

GENDER EQUALITY VOCABULARY

Feminism - Feminism is both an overarching theory and partly a political movement consisting of several different approaches. The objective to change the power structures related to gender is common to all approaches. Various feminist directions, feminisms, explaining the reasons for men's and women's different conditions in different ways. The feminist political movement is also working on ways to ensure that women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in society. Some feminists argue that women's inferior position may disappear through political changes and new laws. Others believe that it is not enough without having to change the entire society overall.

Gender - The concept of gender doesn't refer to the biological sex, but the aspects of sex that are socially and culturally constructed, that is, the beliefs, ideas and actions that shape our social gender. The term gender is a socially constructed classification system that divides people into two categories, men and women, and those that combine these categories with different sets of behavioural, cultural, psychological and social characteristics and behaviour patterns. What is perceived as "feminine" and "masculine" is not something definitely, without changing who we are constantly creating and renegotiating. The concept of gender was introduced in the humanities and social sciences in the 1980s. The relationship between the sexes and varying perceptions of what is perceived as masculine and feminine emphasized.

Equality - Equality is about all individuals' equal value regardless of gender, race, religion, social class, etc. In the political context, it is also about influence and social conditions. Equality can be justified from different points of departure, for example, religion, natural law ideas, liberalism, socialism and democracy.

Gender Equality – Gender Equality means that women and men should have the same opportunities and rights. Equality between men and women assume an equal distribution of power and influence, equal economic independence, equal conditions and opportunities in the field of entrepreneurship, work, working conditions and development opportunities at work, equal access to education and opportunities for developing personal ambitions, interests and talents, shared responsibility for home and children, and freedom from gender-based violence.

Power Structures - Power structure refers to the hierarchical order in which the different groups in society are given power. Feminists have coined the term **gender power structure**, that is to say that there is an order in society in which women have less power than men. But there are also power structures controlled by social class, sexuality, ethnicity, age, etc.

Patriarchy - Patriarchy refers to family or social system in which political and economic power, both within the household and in the public sphere, held by older men, and where, consequently, neither women or younger men participate in the formal decision-making. Patriarchy has been widely used as a social scientific name of the social system in which women are subordinate to men, especially in the early women's studies. Patriarchy as a deep

social structure can still be manifested in many ways in work and home. Also, for example, rape, pornography, prostitution of women can be seen as the effects of a patriarchal system.

Structure - Structure really means 'building'. The word is used to describe the whole or the pattern that is made up of the parts. A fabric's structure depends on how the threads in the fabric are intertwined. The word is often used abstractly, and then refers to some 'construction', 'order'. Social structure is about how society is made up of people and their institutions: companies, organizations, agencies, schools and colleges and so on.

Norms – Norms relate to the "normal" or accepted behaviour in a social group or a society; convention practice. A system of norms indicates the normal pattern that the actions of individuals should comply with. Norms can be divided into legal, economic, moral, aesthetic, technical, etc. They are generally intimately connected with social values, and they constitute the means to realize the conditions that are highly valued by the social group that affirms them. Formal laws express a part of society's norms, others are mediated through traditions, customs and practices.

(Source: <http://www.jamstall.nu/fakta/ordlista/>)

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION POINTS RELATED TO THE VOCABULARY

- 1) What is the difference between biological sex and gender?
- 2) Can a man have a female gender?
- 3) What do you think it means that Sweden has a feminist foreign policy?
- 4) Can a society be equal without gender equality?
- 5) How is the situation for gender equality in your country/community/work place/organisation/family?
- 6) Can you identify any power structures in your society?
- 7) Can you identify any norms in your society?