



**Objectives:**

- To list the difference between sex which is a natural construct and gender which is a social construct.
- To see how some of our roles as men and women are learned and thus can be changed.

**Time:** 1 hour

**Materials:** White board or flip chart, markers.

**Methodology:**

1. As a group, ask the participants to quickly come up with 6-8 statements for men and women separately, which portray the characteristics/ qualities/ behaviours/ roles.

For example: “Men are strong and women are sensitive”

2. The facilitator writes them on the board and discusses the following:
  - Pick each of the characteristics and check whether the other sex can do it or are the characteristics exclusive to a particular sex?
  - If there are differences, what are they?
    - Is it to do with physiological (biological) difference like having a beard or bearing a child
    - Are these differences non reversible? (like breasts, beard, genitals)
  - If non-biological qualities can be common to both sexes, then why does differentiation between the two happen?

A sample table is attached:

Men are.....	Women are.....	Need to identify them
Strong	Weepers	can be for both
wear pants	wear skirts	can be for both...ex. dhoti, African wraps
engineers	good cooks	can be for both
bread winners	manage the kitchen	can be for both
moustache	breast	is exclusive for each
broad chest	thin waist	can be for both, not necessarily natural

3. Be sure the following points are made:

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Is Biological/ Natural	Is Socially Constructed (roles that people around us make for us)
You are born with it	It is learned (parents, siblings teach us these roles)
Cannot be changed even if you try or practice (without surgical intervention)	It can be changed, if you try or practice
Is constant all over the world (eg. physically a man would look the same everywhere)	Gender roles vary in different societies, countries, cultures and historical periods

**Be sure the following points are made during the activity:**

Nature does not determine feminine and masculine traits that women and men must have. It only dictates whether you are born male or female.

The difference between sex and gender must always be kept in mind. It is useful to be aware of the subtle forms of discrimination as well as the power play that exist in our homes, communities and society.

\*\*As a follow up, the session on gender discrimination can be used. \*\*