Gender Discrimination as a Societal Challenge: Opinion Essay

Despite the fact of society evolving rapidly, in this day and age, we still may face a plenty of societal challenges. One of those kinds of problems is discrimination. Much violence and outrage among different social groups was caused by it. Discrimination means denying equal rights for some group of people which may be differentiated by skin color, gender, nation or religion. Discrimination based on an individual's gender is called sexism, which is a global problem for both female and male. Gender discrimination is not an issue that can be ignored or tolerated in silent. Gender inequality has the definition of a differential treatment against an individual which would have not happened if a victim had had another gender. In modern times, the problem of gender discrimination in the workplace and education has become a hot topic for debates. Women have been victims of inequality in professional aspects as in the social one at all times. In the USA, approximately four-in-ten, 42%, female employees have faced a gender discrimination in the workplace. According to the Pew Research Center, they report an array of problems, ranging from having inequal pay in relation to male employees for doing the same work to being passed over for promotions or essential assignments. First of all, the strongest bias on the job is against mothers. It implies that woman may become pregnant and after maternity leave she may adopt a part-time or flexible schedule because of her child. Employers prefer men because of that maternal wall. Moreover, a maternal wall has its origin from assumptions where it is said that mothers cannot be both good employees and mothers, thus they should belong at home. Returning to incomes, several studies provide information of how children affect mother's income. It was found that after the first child women experience a sharp decline in a pay, which never fully recovers (Henrik Kleven, Camille Landais & Jacob Egnolt Dogaard, 2018). Gender discrimination may be faced also in education fields. Tanya Adrusieczko had good grades, so she hoped to apply for the scholarship of the LSE, London School of Economics. There was a lack of one criteria: she was not a boy. "You're ineligible because you're not a man," – that was written in the message. Obviously that kind of scholarships, discriminating by gender, race, nation and others, violate modern human rights policies. Furthermore, before this century, females were seen as the 'weaker sex' and not as educated and capable as males. Some girls did not even have an opportunity of getting an education. In spite of the fact we live in the modern world, the problem of child marriage exists. Every year about 15 million underage girls become wives, which means that every day around 40,000 girls become brides. Because of a marriage their education interrupts and ends. Over 60% of married underage girls in developing countries do not have formal education. The majority of them is not able to return to study because of the need to pay school fees, which children cannot afford. In addition, that girls may have early pregnancies which causes higher rates of them being kicked out of school. Females' and males' life experiences include years at work, university and school, where both of them may experience institutionalized sexism, stereotypes about gender, gendered behavior and discrimination based on gender at all.

Gender inequality has existed since centuries ago. There are examples of the men being biased over women at work, education, religion, politics and others. Hence, the "weaker sex" have often been treated unfairly, however, the discrimination affected the "stronger" one as well. These days, the power of gender inequality has been reduced markedly, nonetheless, that still can be practiced in certain countries. Sons has been prevalently preferred in Asia and north

Africa since the dawn of time. A son preference had a place because of several factors: a possibility of a higher salary, especially in agrarian economies, and, to boot, they continue the family tree. (Thérèse Hesketh, 2010) With females the situation is often different. After marriage, unlike males, they typically become husbands' family members. As a Chinese saying goes, "raising a daughter is like watering the neighbor's garden". In India, a downy has been an essential thing from time immemorial. Bride's family needed to save money for that downy for many years. In order to avoid great expenses, Indians were killing their newborn daughters. Together with the development of technologies, infanticide is no longer the norm. It was replaced with selective abortions by prenatal gender determination. In 2005, by the census it was found that for every 100 girls there were born about 121 boys (Lisa Eklund, 2011). Gender roles have also been contributed to discrimination. The majority of primitive people still thinks that women are inferior to men. Additionally, owners of the "stronger sex" should be breadwinners and earners. There is a prejudice that the "weaker gender" should do the domestic duties like cooking and cleaning the house and be gatekeepers, whereas anything that is relevant to technics and economics is a job of a man. Along with this, prejudices about emotions exist. It implies that each male must control his feeling, and females, by contrast, must be sentimental, crying over serials and films. Keeping with the theme of gender discrimination, there is a need to recall that females were denigrated in religion. To begin, God in the Bible, if only God has a gender, is man. In this tradition, females definitely do not have the same symbolic status as males. Furthermore, in some religions male position was privileged – be it intellectual, social or religious (Morny Joy, 2006). Clothing requirements should not be forgotten. In several places for women there is a need for wearing a "Burqa", which is a head to toe garment, covering the whole body. Unfortunately, they can be abused in case of not wearing it. The social norms have always been one of the most substantial issues of gender discrimination.

Notwithstanding the fact of the above problems being challenging, there may be several cost-efficient ways to solve them.

Recalling the issue of the gender bias at work and education, unequal wages and others, there obviously several steps may be done to help to eliminate the discrimination at those fields. Firstly, employers should ensure those job requirements are not that high that they, as a result, exclude females simply because opportunities in leadership has been denied until relatively recently. However, that does not mean that standards need to be lowered: they should be assessed more realistically. There should appear guard against assumptions about females who have or going to have children. We still have a gender gap when it comes to income. In spite of gap's shrinking, the issue continues to exist. The solution of it may be a review and standardization of salaries. What is more could be done is a clear policy on discrimination. Thus, females would feel more comfortable, and it would encourage productivity of individuals. Society should not underestimate the importance of education in our world. People have to make an effort on schooling, that will improve the economy system. The crucial step may become setting up special gender-sensitive educational institutions, hence a nice environment for learning and teaching would be made. To make an education more available, child marriage should be stopped. By stopping it, girls would not have to worry about school graduation and pursuing higher education.

There is a need of more actions to achieve gender equality in people's lives in religious and social perspectives. Gender justice should be promoted in daily life, which includes activities like sharing household chores (there should be an equal division of labor at home). Furthermore, people should start listening and reflecting. It implies that society has difficulty recognizing

prejudices and their existence. So, society should start paying attention to its assumptions, it should be aware of sexist assumptions and challenge them. The discrimination allows violence against females to continue. About one in three women have experienced any kind of violence, and less than 40 percent of them seek some help. Free psychological help should be provided, as victims should stop feeling ashamed about asking for help. Comprehensive training should be provided at the workplace. Several anti-bias courses and diversity should be promoted among employees. Feminist theologians exist in each religion, actively contributing to eliminate gender discrimination. For example, in the early 1970s, there was the social justice group Ezrat Nashim created by some Jewish feminists in an effort to give both genders “equal access” to leadership roles in the Jewish community. Katherine Coffman said that statistical discrimination was thornier and particularly difficult to root out. However, it is possible.