

HIRALAL MAZUMDAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE

FOR WOMEN

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MAX WEBER:

RELIGION -

PROTESTANT ETHICS

AND

SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM.

①  
Introduction - Marx Weber was born on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1864. He was a German Sociologist, historian, jurist and political economist, who is regarded as among the most important theorists of the development of modern Western Society. He was one of the central figures in the development of sociology and the social sciences, and his ideas profoundly influence social theory and research. On 14<sup>th</sup> June 1920 Max Weber took his last breathe.

Protestant ethic, in sociological theory the value attached to hard work, thrift, and efficiency in one worldly calling which especially in the Calvinist view, were deemed signs of an individual's election, or eternal salvation.

The spirit of capitalism as the ideas and esprit that favour the rational pursuit of economic gain: "We shall nevertheless provisionally use the expression 'spirit of capitalism' for that attitude which, in the pursuit of a calling, strives systematically for profit for its own sake in the manner exemplified by Benjamin Franklin.

## Relation between Protestant ethics and Spirit of Capitalism - Weber

First observes a correlation between being Protestant and being involved in business and declares his intent to explore religion as a potential cause of the modern economic conditions. He argues that the modern spirit of capitalism sees profit as an end in itself and pursuing profit as virtuous.

- Change attitudes towards work:- In the book of Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism, Weber starts from the hypothesis that the Protestant religion created the conditions for the development of capitalism. The author does not deny that there have been other social and economic factors have led to the development of capitalism, or that other religions would have contained work-related teachings, such as Catholicism. His original argument was the Protestant were among the "Chosen ones", having a favored status.

- Self reading of Bible:- Max Weber argued that a religious group or individual is influenced by all kinds of things but if they claim to be acting in the name of religion, we should attempt to understand their perspective on religious

grounds first. He gives religion credit for shaping  
He gives religion credit for shaping a person's image  
of the world, and this image of the world can affect  
their view of their interests, and ultimately how they  
decide to take action. People need to know, for example  
why there is undeserved good fortune and suffering in  
the world.

• Restrictions on alcohol consumption: The Protestant  
ethic prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages,  
whereas Catholicism lack a comparable theological  
doctrine. In fact, the prohibition movement in  
Western societies has always been spearheaded  
by Protestant group.

• Sanction in giving loan and taking interest: Catholic  
theory prohibited the collection of interest on loans  
which discouraged the operation of lending institutions  
and the accumulation of capital. However Calvinism  
approved of this practice which had been forbidden  
in Catholicism. This endorsement fostered an upsurge  
in economic activity, including the establishment of  
lending institutions, new investments, and the growth  
of floating capital.

• Protestant asceticism - The Protestant ethic also incorporates the notion that worldly possessions and physical desires belong to the realm of sin and death. Therefore, individual should refrain from indulging in worldly pleasures. On one hand, the Protestant ethic encourages the ceaseless pursuit of profit, but on the other hand, it discourages using wealth for personal enjoyment.

Conclusion: Weber moved beyond Protestantism with his research into sociology of religion within his later works. Weber maintained that while Puritan religious ideas had significantly impacted the development of economic system in Europe and United States, there were other factors in play as well.

# Hiralal • Mazumder • College • for • Women

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Skill Enhancement Course (Gender Sensitization)

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Write a note on the difference between 'Sex' and 'Gender'

### Introduction →

Gender is a term that has psychological and cultural connotations. If the proper terms for sex are 'male' and 'female', the corresponding term for the gender are 'masculine' and 'feminine'. Scholars have distinguished between 'Sex' and 'Gender'. While sex implies biological attributes that makes a human being male or female and gender implies a socially given identity that makes a man or a woman.

### Differences between Sex and Gender

1) Sex → Sex refers to the biological and physiological difference between male and female on the basis of their reproductive structure.

Gender → Gender refers to the social, cultural, behavioral and emotional differences between men and women.

2) Sex → Sex has two main categories  
a) male b) female

Gender → Gender is divided into two main categories a) Masculine b) Feminine

3) Sex → Sex is determined or inherited by birth

Gender → Gender is influenced by external factors like social culture and behavioral factors

4) Sex → Sex remain the same regardless of the time and culture

Gender → Gender is a flexible term and it's role can be changed from time to time or culture to culture.

5) Sex → Sex is created by the reproductive needs, that is biological feature.

Gender → Gender distinctions are created by social norms.

6) Sex → Sex cannot be change  
Gender → Gender can be changed since gender identity is determined by society

7) Sex → Sex is natural and comes first  
Gender → Gender is a secondary construct this is imposed over natural distinction.

Conclusion → In conclusion, while sex and gender are related concepts, they operate on different places. Sex refers to

biological attributes, while gender encompasses the social and cultural expectations associated with being male, female, or other genders. Recognizing and respecting these distinctions is essential for promoting inclusivity and understanding in contemporary societies.

