

CIVICS

Chapter 4: GROWING UP AS BOYS AND GIRLS



GROWING UP AS BOYS AND GIRLS

In our society boys and girls are brought up differently. The work and role of women are valued less than that of men. Many differences exist in various societies as far as bringing up boys and girls is concerned. While in some societies, these differences are minimal; in some societies they are acute.

Society in Samoa Islands (1920s) and Madhya Pradesh (1960)

The Samoan Islands :

The Samoan Islands are a group of large islands in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean. Following are some facts about the society in the Samoan Islands:

- In the 1920s, the children of the Samoan Islands did not go to schools. When the babies learnt to walk, their mothers stopped looking after them.
- Older children of about five years old took the responsibility of taking care of their younger siblings.
- When they were around nine years of age, the boys went fishing or planted coconuts, while the girls continued to do household work.
- In their teen years, the girls enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom.
- After completing the age of fourteen, they went fishing, worked in plantations and learned to weave baskets.
- Boys were supposed to do the cooking in special cooking houses while the girls helped them with the preparation.



The Samoan Islands are located in the South Pacific Ocean midway between Hawaii and Australia

Madhya Pradesh :

- Boys and girls went to separate schools after completing grade VI.
- In the schools, girls played in a separate courtyard located within the premises of the schools while the boys played in a playground which was just attached to the school.

- During the evening, the boys gathered in the streets and watched the groups of girls who were always in hurry to reach their home.
- While for boys, the street was a place to hang out or to ride a bicycle, girls always rushed to their homes. They always crossed the streets in groups as they feared being teased by the boys.

Role of Society in Bringing up Boys and Girls

The above instances of the Samoan Islands and Madhya Pradesh help us to conclude the following points:

- Societies influence the bringing up of boys and girls and this influence begins at a very early age. For example while boys are given guns and video games to play with, girls are given dolls and kitchen sets. This is one way of defining the future roles of boys and girls.
- Society also decides the dress code for girls and boys. Boys and girls are supposed to behave differently.
- It is these things in their initial life which affect the careers that they choose later.



Societies influence the bringing up of boys and girls. Usually girls are always given dolls to play with.

The Work of Women

- Since women in society are engaged in household work, their work is neither valued nor respected.
- All the household works such as taking care of the family members, cleaning, washing, cooking etc. are chores which women are naturally expected to do. Thus, their work is not respected.
- As women are not paid for the household work, their work remains invisible and is not considered as an economic activity. Thus, their work is devalued by society.
- House work also involves heavy physical work. In many rural areas, girls and women have to walk several kilometers to fetch water. They also carry a heavy load of firewood. Apart from this, many household works are physically strenuous.
- While women work at home, they may also work outside. Many women work as domestic servants or in the fields. In such a capacity they work more than men.



All the household work done by women at home is neither respected nor paid and remains invisible

Women as Domestic Worker :

The lives of women domestic workers are not easy because:

- They do work such as cleaning, cooking, washing and looking after children.
- Although they put in a lot of effort, they do not get any respect from their employers.
- Domestic work is poorly paid as it is not considered to be a skilled job.
- The day of a domestic worker can begin as early as five in the morning and can end as late as twelve in the night.
- After working as a domestic worker in other houses, women have to look and work in their own houses as well.



Domestic workers are poorly paid as their work is not considered to be a skilled job

Women's Work and Equality :

Though our Constitution regards every individual as being equal irrespective of his or her sex, gender inequality still exists in our country. The government in order to do away with this inequality has taken the following steps:

- It has been realised by the government that equality between men and women can be achieved only if women are educated. Many girls are not able to attend schools as they either have to take care of their siblings or to do household work.
- The government in order to solve this problem has set up many aaganwadis or child care centres in many villages of the country. This allows the women to work outside their home while leaving their children in the day care.
- Many laws have been passed by the Government of India which makes it mandatory for organisations which have more than 30 women employees to provide day care facilities to the children of the women.
- This provision of day care helps women to leave their homes and take up jobs.
- Many state governments have either reduced or completely waived off the school tuition fees for girl students.



One of the Directive Principles of the State Policy is equal pay for equal work done by men and women

Class : 7th Social Studies (Political Science)
Chapter 4 : Growing up as Boys and Girls

- Government has set up anganwadis in several villages. -
- Laws have been passed for 'creche facilities'.
- More girls to attend school.

- Societies make clear distinctions between boys and girls
- It begins from a very young age
- In many society the roles men and woman play are not valued equally.

