

GENDER EQUALITY AND THE HISTORY OF GENDER FLUIDITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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In this modern era, the world has seen the recurring pandemic brought by the corona virus, and is now facing the beginning of might be another war between Ukraine and Russia, it is high time that everyone set aside old-fashioned beliefs and biases.

Believe it or not, when it comes to acceptance of all gender, many Filipinos still have backwards point of view. Which is really sad because pre-colonialism, our ancestors, the indigenous tribes that occupy the archipelago have a 500-year-old history and tradition that is centered on gender fluidity and femininity. The pre-Spanish reign, the Philippine culture of feminine metaphysical healers whose deep connection was a foundation of social and political influence is referred to as Babaylan. In indigenous societies, Babaylans are women that act as bridges between both the human and divine realms. Their varied leadership roles include warriors, healers, priestesses, and sages.

Effeminate men were also a huge part of pre-Spanish traditions of our native thrives. Homosexual relationships between men and women were frequent in pre-colonial Philippines and were not stigmatized. Early Spanish chronicles provide numerous tales of effeminate men. They were characterized as dressing like females, working in traditionally feminine roles, and even being regarded like women in the community. Aside from their inability to give birth to children, they were thought to be equivalent to biological females. They were even married to guys, according to the records. And because they were comparable to women, they are also entrusted with roles of political and spiritual leaders.

As the Spaniards colonized and introduce their religion to the native of these lands, they painted their traditions and beliefs as evil. They've gone above and beyond in order to ensure that these beliefs and practices are exterminated.

Now, here we all are 124 years and several foreign occupations later, being blatantly homophobic in the name of religion. "The Philippines is a Catholic country and homosexuality is against the Bible" is the most common argument of conservative Filipinos. However, even Italy, the country where Rome, the center of all Catholic fate have acknowledged same-sex union under civil law, which separates Religion and fate to State and Laws. So what prevents basic human rights on prevailing in the country?

Mostly, the gender bias and stereo typical view of gender are engraved from generations. When Spain conquered the archipelago in 1521, they have also brought their own gender bias and views, which is what they drilled into the generations to come for over 300 years. It should be noted that Spain is under a Monarchy type government at the time of their acquisition of the country. Spain was presided by male rulers, Kings. Their culture value male Heirs due the perception that men are superior to women.

This misogynistic view was passed to our ancestors down to the percent generation. That even in this day and age, Filipinos still believe in toxic masculinity and gender stereotypes and roles like, women are home makers while men are the providers.

Gender equality is not the need to reverse the gender bias of men over women. When individuals of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities, and prospects, this is referred to as gender equality. Gender discrimination has an impact on everyone, including females, males, trans and gender diverse persons, children, and families. It has an impact on the people of all ages and cultures. In safer and healthier cultures, women, men, and other genders are valued equally. Equality between men and women is a basic human right. Everyone benefits from gender equality.

Gender signals can be found everywhere. From schoolbooks to bus advertisements, from discussions on the train or on the big screen, from department stores in malls to any plush office, we are inundated with messages about what it takes to be a "proper" or "regular" woman or guy everywhere we go. Gender has always been there.

Children establish a sense of identity at the age of eighteen months, according the Annual Review of Psychology, it is also in this age when then start picking up cues and actively engage in the exploring their surroundings and information. Developing gender-normative behavior patterns and connecting gender with basic preconceptions are both part of this process. The best example of these are the very famous trend these days, gender reveal parties, which use gender stereotypical colors like "pink for girls" and "blue for boys". As a child, toys are something that are also subjected to gender stereotypes, kitchen sets are for girls, trucks and cars are for boys. Gender is even on the mere clothing they wear and the way they keep their hair.

This is why, in education, it is important that these gender stereotypes and bias are broken and dissolved at the very beginning of learning. Create gender neutral spaces for learning and avoid gender stereotypes when renouncing examples in class. It is also time to stop segregating girls and boys in seat plans and such. Using gender neutral language if appropriate also helps promote gender equality within a classroom. Set same expectations and consequences for male and female students.

Kids are very smart; more than what adults give them credit for. They can figure themselves out without us grownups pushing societal norms on their faces. Let them explore their own awareness and identity.

These patterns are really not true for each and every mentor or even every group of students, but they're worth thinking about as you try to eliminate gender prejudices from the classroom. Gender disparity in academia is merely one part of a much wider

issue of educational equity. Nevertheless, by attempting to break down established gender roles in the classroom, you may better equip students, regardless of their gender, to seek clarification and take an active part in conversations as well as other learning opportunities in a variety of subjects.

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