

Partnership
Unpaid carework
English version PDF
Azad Foundation



PARTNERSHIP ...

Unpaid care work



My name is Rohit. I am 25 years old and I live in Ashokpura .I have been working with Azad Foundation since 2018 as Community mobilizer with adolescents and young men for gender equality under Men for Gender Justice Program.

Perception building trainings and working with youth in community helped me understand the concept of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity etc. While Working with Azad,

I saw how the dominant ideas of masculinity would destroy lives of young men, women, families and communities. I have worked with men and boys who are reluctant to change the way they think and hang on to the traditional ideas of what it means to be a man. But I have also encountered individuals who changed the way they think. I came to know about many stories of aggressiveness that men show, misconceptions of manhood such as rash driving, keeping moustache and considering them superior over the women in our community.

I've heard a lot of stories over the years, some have been heartwarming while some have left a bitter taste in me. But the story I'm telling you today is a story of change. While chasing their dreams and aspirations, siblings Rohit and Kavita encounter social norms related to domestic work and start understanding how it effects their lives. So read on to know how the story goes.....



mother



father



Kavita



Ramesh



Shreya



Meera



Rahul



Amit

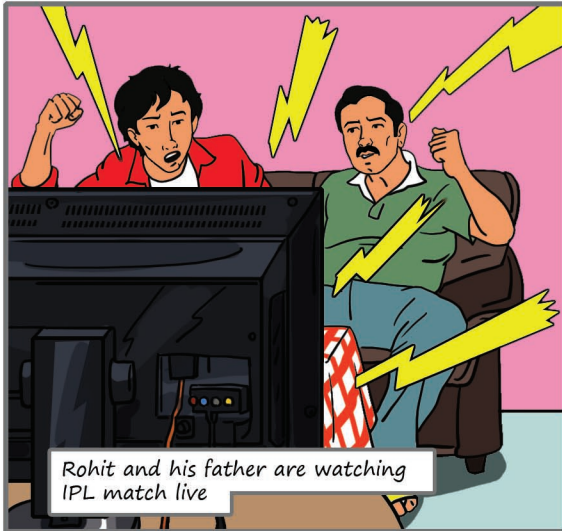
I am going to tell you a story about siblings Rohit and kavita. Rohit and Kavita both have dreams and aspirations of their own. Rohit wants to be a cricketer and Kavita wants to be an astronaut when she grows up. But as Kavita's mother falls ill, she realizes that caring for Rohit and her father and doing all of the household chores is having a bad effect on her studies. Kavita does not know what to do until her friend comes up with a suggestion. Read on to know what happens in the story...



Kavita's mother quit her job when Kavita was born so that she could take care of her while her father was at work. Lately, she has been facing issues with her health. She is taking rest.



Kavita meanwhile is making pakodas for her younger brother and father....



Rohit and his father are watching IPL match live



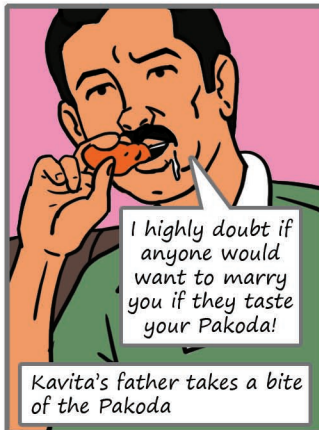
Didi what's taking you so long?



Hold on it takes time!



Didi, keep the plate on the table and get out of the way



I highly doubt if anyone would want to marry you if they taste your Pakoda!

Kavita's father takes a bite of the Pakoda



they have a laugh over that joke. Kavita doesn't respond.

This is not the first time she's heard this from them





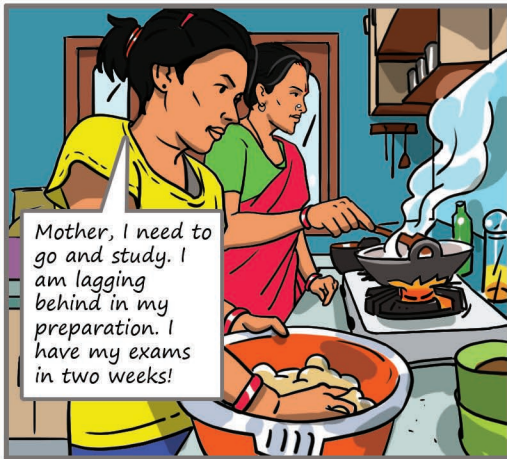
Kavita's mother is feeling better now and She is able to Support Kavita to cook. Kavitha and her mother are working in the kitchen.



