

A GIRL'S TRYST WITH TECHNOLOGY... MILES TO GO (WOMEN AS ENGINEERS)

Every parent has an aspiration for their child regarding their careers. But why are those aspirations different for girls and boys?

It is a matter of pride when a son cracks IIT and becomes an engineer. However, thinking that a girl will do the same is a foreign idea to most of us. Why is the idea so foreign of a girl holding a screwdriver? Why are sons always expected to learn to use a hammer, spanner, wrench, piler etc. even when they are not interested? When a girl wishes to do the same everyone gives her doubtful looks and side eyes. This instinctive behaviour has been taught to us since our childhood to unconsciously treat women as weaker and less efficient. We have stereotypes that limit all genders. The boys are not allowed to cry, and the girls are not allowed to laugh loudly. We have bifurcated fields for men and women. We have drawn lines which limit a girl's dreams. After all she is expected to balance household and work life!

When we see a girl good in making circuits, programmes, mechanical projects etc., we tell our boys, "Look, the girl can do it. Why can't you!". This small line has unimaginable effect on the girl. It conveys so many unspoken thoughts. That the girl is not intelligent or capable as the boy. Her hardwork has no meaning so many other thoughts. That girl has dared to stand up. The least we can do is not dissuade her.

We all think this does not happen around us, in major cities. At least not in our families!! But all we need to do is look around us. This happens in major cities only. Girls have to work twice as hard to prove their worth. Girls are expected to be fragile, delicate, soft etc. When a girl does not match these definitions, she is treated as an outcast. A hands-on girl is termed as a tomboy. This means that she has to take up behavioural features that our society has decided for men in order to pursue her dreams. Why? Why can she not keep her feminine nature? If the answer is "It will be difficult for her", we must think again. This is her choice! She decides if something is difficult for her or not.

Remember,

You can be feminine but still be hands on

You can like flowers and still like hammers

You may love to dress up and still like to pursue engineering

It's the choice whether you want to be an engineer, a doctor, a sportsperson, a homemaker, a teacher, a singer, an artist. Don't let this patriarchal society restrict you. Don't let others define you as weak. If you have a dream, be obstinate about it.

The contribution of women in our society is impeccable. They have unique opinions and ideas which have the capability to change our perspective. We must give them equal opportunities and leave it to them to decide their own paths.

For the development of our society, support one girl in your life. Give her your trust. See how high she can fly.....

-Avni Mahajan IX-B