# Progress towards meeting the MDGs for women and girls

## Introduction

Since their adoption more than 13 years ago, significant and substantial progress has been made in meeting many of the eight Millennium Development Goals, including visible improvements in all health areas as well as primary education, and halving the number of people living in extreme poverty. However, progress is uneven, particularly for women and girls, and in many areas far from sufficient.

Find out more about how women and girls are faring in progress on each goal, an UN Women efforts towards meeting the MDGs by the end of 2015

### • MDG 1 - Targets include

- Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day
- Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people
- Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

According to the Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, the world has reached the poverty reduction target five years ahead of schedule. In developing regions, the proportion of people living on less than USD \$1.25 a day fell from 47 percent in 1990 to 22 percent in 2010. Extreme poverty is also falling in every region. UN Women works to support women's fundamental role in food security, as the cornerstones of food production and utilization. UN Women also works to eliminate legal restrictions to women's economic empowerment.

### • MDG 2 Target

Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. Enrolment in primary education in developing regions reached 90 percent in 2011, up from 82 percent in 1999, which means more children than ever are attending primary school. But even as countries with the toughest challenges

have advanced progress on primary school enrolment has slowed since 2004, dimming hopes for achieving universal primary education 2015.

### UN Women's efforts

UN Women focuses action on girls's school completing rates and improving school conditions for girls.

UN Women works to advance women's empowerment through education and economic opportunities.

UN Women also works on campaigns that address attitudes and behaviours, safety, female modesty and the lack of economic returns to girls' education.

### • MDG 3

This the overarching gender equality goal which encompasses parity in education, political participation and economic empowerment.

### Target

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

### Indicators

These include the share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural

sector and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

UN Women's efforts  
UN Women works with partners to promote the education of girls and women and overcome barriers to schooling for girls  
UN Women works to enact and implement equal economic rights for all  
They contribute to improved efficiency in policymaking through bringing their diverse perspectives.

#### • MDG 4

##### Target

Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate for children under five worldwide, the mortality rate by 41 percent from 87 deaths per 1000 live births in 1990 to 48 in 2012.

##### UN Women's efforts

UN Women works with partners to prioritize care of mothers  
UN Women works to ensure the women's voices and concerns are reflected in budgetary planning processes.

UN Women also focuses on fighting discrimination against girls

UN Women focuses on changing attitudes and laws to address this practice.

### • MDG 5 - Targets include

- Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio
- Achieve universal access to reproductive health. Inadequate funding for family planning is a major failure in fulfilling commitments to improving women's reproductive health.

Globally, the maternal mortality ratio declined by 47 percent over the past two decades, from 400 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 210 in 2010

### UN Women's efforts

UN Women works to end practices that bring danger to mother and child.

UN Women works to ensure women's greater decision-making and position in families and societies, so that they can have more access and voice in issues such as healthcare as well

UN Women also seeks to increase the share of women in decision-making positions in the health sector.



## • MDG 6

### Targets include

- Halt and being to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Achieve by 2010 universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it

The incidence of HIV is declining steadily in most regions, still the number of women living with HIV has been increasing globally since 2001. According to the latest UN AIDS report 2.3 million people were newly infected in 2012

### UN Women's efforts

UN Women is working with governments on enactment and enforcement of legal measures against discrimination that drives the spread of HIV and AIDS among women and girls

UN Women also supports women and girls living with HIV and advocates for their leadership and full participation in policies that affect them

UN Women advocates equality in society, including marriage and family relations.

## • MDG 7 - Targets include

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, reverse loss of environmental resources
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

Global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) have increased by more than 46 percent since 1990. Containing the growth in global emissions demands hold, coordinated national and international action. The MDG target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water has been achieved five years ahead of schedule.

## UN Women's efforts

UN Women works with Governments on development policies and programmes that both respond to the needs of women and are sustainable

UN Women works on reforming policies for equitable property and resource ownership. UN Women advocates for gender equality

and women's empowerment in mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving equitable and inclusive sustainable development.

### MDG 8 - Targets include

- Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

In 2012, net official development assistance from developed countries stood at \$ 125.6 billion, representing 0.29 percent of donors's combined gross national income.

### UN Women's efforts

Because of the cross-cutting nature of women's empowerment for all the MDGs, assistance to gender programmes should be increased in order to pave the way for attainment of the MDGs, from allocation of resources for women's economic empowerment to ending violence against women, a pandemic

of huge proportions, which is not only a gross human rights violation, but also which hampers development and growth.

### Conclusion →

The MDGs have led to significant strides in improving the lives of women and girls globally. However, persistent challenges remain, particularly in the realms of gender-based violence, political and economic participation, and access to quality healthcare and education. Addressing these issues requires continued global commitment and targeted efforts to ensure that progress is both sustainable and inclusive, leaving no woman or girl behind.