Rohit, Kavita's younger brother is studying in the room.



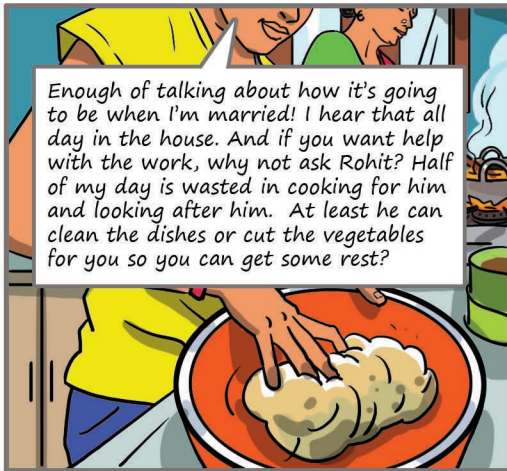
Her dad is watching news on the television.



Mother, I need to go and study. I am lagging behind in my preparation. I have my exams in two weeks!



Can't you see how overburdened I am with household work? Do you think it is easy for me to do everything on my own? Moreover, you'll have to do this once you are married so get used to this!

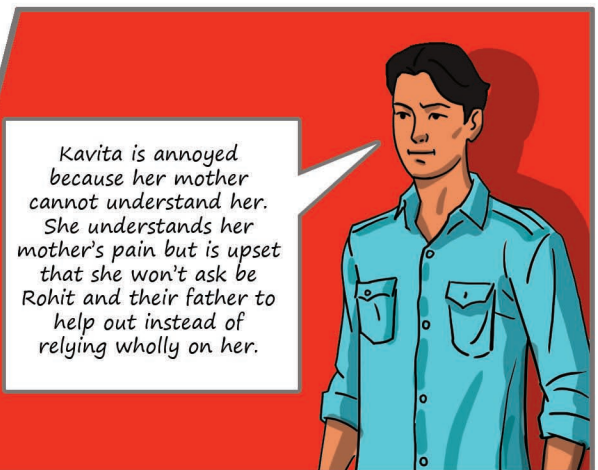


Enough of talking about how it's going to be when I'm married! I hear that all day in the house. And if you want help with the work, why not ask Rohit? Half of my day is wasted in cooking for him and looking after him. At least he can clean the dishes or cut the vegetables for you so you can get some rest?

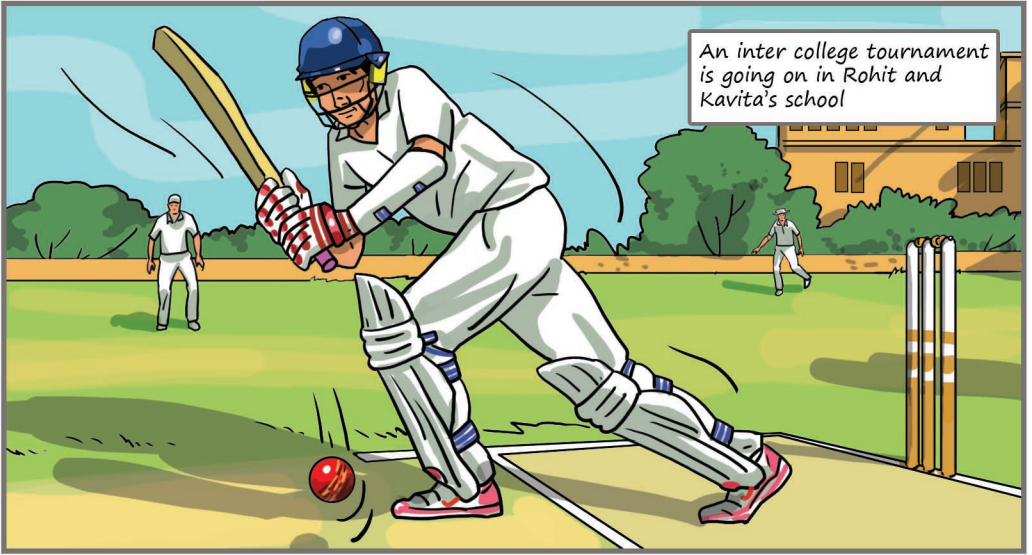


Is your mind all right? Have you ever seen men doing household work?

