

## **Chapter – 4: Growing up as Boys and Girls**

- Being a boy or girl – imp. part of identity
- Society – teaches – how to behave as boys or girls
- Do all societies – look at boys and girls – same way?
- Most societies – value men and women – differently
- Work of women – valued less than the work of men
- This chapter – examine – inequalities between men and women

### **Growing up in Samoa in the 1920s**

- Samoan Islands – part of large group of islands – southern part of Pacific Ocean
- 1920s – children – did not attend schools
- Learnt many things – take care of children or do household works – from other children and adults
- Fishing – very imp. activity
- Learnt these things – different points in their childhood
- Babies – very early age – parents stopped looking after them
- Older children – as young as 5 years old – took over responsibility
- Both boys and girls – look after kids
- Boys – reach age of 9 years – joined older – boys – learnt – outdoor jobs – fishing, planting coconuts
- Girls – continue looking after children – do errands with elders – until teenagers
- After becoming teenager – more freedom
- After age of 14 – girls also went on fishing trips, worked in plantations
- Cooking – special cooking-houses – boys – all the work – girls – helped

### **Growing up male in Madhya Pradesh in 1960s**

- Class VI onwards – boys and girls – separate schools
- Girls' schools – central courtyard – total seclusion and safety
- Boys' schools – no such thing – playground – big space attached to school
- Every evening – when school was over – girls – move in groups through streets – get home
- Boys – more freedom – play, try out tricks with bicycle
- Above 2 example – different ways of growing up
- We think – only one way of growing up – our own
- Talk to elders – their experience – different from ours
- Societies – make clear differences between boys and girls
- Boys – given cars to play with – girls – given dolls to play with
- Toys – tell them – they have different futures
- Difference – created in smallest and everyday things
  - How girls should dress
  - What boys should play
  - How should girls talk
  - How should boys behave

- All these – different ways of telling – their future role
- Later in life – affects subjects and careers
- Most societies – like ours – work of men and women – not valued equally

### **My mother does not work**

- Kid (Shonali) – asked her mother to volunteer for an excursion
- Says – friend's (Harmeet) mother (Jaspreet) – always comes – does not work
- Friend also thinks – she doesn't work – she goes on strike next day – does not do any housework – house help – Mangala – on leave
- Everyone understands – housework also imp.

### **Valuing housework**

- Harmeet's family – did not think Jaspreet's housework – imp.
- Throughout the world – responsibility of housework – women
- YET – work of women at house – never valued
- Believed – housework – something that comes naturally to women – not valuable – don't have to pay for it

### **Lives of domestic workers**

- Many homes – employ domestic helps
- Above example – Mangala – house help
- Domestic helpers – sweeping, cleaning, washing clothes and dishes, cooking, looking after children and elderly people
- Most domestic workers – women
- Sometimes – young boys and girls – employed
- Wages – low – housework – not valued much
- Domestic worker's day – starts early – ends late – employers – do not respect them
- Melani's experience from Delhi –
  - 1<sup>st</sup> job – rich family – 3-storey house
  - Memsahib – shout for any work
  - Her work – in the kitchen – 2 other girls – work their
  - Day started – 5 o'clock – breakfast – tea and 2 rotis – nothing extra
  - Evening – when cooking food – girls begged for extra roti – she would give them secretly and make for herself too
  - Hungry after complete day
  - Winters – feet swell up – not allowed to wear chappals
- Housework – involves many tasks
- Many tasks – physical work
- Both rural and urban areas – women and girls – fetch water
- Rural areas – women and girls – carry firewood
- Washing clothes, cleaning, sweeping – require physical work
- Housework – time consuming

- All the work – women do – takes much more time than men's work
- Women – 23 hours (paid – outside home) + 30 hours (unpaid – inside home) = 53 hours (total work)
- Men – 38 hours (paid – outside home) + 2 hours (unpaid – inside home) = 40 hours (total work)

## **Women's work and equality**

- Low value attached to housework – not family or individual matter
- Part of larger system – inequality between men and women
- Solved by – government
- Equality – imp. principle – Constitution
  - States – no discrimination – based on gender
- Reality – discrimination exists
- Government – taking actions – solve problem
  - Recognize – burden of child-care and housework – falls on women and girls
    - Impact – whether girls attend school or not
    - Impact – their work outside home
  - Set up *anganwadis* – child care centres
  - Made laws – mandatory – organizations – more than 30 women employs – provide crèche facilities