

GENDER ROLE

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CONCEPT OF GENDER

- Gender is a description of roles, activities and responsibilities assigned to men and women in a given society, culture, community or time.
- Men and women are expected to perform the fixed roles assigned to them by the society.
- Socially prescribed roles, and behaviours expected from men and women and in this prescription women assume lower status
- It is a learned process and can be changed
- Example: *f*She will be a great cook! *f*He will be a great Dr!
- Gender roles can be defined as the social roles that a person is expected to fulfill based upon his or her gender.



CONTD.

- In a family, usually father works hard who is the sole bread earner and mother takes care of home.
- These behaviours of men and women that are considered socially appropriate are called gender roles.
- Gender roles differ from the biological roles of men and women. Gender roles are socially constructed. They demarcate responsibilities between men and women, social and economic activities, access to resources, and decision making authority.
- Biological roles are fixed, but gender roles can and do change with social, economic, and technological change.



NATURE OF GENDER ROLE

- Gender roles are societal, cultural and personal.
- Regulate how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society.
- Learning reinforced through various societal institutions and plays a role in shaping gender roles.
- Socializing agents- parents, teachers, peers, movies, television, music, religion- teach and strengthen gender roles throughout the lifespan, parents probably exert the greatest influence.
- The way in which gender roles are absorbed and assimilated by a group of people describes the influence of society.
- The role of a man and a woman in society is influenced by a variety of factors.
- These factors vary with the region, religion, culture, climate, historical beliefs, ideologies and experiences, across the globe.



CONTD.

- Gender roles vary in different social, cultural and historical contexts.
- They vary among different societies and cultures, classes, ages and during different periods in history.
- Gender –specific roles and responsibilities are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions (FAO, 1997).
- Gender roles are culturally defined roles.
- A woman's role as household cooks is not biologically determined. Men can and often do cook. The female role of cooking is socially determined, and we call it a female gender role not a female sex role.



- Gender roles determine how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society.
- The roles conform to the anticipations of the domestic, social, religious and cultural tenets of that period and region.
- The infants are brought up to conform to their gender-based stereotyped responses and reactions.
- The accepted stereotyped roles expect the man to be brave, confident, ready to face the ordeals of life with determination and ease.
- As the sole breadwinner of the home he commands respect and the natural head of the family.



EXAMPLES OF GENDER ROLE

- Woman is expected to be kind, modest, weak, take care of home and children, obedient and patient; man is knowledgeable and skilled and the woman is affectionate and benevolent.
- Examples of Gender bias.
- **Boys:**
- Brought up to achieve.
- You will be a doctor
- Primarily Job, secondary marriage
- He has to get job before marriage



CONTD.

- **Girls:**
- Brought up to conform
- Learn how to cook
- Primarily marriage secondary job
- She has to marry and bear children earlier
- Due to this social approval boys become more independent and more reliant upon internal standards of excellence in achievement situation.
- While girls do not expect to achieve, they underestimate their academic abilities.
- Generally, girls socialize to be more dependants, more conformist and more vulnerable to interpersonal rejection than boys.



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- Physical Appearance –

Women are expected to be thin and graceful, while men are expected to be tall and muscular. Men and women are also expected to dress and groom in ways that are stereotypical to their gender (men wearing pants and short hairstyles, women wearing dresses and makeup).



ROLE AGENTS OF GENDER

- Parents: Parents are a child's first source of information about gender.
- From birth, parents communicate different expectations to their children depending on their sex.
- For example, a son may engage in more roughhousing with his father, while a mother takes her daughter shopping.
- The child may learn from their parents that certain activities or toys correspond with a particular gender.
- Even parents, who emphasise gender equality, may inadvertently reinforce some stereotypes due to their own gender.



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- Teachers :
- Teachers and school administration model roles sometimes demonstrate gender stereotypes by responding to male and female students in different ways.
- For example, separating students by gender for activities or disciplining students differently depending on their gender may reinforce children's developing beliefs and assumptions.



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- Peers:
- Peer interaction also contributes to gender socialisation.
- Children tend to play with same gender peers.
- Through these interactions, they learn what their peers expect of them as boys and girls.
- These lessons may be direct, such as when a peer tells the child that a certain behaviour is or is not appropriate for their gender.
- They can also be indirect as the child observes same and other gender peers' behaviour over time.



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- Media:
- Media including movies, television, and books teach children about what it means to be a boy or a girl.
- The media conveys information about the role of gender in people's lives and can reinforce gender stereotypes.
- For example, consider an animated film that depicts two female characters, a beautiful but passive heroine, and an ugly but active villain.
- Countless examples reinforces ideas about which behaviour is acceptable and valued (and which are not) for a particular gender.



FACTORS DETERMINING GENDER ROLES/STEREOTYPES

- Personality Traits –

Women are often expected to be accommodating and emotional, while men are expected to be self-confident and aggressive.

- Domestic Behaviours –

Some people expect that women will take care of the children, cook, and clean the home, while men take care of finances, work on the car, and do the home repairs.

- Occupations –

Some people are quick to assume that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots, doctors, and engineers are men.



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- Thank You