Women's Work
and Equality

Boys and Girls

Growing
up as Boys
and Girls

Lives of Domestic
Workers

Valuing
Housework

- Most of them are women, young boys or girls. Wages are low
- Does not have much value attached

Work done by women within
the household is not
recognised as work

Important Questions

➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. Chaitanya Bhagabat is about the

- (a) life of a politician
- (b) life of a teacher
- (c) life of a rich men
- (d) life of a saint

Question 2. At what age did the boys of Samoan join older boys for learning outdoor jobs

- (a) 6
- (b) 9
- (c) 13
- (d) 10

Question 3. The roles of men and women are:

- (a) equally valued
- (b) not equally valued
- (c) of same status
- (d) none of these

Question 4. Samoa island is located in:

- (a) Atlantic Ocean
- (b) Pacific Ocean
- (c) Indian Ocean

Question 5. What percent of working women in India are engaged in agricultural work?

- (a) 84.8
- (b) 82.5
- (c) 81.7
- (d) 83.6

Question 6. Which was a very important activity on the Samoan islands?

- (a) Quarrying
- (b) Fishing
- (c) Mining
- (d) Dairy farming

Question 7. What was the most important activity on an Island of Samoa in 1920s?

- (a) Fishing
- (b) Farming
- (c) Household work
- (d) None of these

Question 8. Girls in Samoan are free when they become:

- (a) Adult
- (b) Married
- (c) Teenagers

Question 9. It refers to a range of tasks related to looking after and nurturing. Besides physical tasks, they also involve a strong emotional aspect.

- (a) Care-giving
- (b) Care-looking
- (c) Double-giving
- (d) Physical-giving

Question 10. The government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than ___ employees to provide cr-che facilities.

- (a) 40 men
- (b) 40 women
- (c) 30 men
- (d) 30 women

Question 11. At what age did the boy in Samoa join older boys for learning outdoor jobs?

- (a) 5 years
- (b) 9 years
- (c) 11 years
- (d) 13 years

Question 12. Whose work is devalued?

- (a) Men
- (b) Women
- (c) Both (a) and (b)

Question 13. ___ is a sense of self-awareness of who one is.

- (a) Reputation

- (b) Dignity
- (c) Self concept
- (d) Identity

Question 14. Which method was adopted by the women's movement to fight for the women's right

- (a) Violence
- (b) Campaigning
- (c) Harassment
- (d) War

Question 15. What did girls in Samoa learn after the age of fourteen years?

- (a) How to weave baskets
- (b) How to grow plantation
- (c) Special cooking
- (d) All of these

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. We find _____ between boys and girls in our societies.
2. The term housework involves many different tasks which require heavy _____ work.
3. The work of women is time _____.
4. When we do not give due recognition for a work, it means we _____ it.
5. The Samoan children are very much _____ from today's children.

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. The society we grow up in teaches us what kind of behaviour is acceptable for girls and boys.
2. If we talk to elders in our family, we will see that their childhoods were probably the same as ours.
3. Men and women do not have the same status.
4. The government has set up anganwadis or child-care centres in several villages in the country.
5. Work done by a housewife is valued.

➤ **Very Short Questions:**

1. What was a very important activity on the Samoan islands in the 1920s?

2. How was the girls' school in Madhya Pradesh in the 1960s designed differently from the boys' school?
3. As these girls walked on the streets, they looked so purposeful'. What does the word 'purposeful' refer to?
4. Why do we give boys and girls different toys to play with?
5. What do we teach boys and girls in their early childhood?
6. Why are the wages of domestic workers usually low?
7. What is the daily schedule of a domestic worker?
8. How are domestic workers treated by their employers?
9. What do you mean by the term 'double burden'?
10. Housework commonly involves many different tasks. Name some of them.

➤ Short Questions:

1. How a boy's school differ from a girl's school?
2. Why we should value housework?
3. What did boys do every evening, once the school was over?
4. Why does our society devalue the work women do inside the home?
5. Our constitution does not discriminate between male and female. But inequality between the sexes exists. What does the government do to remedy the situation?

➤ Long Questions:

1. Give an account of growing up in Samoa in the 1920s.
2. Write a brief note on the lives of domestic workers with an example.
3. Discuss the initiatives taken by the government to promote equality between the male or female.
4. Explain the term Identity, Care-giving and De-valued.
5. Make a list of toys and games that boys typically play and another for girls. If there is a difference between the two lists, can you think of some reasons why this is so? Does this have any relationship to the roles children have to play as adults?

ANSWER KEY –

➤ Multiple Choice Answer:

1. (d) life of a saint
2. (b) 9
3. (b) not equally valued

4. (b) Pacific Ocean
5. (d) 83.6
6. (b) Fishing
7. (a) Fishing
8. (c) Teenagers
9. (a) Care-giving
10. (d) 30 women
11. (b) 9 years
12. (b) Women
13. (d) Identity
14. (b) Campaigning
15. (d) All of these

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. distinctions
2. physical
3. consuming
4. devalue
5. different

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False

➤ **Very Short Answer:**

1. Fishing was a very important activity on the Samoan islands in the 1920s.
2. Girls' school had a central courtyard where girls played in total seclusion and safety from the outside world. The boys school had no such courtyard.
3. Their only intention was to get home safe and as soon as possible.
4. We want to tell them that they will have different futures when they become men and women.