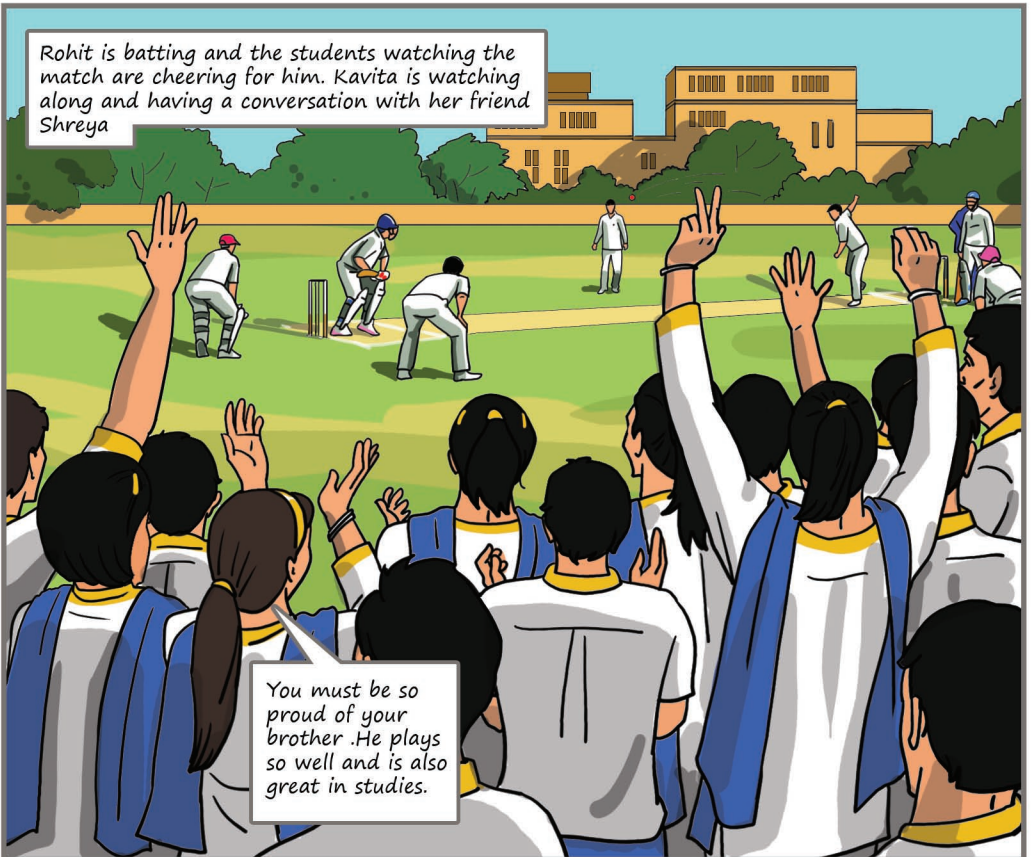
Do you want your brother to be teased by his friend's for doing household work? Please stop saying crazy things and help me with my work. He doesn't need to do domestic work in presence of her mother and sister.



Kavita is annoyed because her mother cannot understand her. She understands her mother's pain but is upset that she won't ask be Rohit and their father to help out instead of relying wholly on her.

