



GENDER IDENTITIES & SOCIALIZATION  
PRACTICES IN FAMILY, SCHOOL & OTHER  
FORMAL & INFORMAL ORGANISATION.

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# Gender Identities & Socialization Processes:

- Gender Identity

- Gender identity refers to the deeply felt sense of being a man, woman, neither or other. Gender identity interacts and is often expressed in relation to both gender roles and gender expressions (modes of dress, gestures and behaviour) as well as sex (the physical appearance of the body, hormone balance etc).

# Gender Identities & Socialization Processes

- **Components of Gender Identity**
- **Stoller** identified three components in the formation of core gender identity.
- They are as follows:
  - **1. Biological and hormonal influences**
  - **2. Sex assignment at birth**
  - **3. Environmental and psychological influences with effects similar to imprinting.**

# Types of Gender Identity

- Femininity and masculinity or one's gender identity refers to the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine given what it means to be a man or woman in society. Femininity and masculinity are rooted in the social (one's gender) rather than the biological (one's sex) system.
- The types of a person's gender identity are given below:

TYPES OF GENDER IDENTITY	
MASCULINITY	Identifying oneself of male gender and acting accordingly is known as masculinity.
FEMININITY	Identifying oneself of female gender and acting accordingly is known as femininity.
ANDROGYNY	Having both the characteristics of masculinity and femininity at high level is called androgyny.
UNDIFFERENTIATED	Being low on both the basic dimensions of gender identity, i.e. masculinity and femininity, is labelled as undifferentiated.

# : Development of Gender Identity

- The formation of a gender identity is a complex process that starts with conception but which involves the growth processes during gestation and learning experiences after birth. There are differences long the way, but the language and tradition in many societies instill and ensure that every individual should be categorized as either a man or a woman. The first thing, most adults ask about a baby (their own or anyone else's) is whether it is a boy or a girl.

# Development of Gender Identity

- The birth announcement begins with that information, a male or female-sounding name is selected, pink or blue clothing is bought, the baby's room is decorated in either a feminine or a masculine style, and "gender appropriate" toys and clothing are provided. Developmental aspects of gender identity are given below:

# Development Aspects of Gender Identity

Development Aspects of Gender Identity	
ADOLESCENCE & ADULT	<p>Gender identity is well established and gender stereotypes are understood. The individual may or may not identify with the gender stereotypes associated with his or her sex. That is, a person may adopt these sex-linked stereotypes or those of the opposite sex or those of both sexes or those of neither sex.</p>
LATER CHILDHOOD	<p>Sex identity becomes very clear, and gender identity (I am a male or I am a female) develops as part of the self-concept. Child also is learning culturally designated 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate characteristics' associated with gender. By age 5, gender stereotypes begin to be acquired.</p>

# Development Aspects of Gender Identity

AGES 2-4	Child learns social categories of male and female and labels self and others as boy or girl, though with a somewhat limited understanding of precisely what this means.
CONCEPTION	Genes on the sex chromosomes determine whether a biological male or a biological female has been conceived.

# SOCIALIZATION

- Socialization is the process of internalizing society's values in order to adapt to one's culture. It influences how people behave as males and females in society. The social learning process that imbibes people into understanding the various aspects of culture includes the process of gender socialization. Gender Socialization encompasses the process of learning society's gender roles and their advantages and limitations.

# SOCIALIZATION

- The main agents of gender socialization are parents, peer, siblings, school, society and religion. For very young children parents and family play the central role in shaping gender socialization. They determine how the family interacts with a boy as well as the types of toys and clothes that the baby is given.
- According to A M Colman the meaning of socialization is,

*"The process beginning in infancy, whereby one acquires the attitudes, values, beliefs, habits, behaviors, patterns and accumulated knowledge of one's society through child-rearing, education and modification of one's behavior to conform with the demands of the society or group to which one belongs."*

# SOCIALIZATION

In brief socialization is defined as a learning process, one that involves development or changes in the individual's sense of self. Socialization is a process that starts at birth and continues through the lifespan. Each person learns values, beliefs and social norms through socialization. This process also influences a person's identity and role within society, Socialization is a learning process where one develops a 'sense of self as we are socialized, but socialization is much more than that. If socialization was just a learning process, we could call it education and be done with it.

