with skills, resources, and _____ to improve their lives.
5. Identify one example of an empowerment initiative and describe its impact.

5.3 Workplace, Economic, and Media Interventions

5.3.1 Equal pay and employment policies

Equal pay policies ensure that men and women receive the same wages for performing similar work. Employment policies may also include maternity and paternity leave, flexible working arrangements, and anti-discrimination measures. These policies are essential for reducing economic disparities and promoting fairness in the workplace.

Fill in the blank: Equal pay policies ensure that men and women receive the same _____ for similar work.

5.3.2 Diversity and inclusion initiatives

Diversity and inclusion initiatives are workplace strategies that promote representation of different genders, cultures, and backgrounds. They may include mentorship programmes, training on unconscious bias, and recruitment practices that encourage diversity. These initiatives create more inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.

Fill in the blank: Diversity and inclusion initiatives promote representation of different genders, cultures, and _____.



Intervention Type	Examples	Primary Objective
Pay & Benefits	Equal Pay Audits , transparent salary scales, and paid parental leave for all genders.	To eliminate the gender pay gap and support work-life balance.
Learning & Culture	Diversity & Bias Training , mentorship programs, and establishing employee resource groups (ERGs).	To reduce unconscious bias and build a supportive professional network.
Hiring & Promotion	Inclusive Recruitment (blind resume screening), diverse interview panels, and gender-neutral job descriptions.	To remove systemic barriers in the talent pipeline and leadership track.
Working Conditions	Flexible working hours, remote work options, and robust anti-harassment policies.	To create a safe, adaptable environment that retains diverse talent.

Table 5.3: Examples of workplace interventions

5.3.3 Support for entrepreneurship and financial independence

Supporting women's **entrepreneurship** and financial independence is another key strategy. This can involve providing access to credit, training in business management, and mentorship. Financial independence empowers women to make decisions, support their families, and contribute to economic growth.

Fill in the blank: Financial independence empowers women to make _____ and support their families.

5.3.4 Media campaigns and digital tools for advocacy

Media campaigns challenge stereotypes by promoting positive images of women and men in diverse roles. **Digital tools** such as social media platforms and mobile applications are increasingly used to raise awareness, mobilise support, and connect activists globally. These interventions are powerful because they reach wide audiences and influence public opinion.

Fill in the blank: Media campaigns challenge _____ by promoting positive images of women and men.