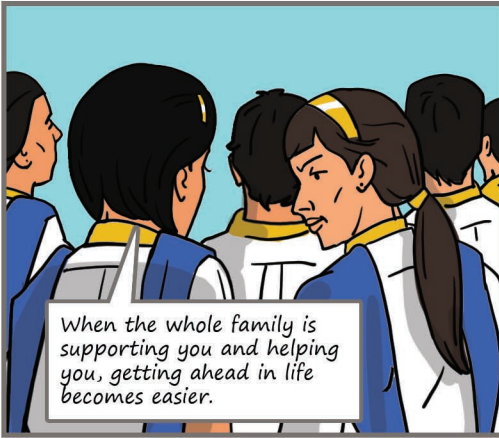


An inter college tournament is going on in Rohit and Kavita's school



Rohit is batting and the students watching the match are cheering for him. Kavita is watching along and having a conversation with her friend Shreya

You must be so proud of your brother. He plays so well and is also great in studies.



When the whole family is supporting you and helping you, getting ahead in life becomes easier.



What is the matter Kavita? You look lost and upset.

Kavita is lost in thought. She is happy for her brother, but at the same time she is upset about not getting the same support he gets from the family.



I have not been able to study. I get called for doing household work the moment I'm in the middle of studying.

i went through the same.... I am tired of explaining myself. Me and my mother go through the same arguments every



Same! How do you manage your studies then?



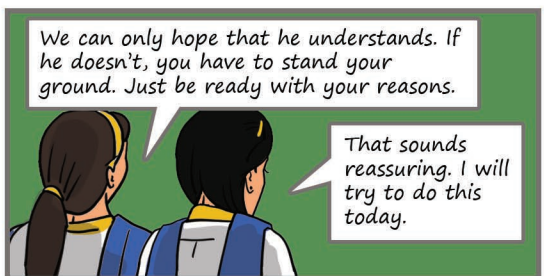
I just stood my ground. I strictly say that I am studying and cannot do household chores. I asked my brother to help my mother out.

Did your brother agree to it?



Yes he eventually understood me when I explained him that it is equally his responsibility.

I don't think my brother will understand me!

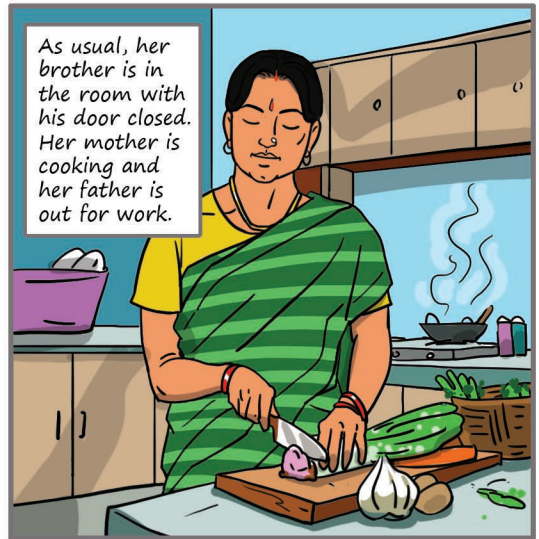


We can only hope that he understands. If he doesn't, you have to stand your ground. Just be ready with your reasons.

That sounds reassuring. I will try to do this today.



Kavita returns home



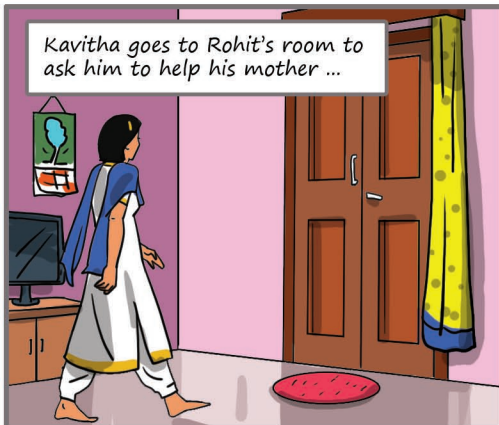
As usual, her brother is in the room with his door closed. Her mother is cooking and her father is out for work.