# SOCIALIZATION

- If socialization was only about our "sense of self" we could leave with psychologists and not be bothered ourselves, But, socialization is more than just education and it impacts more than just your sense of self.
- The socialization process one goes through is significant and sophisticated and any definition of it should capture that significance. In order to understand the significance of the socialization process, the first thing one has to understand is that socialization is not a political, socially, or even spiritually neutral process. That is, the things a child is taught from childhood and the ways he/she is to behave are not random.

# SOCIALIZATION

- As stated earlier the socialization process begins with the birth, it is not just about the child and the family, it is about the social and political order within which he/she is born into. In other words, socialization teaches one the social order. When the socialization process begins one does not have a choice. Whatever society one is born into, whatever the sex of the body one happens to inhabit, one is given no choice. It is about the social and political order within which he/she is born into. Immediately after one is born, and long before one has the intellectual capacity to understand what it is that is happening to her/him, the process imposing the social order begins.

# Gender Socialization

- Gender socialization is the process by which individuals are taught how to socially behave in accordance with their assigned gender, which is assigned birth based on their biological sex. Gender socialization is a more focused form of socialization, it is how children of different sexes are socialized into their gender roles and taught what it means to be male or female.
- According to UNICEF, Gender socialization is the process by which people learn to behave in a certain way, as dictated by societal beliefs, values, attitudes and examples. Gender socialization begins as early as when a woman becomes pregnant and people start making judgments about the value of males over females. These stereotypes are perpetuated by family members, teachers and others by having different expectations for males and females.

# Family and Gender Socialization

- The child's first world is that of his family. It is a world in itself, in which the child learns to live, to move and to have his being. Within it, not only the biological tasks of birth, protection and feeding take place, but also develop those first and intimate associations with persons of different ages and sexes which form the basis of the child's personality development.
- The family is the primary agency of socialization. It is here that the child develops an initial sense of self and habit-training eating, sleeping etc. a very large extent, the indoctrination of the child, whether in primitive or modern complex society, occurs within the circle of the primary family group.

# Family and Gender Socialization

The child's first human relationships are with the immediate members of his family mother or nurse, siblings, father and other close relatives, Here, he experiences love, cooperation, authority, direction and protection is also learnt in the family from childhood.

People 's perceptions of behavior appropriate of the sex are the result of socialization of and major part of this is learnt in the family. As the primary agents of childhood socialization, parents play a critical role in guiding children into their gender roles deemed appropriate in a society.

# Family and Gender Socialization

- As the primary agents of childhood socialization, parents play a critical role in guiding children into their gender roles deemed appropriate in a society. They continue to teach gender role behaviour either consciously or unconsciously, throughout childhood. Families also teach children values they will hold throughout life. They frequently adopt their parents attitudes not only about work but also about the importance of education, patriotism and religion.

# Family and Gender Socialization

As the primary agents of childhood socialization, parents play a critical role such are highlighted below:

- Parents' Role as Teacher
- Parents' Role as a Model
- Child Abuse
- Space in the Family
- Sibling Relations
- Home Environment

# Family and Gender Socialization

- Family socialization begins a process through which humans learn and develop to be the adult persons they become. For some, the effects of family socialization are very evident and long lasting; for others, there is not much obvious effect; and for still others, it looks like there's no relationship at all. If you look closely, you'll see that some adults choose to adopt behaviours and values that are completely opposite from those of their families. For those individuals it can be said that the socialization is just as strong, but it has a different effect.

# Family and Gender Socialization

For some adults, their interactions with family continue in such a close relationship that the family maintains a dominant role in their ongoing socialization. Family plays a very important role in the gender identity of a child. In this context Lawrence Kohlberg's (1966, 1969) Cognitive-Development theory needs to be mentioned. He suggested that children had made a cognitive judgement about their gender identity before them, selected same sex models, for sex typed behaviours.