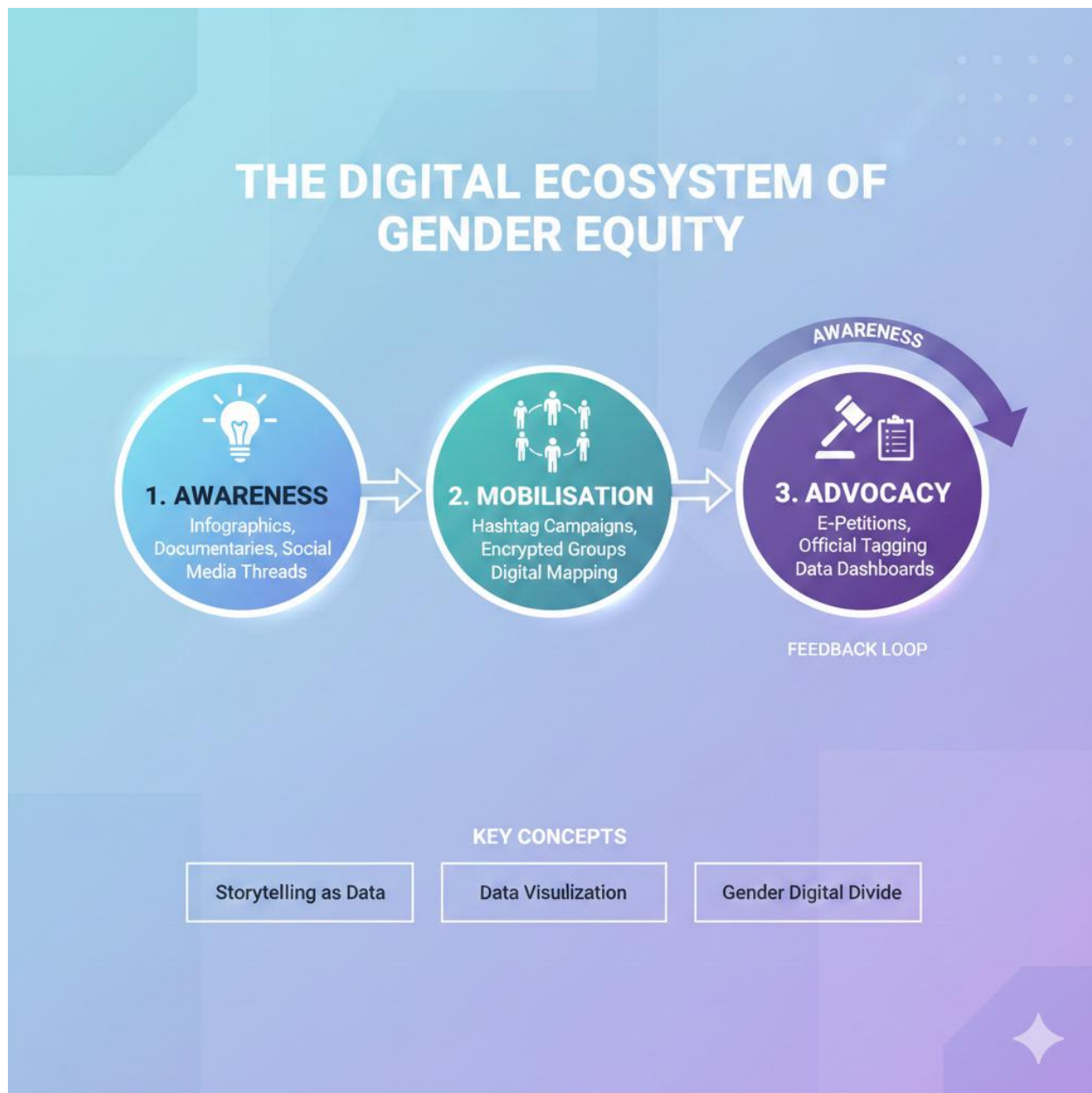


Diagram showing the role of media and digital tools in promoting gender equity
Figure 5.3: Media and digital advocacy for gender equity

Pilot Questions 5.3

1. Define **equal pay policies** and explain their importance.
2. Fill in the blank: Diversity and inclusion initiatives promote representation of different genders, cultures, and _____.
3. Explain how supporting women's **entrepreneurship** contributes to gender equity.



4. Fill in the blank: Financial independence empowers women to make _____ and support their families.
5. Describe one way media campaigns can challenge stereotypes and promote equity.

Series Summary

This Series has focused on practical strategies and actions that can be taken to promote gender equity, building on the understanding of disparities explored earlier. Its purpose was to provide you with knowledge of frameworks, initiatives, and interventions that operate at global, national, and local levels, and to highlight how these can be applied to create more inclusive societies.

We began by examining policy and legal frameworks, including international conventions, national laws, and institutional enforcement. We then moved on to educational and community-based strategies, where we considered gender-sensitive curricula, advocacy programmes, and empowerment initiatives. Finally, we explored workplace, economic, and media interventions, such as equal pay policies, diversity initiatives, entrepreneurship support, and media campaigns. By completing this Series, you should now be able to define key frameworks, analyse strategies in education and community contexts, and evaluate workplace and media interventions, as outlined in the Series Learning Outcomes.

Glossary of Terms

- **Advocacy programmes:** Initiatives that actively promote policy changes and mobilise support for gender equity.
- **Diversity and inclusion initiatives:** Workplace strategies that encourage representation of different genders, cultures, and backgrounds.
- **Empowerment initiatives:** Programmes that provide girls and women with skills, resources, and opportunities to improve their lives.
- **Equal pay policies:** Employment measures that ensure men and women receive the same wages for similar work.
- **Gender-sensitive curriculum:** Teaching materials and approaches that avoid stereotypes and ensure equal representation of genders.
- **Institutional enforcement and monitoring:** The role of agencies and commissions in ensuring compliance with gender equity laws and policies.
- **International conventions:** Formal agreements between countries that set standards for protecting rights and promoting equality.
- **Media campaigns:** Public initiatives that challenge stereotypes and promote positive images of gender roles.
- **National laws and policies:** Legal measures within a country that translate international commitments into local action.



- **Pedagogy:** The methods and practices of teaching, which can be adapted to promote inclusivity and equity.
- **Reproductive rights:** Rights that ensure individuals can make informed choices about family planning, childbirth, and reproductive health.
- **Workplace reforms:** Policies such as parental leave, anti-discrimination measures, and inclusive recruitment practices that promote fairness.

Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

Objective questions

1. Define **international conventions** and state one example relevant to gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
2. Identify one national policy that promotes gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
3. Which institution is responsible for enforcing gender quotas in politics? (Linked to SLO 5.2)
4. State one key feature of a **gender-sensitive curriculum**. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
5. What term describes workplace strategies that promote representation of different genders and backgrounds? (Linked to SLO 5.5)

Short-answer questions

6. Explain how **institutional enforcement and monitoring** support gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.2)
7. Describe one way **community advocacy programmes** contribute to gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
8. Analyse how **empowerment initiatives** improve opportunities for women. (Linked to SLO 5.4)
9. Assess the importance of **equal pay policies** in reducing economic disparities. (Linked to SLO 5.5)
10. Illustrate one example of how **media campaigns** challenge stereotypes. (Linked to SLO 5.7)

Long-answer questions

11. Compare the role of **international conventions** with **national laws** in promoting gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain how conventions set standards and laws translate them into local action.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by discussing challenges in implementation and examples of successful integration.
12. Evaluate the effectiveness of **educational and community-based strategies** in addressing cultural barriers to gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.3 and SLO 5.4)
 - **Basic response:** Use Series content to show how curricula, awareness programmes, and empowerment initiatives promote inclusivity.