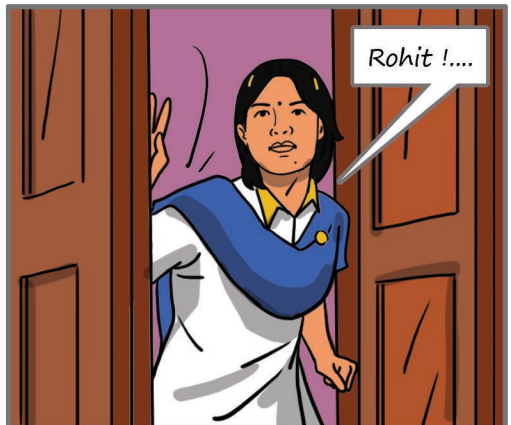
Kavita! Please freshen yourself up and help me prepare lunch!

I cannot do it mom. I have to study.

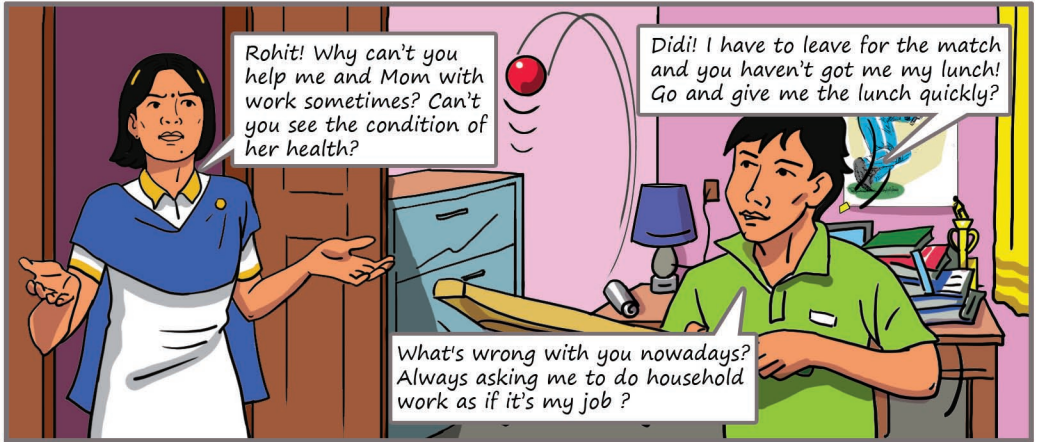
I guess I have to make food, wash dishes, clean the floor and do everything all by myself now!



Kavitha goes to Rohit's room to ask him to help his mother ...



Rohit !....



Rohit! Why can't you help me and Mom with work sometimes? Can't you see the condition of her health?

Didi! I have to leave for the match and you haven't got me my lunch! Go and give me the lunch quickly?

What's wrong with you nowadays? Always asking me to do household work as if it's my job?



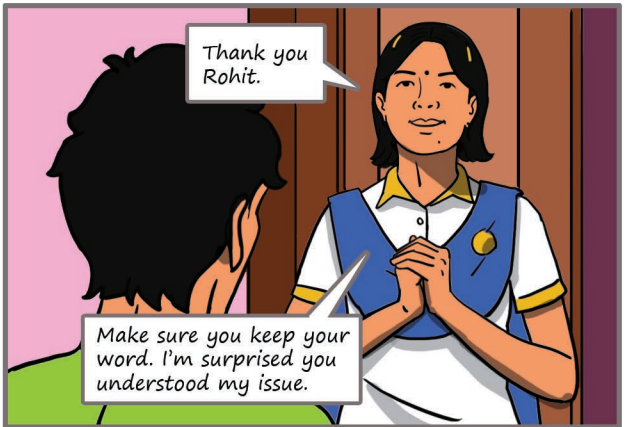
Do I not have to study? Do you want to see your sister fail just because she has to do household work while others study? Do you want your mother to have back issues because of exertion?



I did not know that I am coming in the way of my sisters dreams. My mother is also sick. But I can't do household work. What will my friends say if they come to know?



Okay we can split the work from today! I'll help mom out with lunch. You help her out with dinner.



Thank you Rohit.

Make sure you keep your word. I'm surprised you understood my issue.



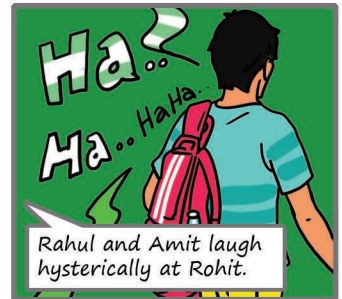
What if my friends come to know about me doing household work. I will become a laughing stock!

