

Gender inequality in the workforce



Rhodes in the article "Speaking of sex: The denial of gender equality" asserts that gender has been used as the basis of all inequalities towards females. She explains the originality of gender differences and how they affect work force. The roles and characteristics associated to males and females vary according to culture and time. Biology is however not highly associated with the determination of female and male identities because societies are different in terms of the traits and tasks associated with each sex. Biologists believe that feminine and masculine traits are physiological in nature and it is therefore the duty of the society to transform these false ideologies which bring about social disadvantages to the society. The 1995 ABC TV documentary shows that many Americans perceive biology as the main vehicle in the creation of masculine and feminine characteristics. Sex-based inequalities are founded on reproductive capacity, hormonal drives, brain structure and physical strength and size. The creditability of biology in the definition of masculinity and femininity is highly questioned since well adjusted people have dual sexual characteristics.

According to Rhodes (23), most of the sex based inequalities is highly based on the sex based differences in reproductive physiology. The sociobiologists have explained that gender roles are biological because in the early years pregnant and breastfeeding women, used to depend on their husbands for food and other amenities while the husbands were the hunters.

Anthropologists have however refuted this claim. They argue that men were not the only major providers and child rearing roles were carried out by all sexes. Rhodes says that hormones should not be accounted for the lack of aggression in females. This is because most of the aggression varies

according to cultures. For example rape is not allowed in most societies and it should therefore not be an aggression driven by hormones. Most females were not assigned some highly physical roles for example like in the military for they were said to be weak. Rhode concludes that our culture concludes the social differences between both sexes.

According to Cotter, Hermsen and Vanneman (1) in the article " Gender equality at work", work roles (men's and women's) are changing with the changing cultural, economic, social and technological changes during the last half of the twentieth century. They mainly explain how the labor force participates, the kind of segregations and how they come about and also how the issue of earnings is prevailing in the work force. They have also explained the major causes of the gender inequalities in the workforce and they include attitudes, education, politics, economic structure and families (37). The gender inequality in the labor market is seen to be very persistence. This is characterized by low earnings for women workers who compared to men and discriminatory promotions. This is despite the rising number of women in the labor force. But again it seems like the trends are changing because the difference between the workingmen and women seems to be narrowing.

Scholars have noted occupational segregation whereby only a small percentage of female can work in the male occupation while a higher percentage of working men always occupy more than 75 percent of female jobs. Integration is perceived to be the only solution to the narrowing of this gap. Occupational segregation is perceived in terms of age, cohort, race, ethnicity, class, and education. There is noticeable integration of men's and

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women's work although substantial amounts of segregation are still persistent. Females earn less even though the men's earnings are also changing due to the changing ratio of the work force. It is however reported that women have had increased earnings. Amid these incredible changes, traces of gender inequality are still evident today. Men are more active than women in the labor force (Cotter, Hermsen and Vanneman 52). Again, inequitable earnings even for the same kind of jobs with women getting less than men clearly reflect. According to Male (2), men have a higher probability of accessing paid employment, better jobs and pay compared to women. Apparently, gender equality in the workplace is still a mirage in today's work environment.

Works cited

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