

2018 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

## **Changing culture among males**

(Original)

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I am a boy and I'm ready to change!

Culture is a belief or behavior of people in a particular community, society, ethnic or even in age group. Change means to make, do, think or react differently from what is the case. Change is hard to start but it's possible, so start today.

Long time ago in the country where I live, culture between women and men in relation to social and economic development was created clearly. Women were preferred to be at home taking care of all housework. Days for them were filled by raising children, preparing food, fixing clothes, washing, farming, carrying water from far distance, raising cattle, etc. It was believed that women were too gentle and physically weak to go outside. They wouldn't be able to work and generate incomes for family and contribute to society like men.

Men were always seen as strong and smart. Their main job was to earn money from working outside. Husbands were always the leader in the home and they made all decisions. In wider situation such as in village meetings, men normally would take the floor. Women were not really encouraged to take part. This culture became a usual and accepted by individual from one generation to another.

I am a 14-year-old boy and I have one younger brother. We both grow up with good care from our parents. My mom has been the main person taking care of the house – similar to ladies in the previous time, except walking far to get water and raising cattle. However, one big different between women in the past and now, including my mum is that they don't have to only stay at home but they also work outside to support their families. They can earn money, make their voice heard, contribute to the country, travel and meet people from all parts.

Although time has proved to be a key for change, I believe the old culture is still a practice in many houses. When I visit my friends and relatives, I observe that males still like

to take advantage of having wives, moms, daughters or sisters (basically females) to do kinds of basic housework. I wonder if these women would ever feel tired of doing it when their family members could share some responsibilities.

From the day I never felt helping anything, I started with few simple tasks like cleaning my room and bed, preparing dining table and washing my own glass after drinking. Slowly, I manage to wash my own school uniform, dry them up and iron. During weekends, I join my family to our farm watering our vegetables and trees. This means my time for TV, games and social media decreased but I am totally fine.

What has brought me to this change? Is it because I am bigger so I can do these little by little? Or whether I recognize the women's value better? I think it is a combination of both.

I wish my friends, relatives and all the males out there to start changing their culture, mindset and behavior towards females. I wish they would never take their wives, mums, sisters or any girls for granted. I wish women would be valued more in the right ways. But, what and how would I do to make my big wishes reality? I do not think I can.

However, with my little capacity I can start from my little brother. By asking him to join all activities I have whether cleaning or washing, explaining what I think is the right ways to treat women and why it's not ok to keep saying 'it's not my job'. In addition, I will share with him my observations when I see some misbehavior of men towards women and we will think through together. This will take time so this is a good starting point for both of us.

The past might have its own reasons but today regardless of age, gender or ethnicity, everyone should be weighted with same value, same rights, receive the same respects and opportunities. Let's stop throwing unnecessary reasons to divide males and females and let's become gentlemen rather than just men for the real sustainable development.