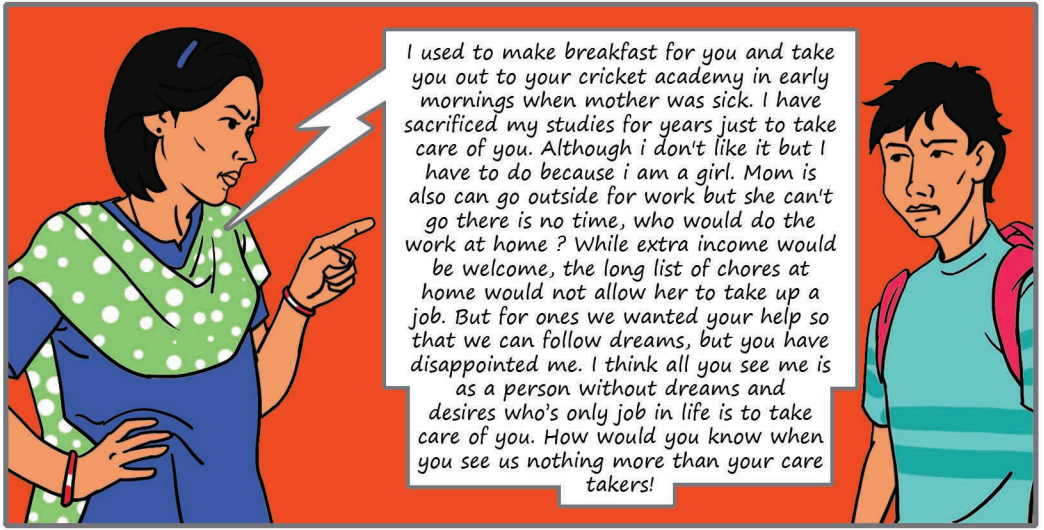
Rohit goes and helps his mom with cutting onions and tomatoes.

"The path from dreams to success does exist.
May you have the vision to find it,
the courage to get onto it
and the perseverance to follow it."
Kalpana Chawla - 17th Mar, 1962- 1st Feb, 2003



*Kavita finally gets some well
deserved time for her studies.*

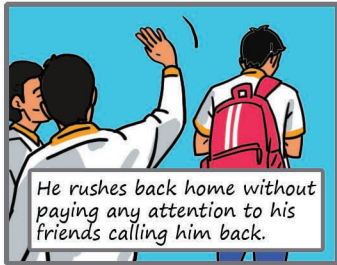




I used to make breakfast for you and take you out to your cricket academy in early mornings when mother was sick. I have sacrificed my studies for years just to take care of you. Although i don't like it but I have to do because i am a girl. Mom is also can go outside for work but she can't go there is no time, who would do the work at home ? While extra income would be welcome, the long list of chores at home would not allow her to take up a job. But for ones we wanted your help so that we can follow dreams, but you have disappointed me. I think all you see me is as a person without dreams and desires who's only job in life is to take care of you. How would you know when you see us nothing more than your care takers!



Rohit is upset but what Kavita said yesterday is still fresh in his mind.



He rushes back home without paying any attention to his friends calling him back.



Rohit reached home and helps his mother and sister in domestic work.



He cut the vegetable, wash, clean his room etc.



he also encouraged his fiends do the same.



Didi, I hope you are able to give time to your studies now. Let me know if you need any help.

Kavita smiles at him. She is happy to see the change in him.



Kavitha observes that her friend Meera is looking a bit off. Her head is stooped low and she is ruminating about something.



Hey Meera! Is something bothering you?



It's the usual problems at home. I want to study but my parents cannot see me as anything more than a future wife to some man. They keep making me do household work.



Kavitha gives her a smile and holds her hand to comfort her

Meera! don't worry. I know that it is tough to convince boys and men to help out in household chored. Even I wasn't doing any work but my sister made me realize that household work is everyone's work. I will talk to your brother and try my best to make him understand. !