- **Value-added response:** Extend by connecting to real-world case studies or global examples of community-driven change.
13. Discuss how **workplace and media interventions** can complement each other in advancing gender equity. (Linked to SLO 5.5 and SLO 5.7)
- **Basic response:** Use Series content to explain equal pay, diversity initiatives, and media campaigns.
 - **Value-added response:** Extend by analysing how digital tools and corporate reforms together influence public opinion and workplace culture.

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

1. International conventions are formal agreements between countries that set standards for protecting rights and promoting equality. Example: CEDAW.
2. Equal pay legislation.
3. Electoral commission.
4. Avoids stereotypes and ensures equal representation of genders.
5. Diversity and inclusion initiatives.
6. Institutional enforcement ensures laws and policies are applied in practice through monitoring and compliance.
7. Advocacy programmes promote policy changes and mobilise community support for equity.
8. Empowerment initiatives provide women with skills, resources, and opportunities to participate fully in society.
9. Equal pay policies reduce wage disparities and promote fairness in employment.
10. Media campaigns challenge stereotypes by promoting positive images of women and men in diverse roles.
11. **Basic response:** Conventions set global standards, while national laws translate them into enforceable local measures.
Value-added response: Implementation challenges exist, but successful integration can be seen in countries adopting quotas or equal pay laws.
12. **Basic response:** Educational and community strategies promote inclusivity by addressing stereotypes and empowering women.
Value-added response: Global case studies show how grassroots advocacy and curricula reforms reshape cultural norms.
13. **Basic response:** Workplace reforms ensure fairness, while media campaigns influence public opinion.
Value-added response: Together, they create systemic change by combining institutional reforms with cultural transformation.



Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 5]

Part 5.1 Policy and Legal Frameworks

1. Formal agreements between countries; CEDAW.
2. CEDAW.
3. They translate international commitments into enforceable local action.
4. Enforced in practice.
5. Labour ministry, electoral commission, or human rights commission.

Part 5.2 Educational and Community-Based Strategies

1. Teaching materials and approaches that avoid stereotypes and ensure equal representation.
2. Stereotypes.
3. Awareness programmes educate communities, while advocacy programmes promote policy changes.
4. Opportunities.
5. Scholarships, vocational training, or leadership development programmes.

Part 5.3 Workplace, Economic, and Media Interventions

1. Policies ensuring men and women receive equal wages for similar work.
2. Backgrounds.
3. Entrepreneurship provides financial independence and supports economic growth.
4. Decisions.
5. By promoting positive images of women and men in diverse roles.

References and Attributions [Series 5]

Textual references

- United Nations. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. New York: United Nations.
- World Bank. (2012). *World development report 2012: Gender equality and development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- UNESCO. (2017). *Gender equality in education: Progress and challenges*. Paris: UNESCO.
- International Labour Organization. (2019). *Women at work trends 2019*. Geneva: ILO.



- UN Women. (2020). *Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing*. New York: UN Women.

Illustrations

- *Figure 5.1: Framework for promoting gender equity through conventions*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram international conventions gender equity framework”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing international conventions at the top, national policies in the middle, and local implementation at the bottom, connected by arrows.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 5.1: Examples of national laws and policies promoting gender equity*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table national laws gender equity policies”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of national laws and policies promoting gender equity, including equal pay, anti-discrimination, and gender quotas.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Table 5.2: Institutions responsible for enforcing gender equity*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table institutions enforcing gender equity”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing institutions responsible for enforcing gender equity, including labour ministries, electoral commissions, and human rights commissions.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 5.2: Components of a gender-sensitive curriculum*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram gender-sensitive curriculum education”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing components of a gender-sensitive curriculum, including inclusivity, equal representation, and bias-free content.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Box 5.2: Examples of community-based strategies*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table community strategies gender equity”.



- AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of community-based strategies for gender equity, including awareness campaigns, advocacy programmes, and empowerment initiatives.”
- Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Table 5.3: Examples of workplace interventions*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER table workplace interventions gender equity”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a table showing examples of workplace interventions for gender equity, including equal pay, diversity training, and inclusive recruitment.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.
- *Figure 5.3: Media and digital advocacy for gender equity*
 - Attribution: Suggested OER search string “OER diagram media campaigns digital advocacy gender equity”.
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing the role of media campaigns and digital tools in promoting gender equity, including awareness, mobilisation, and advocacy.”
 - Platform: AI-generated illustration placeholder.

