Exploring Changing Gender Roles in Society

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Traditional gender roles are changing in current American society since last two decades. Though the process is quite slow but its impact is significant. In a society where masculinity is valued and feminism is devalued, the transition state is not perceived with open-mindedness. This process began some 25 years ago, and is still a long time to go. Women are taking part in male majority jobs and men are shifting towards jobs like stay at home dads, male nurses and nannies. Even men at military are preferring dad care jobs after retirement. On the other hand, there are women who are taking jobs in military, fire fighters and stock exchange which are still considered to be male dominant jobs (*Traditional gender roles being challenged*, 2015). There is also a huge decreasing trend in boys enrolling in colleges and even a lower rate in graduations as compared to girls. A general perception has been made among boys that academic disengagement is a sign of masculinity. But women do realize that now is the time of knowledge-based economics and not action based. Men think it somehow reduces their masculine powers to be smart and over qualified. Despite of change in roles and responsibilities, there is still a pay gap in many organizations. Now there is only a small number of men in academic fields because of low income and they have to do multiple jobs to make both ends meet (CBS News, 2012, & Am, 2012).

The factors that are driving towards this shift are movements and awareness for leaving behind the concepts of gender stereotyping and patriarchy. The shift in social norms has gender identity autonomy. This has made it easier for people to take on the roles that they suit fit to. Also, the economics has played a role in this change too. Women receiving education and contributing in the finances of a household is ideally better for the society in general and men in particular as before it was sole responsibility of men to be the breadwinners in a household (CBS News & Pm, 2016). The demand of equal rights and autonomy has given women the sense of empowerment and not remain dependent on men all their lives. The women and men movements has contributed a lot in their separate struggles for gender identity and expectations autonomy.

The family dynamics has also changed dramatically with the change in gender roles shifting. Social and gender expectations have changed and thus men and women can opt for reversal roles on their own will. Households that were defined on the basis of masculine dominance and patriarchy have no longer such norms. Also, gender fluidity has become more common in our society. Though it is a much painful process within our families, but slowly it is being accepted. In many households, women have taken dominance and are the breadwinners while men have taken the stay at home responsibilities. Women who wish to lead and take dominating roles are encouraged and supported not only by families but community, churches and other organizations. And amazingly it has a positive impact on family systems (Kantor & Silver-Greenberg, 2013). There are many households where boys are raised by single mothers and there are no men around. Such boys see their mothers engaged in such dominating and struggling roles which inspire them. These are the characteristics of healthy families where equal opportunities are given to women as men.

I think this change in the gender role is an excellent opportunity for everyone to take on responsibility according to their competencies and so they can lead and progress in a more effective way. I personally would like to see a change in our society where men and women are open to choosing their identities and roles and a society that is ready to accept equal representation at all forums. I want to see more households where men are happy to work as sit home daddies or nannies and society appreciates their work just as women. This is still a long shot but definitely there will be a huge change and more stability in the next generation.

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