Debriefing note:

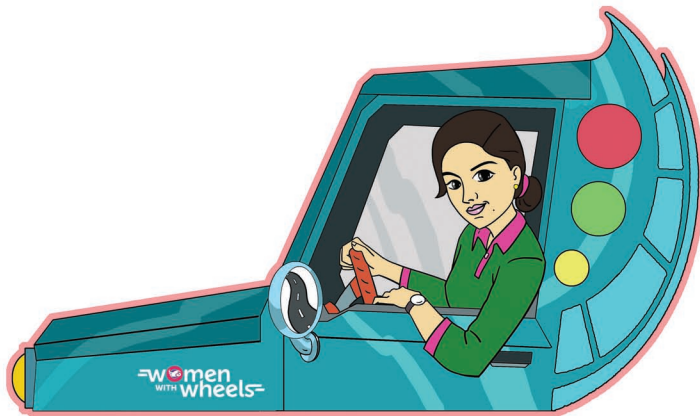
To reflect on the story, we need to have a proper understanding about unpaid care work in domestic spaces. It's can be explained as any work that involves looking after a sick patient, raising a child, talking to someone in emotional distress and a lot of other activities. Domestic work includes all work that has to be done to maintain a home and raise a family.

Care work and domestic work are often seen as the duty of women. Women are expected to put the family's needs in front of their own, every day and every moment of their lives. Work done by women is taken for granted and not respected as 'real' work. Moreover, women and girls who aspire to do other work are discouraged and stopped. Men also are discouraged if they show interest in household chores and care work, with families and society fearing that they wouldn't be a 'real' man if they did so.

We can see in this story that Rohit has had all the support from his family without even realising. His sister used to make his breakfast, pack his lunch often at the cost of her own studies. His mother's health is deteriorating. She has issues with her back and has ignored her pain for far too long because of her children and husband. Rohit grows up feeling entitled to everything that his mother and sister do for him, until Kavita gets emotional and makes him question himself for his positive masculinity.

Men often express how they are essentialized as bread-winners and protectors in the familial spheres while women are relegated to roles of nurturers and care-givers. Men have their own apprehensions for going against assigned gender roles. These apprehensions are the by-products of social construction of masculinity which disallows men from participating equally in care-giving activities, thus perpetuating gendered division of labour. In story we see that Rohit's friend's tease him, telling him he has started doing feminine work. But ultimately Rohit started 'caring' for his sister and her dreams. Taunts from his friends did not matter when he started caring for his mother and sister. Rohit transitioned for a boy who had to be cared for throughout the day, to someone who could care for the women in his family as well.

There are various socially constructed definitions of what it means to be a man. These definitions often discourage men from caring for others and contributing in domestic work. This is harmful for men and boys, as they grow up feeling entitled to being served and receiving care. This is harmful for women as all this work takes an emotional and physical toll. As men and boys start contributing to domestic work and care work, there can be important and healthy transformations within relationships and health within the family.



About Azad Foundation :

We are a professional feminist organization working across social and religious divides to enable resource Poor women to themselves by engaging them in viable non-traditional livelihood options.

We are committed to breaking patriarchal boundaries and structures so that the women can exercise control over their lives and live a life of dignity.

We do this through transformative capacity building programs around the self and the skills needed for NTL, based on adult learning principles. We engage with both men and women in their communities so that both can construct a safe and supportive space for their development.

About the project :

Azad Foundation believes that engaging with young men. It is an integral part of the process for empowerment of women on their journey to access non-traditional livelihoods with dignity and reclaim control over their own lives.

Men for Gender Justice is a program of Azad foundation , work with young men and boys towards enabling them to build their Perspectives on patriarchy, gender based violence, masculinities facilitate men to change their behavior for gender justice and support women to pursue non-traditional livelihoods with dignity. Engagement of Men in unpaid care work also enable women to work outside home and dedicate more time to education and income generation activities.

Azad Foundation engages with young boys between age of 14-20 by organizing them through community youth clubs, street plays, campaigns and sports sessions. Azad's approach of peer groups helps support each other to take action against gender based discrimination in family and community.

My commitment / Action for Gender Equality

Individual/family level

1.....

2.....

3.....

Community level:

1.....

2.....

3.....



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