5. We teach boys that they need to be tough and masculine. On the contrary we , teach girls that they need to be soft and mild.
6. It is because the work that domestic workers do, does not have much value.
7. A domestic worker's day usually begins at five in the morning and ends at twelve in the night.
8. Domestic workers are often not treated well by their employers. Despite the hard work they do, their employers often do not show them much respect.
9. Several women today work both inside and outside the home. This is often referred to as 'double burden'.
10. Washing clothes, cleaning, sweeping, cooking etc.

➤ Short Answer:

1. In a boys school generally there is no courtyard, and they play in playground attached to the school. While in a girl's school there is a central courtyard where girls used to play. In a boy's school most of the teachers are male while in a girl's school most of the teachers are females.
2. House work is very important. It is equally valuable as other outside works, but this kind of work is often invisible and is not paid. Thus we should value household work.
3. Every evening, once the school was over, boys watched as hundreds of school girls crowded the narrow streets. The girls walked on the streets in groups and their only intention was to get straight home. On the contrary the boys used the streets as a place to stand around idling, to play, to try out tricks with their bicycles. They never reached home in time.
4. Women discharge a lot of responsibilities inside their home. They look after the family, especially children, the elderly and sick members. They manage the entire activities so efficiently. They cook food by standing for hours in front of hot stoves, wash clothes, maintain cleanliness, etc. In rural areas women and girls carry heavy headloads of firewood. These works are not considered as real works in our families and societies. The work that women do within the home is not recognised as work. It is assumed that this is something that comes naturally to women. Due to this fact, it does not have to be paid for. Our society devalues such work.
5. The government recognises that burden of childcare and housework falls on women and girls. This naturally has an impact on whether girls can attend school. It determines whether women can work outside the house and what kind of jobs and careers they can have. The government has set up Anganwadis or child-care centres in several villages in the country. It has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide creche facilities. The provision of creches helps many women to take up employment outside the home. Girls have also been benefited through this provision. More and more girls

now have started attending schools.

➤ Long Answer:

1. A research took place on Samoan society in 1920s. According to the reports of the research, Samoan children did not go to school. They engaged themselves in many different activities. They learnt from their elders how to take care of children or do housework. Fishing was an important activity on the Samoan islands. Young people learnt to undertake long fishing expeditions.

Both boys and girls used to look after their younger siblings. But, by the time a boy was about nine years old, he joined the older boys in to learn outdoor jobs like fishing and planting coconuts. Girls had to continue looking after small children or do errands for adults till they were teenagers. They enjoyed much freedom during teenage. After the age of fourteen or so, girls also went on fishing trips, worked in the plantations, learnt how to weave baskets. Boys had to do most of the work associated with cooking. After they prepared the meal, girls helped them

2. The lives of domestic workers are full of hardships. They do a lot of work in then-employer's house. They sweep and clean, wash clothes and dishes, cook different varieties of food, look after young children or the elderly. Their day usually begins at five in the early morning and ends at twelve in the night. During this span they do not sit even for a while. Most domestic workers are women. Sometimes, even young boys and girls are employed to do all these works. Despite the hard work they do, their employers often do not show them much respect. They are often scolded by them even at a minor mistake. So far their wages are concerned, they are veiy low. The reason behind this is that domestic work does not have much value.

Melani is a domestic worker who leads a very hard life inspite of her hard labour. Her employer is not at all sympathetic to her. She shouts at her every now and then. She does not give her sufficient food to eat. Even during severe winters she does not allow her to wear chappals in the house. Melani feels very humiliated. As she has no other option, she has to bear all the hardships. But she, like her employer, also wishes to be respected.

3. Government recognises that burden of child-care and housework falls on women and girls. This naturally has an impact on whether girls can attend school. It determines whether women can work outside the house and what kind of jobs and careers they can have. The government has set up anganwadis or child-care centres in several villages in the country. The government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide crèche facilities. The provision of crèches helps many women to take up employment outside the home. It also makes it possible for more girls to attend schools.
4. **Identity:** Identity is a sense of self-awareness of who one is. Typically, a person can have several identities. For example, a person can be a girl, a sister and a musician.

Care-giving: Care-giving refers to a range of tasks related to looking after and nurturing. Besides physical tasks, they also involve a strong emotional aspect.

De-valued: When someone is not given due recognition for a task or job they have done, they can feel de-valued. For example, if a boy has put in a lot of effort into making a special birthday gift for his friend and this friend does not say anything about this, then the boy may feel de-valued.

5. List of toys and games that boys typically play includes cricket, kabaddi, cars, football etc.

List of toys and games that girls typically play includes doll, kitchen game, indoor games, hide and seek etc.

From the above list we realize that societies make clear distinctions between boys and girls from a very young age. Boys are taught to be tough whereas girls are taught to be soft. All these are ways of telling children that they have specific roles to play when they grow up to be men and women.

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