

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30090

Name: Anita Wilcox

Theme 1: Gender norms and stereotypes

Gender norms and stereotypes as barriers to gender equality

Fixed ideas about what women and men should do in the home or at work are learned by girls and boys in early childhood and throughout their lives. These ideas or gender stereotypes affect their choices in school and as they enter careers and contribute to a lack of progress toward equality between women and men. This limits not only the jobs that women and men consider or are available to them, but also can exclude women and men from social roles and tasks.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

Despite having quite a few Acts with Equality components in it, the practice is still quite traditional. The key barriers are organisational culture, lack of childcare facility and lack of support system in general proffered by successive governments.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

Should be a multi-faceted approach. Education starts at home, it is said. So yes, education of both parents and child/ren, private sector employers and the State, definitely.

Theme 2: Work: Occupational segregation by gender, gender discrimination and the gender pay gap

Women and men are often concentrated into different kinds of jobs and within the same occupations, women are often in work that is less well paid and has less opportunities for career advancement. Women often work in areas where they can work part-time so as to fit in with their caring responsibilities. While many men work in low paid jobs, many professions dominated by women are also low paid, and professions that have become female-dominated have become lower paid. This worsens the gender pay gap (the average difference between the wages of women and men who are working).

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

1. State taking a hands off approach in promoting gender equality and leaving it to employers. 2. By not providing the support structure, the state is, in a way, promoting the stereotyping of women as homemakers. 3. lack of transparency in remuneration offer in private or semi-state bodies, especially where one has to negotiate the salary. Often we find out accidentally that someone else doing the same job is actually earning more than us!

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

Carrying on, it should be addressed by all 3 parties, the state carrying the greatest burden as it is the lawmaker as well!

Theme 3. Care, paid and unpaid, as a social and family responsibility

Care -- the social responsibility of care and women and men's co responsibility for care, especially within the family

Women remain disproportionately responsible for unpaid care and often work in poorly paid care work. For working parents or lone parents, balancing paid work with parenting and or caring for older and dependent adults presents significant challenges. Women are most disadvantaged by these challenges, yet men also suffer from lack of opportunities to share parenting and caring roles. Despite recent legislation and policy initiatives to support early years parental care, inequalities in the distribution of unpaid care continue between women and men. The cost of childcare has been identified as a particular barrier to work for women alongside responsibilities of caring for older relatives and dependent adults.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

Government policy and legislation is the key barrier to the road to gender equality. We are very good at paying lip service; not good at stepping up to the plate.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

1. Water tight legislation. 2. Proper funding/allocation of resources. 3. bring private sectors within the legislation and no exceptions. Educate the people, not just the children.

Theme 4: Women's access to, and representation in, public life and decision making

Ensure women's participation and representation in decision-making and leadership in the workplace, political and public life

Women are systematically underrepresented in leadership in economic and political decision-making. Despite the introduction of a candidate gender quota (through the system of party funding) for national political office, and initiatives to support women's access to corporate decision-making roles, men continue to dominate leadership positions. There are also issues to be considered around how media represents women and men.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

1. Lack of support within the greater family structure. 2. body shaming of women. 3. social media trolling. 4. Rise of influencers on social media.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

1. More state support structure. 2. Proper equality legislation. 3. Education, education, education!

5. Where does gender inequality impact most?

To conclude we would be interested in your response to the following question: In which area do you think gender inequality matters most?

Please rank the following in order of importance, 1 being the most important:

- Paid work 3
- Home & family life 1
- Education 2
- Politics and public life 5
- Media 6

- Caring for others
- Other – please elaborate

4

➤ Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

Women are not just homemakers; they are part of our family life too. Inequality in treatment breeds indifference and contempt. We can tackle it through education. That will lead to equal recognition at work place. The stereotyping of women as carers will also change through education. The same goes for politics and media. It will take time, but I am positive it will happen.

➤ Please include any further comments or observations you may have here.