# Stages of Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Theory

- **Basic gender identity**: The child knows that he or she is a male or a female, but the child fails to realize that gender is a constant attribute. Most three year olds had reached this stage.
- **Gender stability** The child knows that their gender is stable over time. A child in this stage knows that boys will grow up to be men and that girls will grow up to be women.
- **Gender consistency**: The child knows a person gender stay the same regardless of changes in the person's activities or appearance. For example, a 6 or 7 year old who had reached this stage knows a person gender stay the same when a person dress up like a member of the other sex or when a person does cross-sex activities.

# Importance of Family in Gender Socialization

- The family is considered as the institution that has the greatest impact on gender socialization. It is in the family that a child first learns what it is to be 'male' or 'female'. There are a number of ways in which parents and other family members guide their children and teach them to conform to the norms that prevail in society with regard to the appropriate behaviours, attitudes and roles of members of each sex. We shall look at how gender socialization takes place in the family. The parents usually hold a number of gender stereotypes, which are ideas about how a girl and a boy should ideally act and think. Therefore, they tend to treat children of different sex differently.

# Importance of Family in Gender Socialization

- For example, mothers will tend to hold a baby girl delicately while she may bounce her baby boy on her knees. Boys and girls are handled and spoken to and dressed differently. Oakley (1974) refers to this difference in treatment as 'manipulation'.
- Children are also given different toys to play with. Boys are usually given guns, trucks, footballs, bricks and a variety of other active and mechanical toys with which they can play inside or outside the home. Girls are more usually given dolls, tea sets, miniature cooking appliances, sewing machines and other toys that are usually linked to the home. Thus, the choice of toys for the children seem to an image of what is expected of them in their future life as men and women. Parents also tend to apply different rules to their children. Boys, for example, are more likely to be granted permission to play on the street or to come late at home than girls. They are usually given more liberty.-

# School and Gender Socialization

Schooling is one of the most important socialization processes that a child goes through outside her family. It shapes the child's understanding of self in relation to others. The schools and the teachers play a very important role in a child's formative years. The child starts to understand her/his identity beyond the family, role that each one in the society assumes, through friends, teachers in school and most importantly books that they read in class room. A child's understanding of gender specific role gets almost fixed when schooling starts and get re-enforced every day by the behaviours towards them by the teachers, staff, member of the school.

# School and Gender Socialization

They start being actor of the patriarchal system and carry it along much after they have left school.

After family the educational institutions take over the charge of socialization. In some societies (simple non-literate societies), socialization takes place almost entirely within the family but in highly complex societies children are also socialized by the educational system. Schools not only teach reading, writing and other basic skills, they also teach students to develop themselves, to discipline themselves, to cooperate with others, to obey rules and to test their achievements through competition.

# School and Gender Socialization

Schools teach sets of expectations about the work, profession or occupations they will follow when they mature. Schools have the formal responsibility of imparting knowledge in those disciplines which are most central to adult functioning in our society. It has been said that learning at home is on a personal, emotional level where as learning at school is basically intellectual.

The role of a school in the socialization process is given below:

Acquisition of New Social Behaviour

Restraint

- Use of Formal Language
- Group Cohesion
- Social Awareness
- Gender Identity.

# Importance of School in Gender Socialization

Schools are major contexts for gender socialization, in part because children spend large amounts of time engaged with peers in such setting. For nearly all psychological traits on which young boys and girls differ (e.g., reading ability, play preferences), the distribution of the two groups is overlapping. Schools can magnify or diminish gender differences by providing environments that promote within-gender similarity and between-gender differences, or the inverse (within-gender variability and between group similarity). Schools are important contexts for the socialization of young children's gender attitudes and behaviour. Teachers and classmates shape children's gender attitudes and, in turn, gender differences in cognition and behaviour.

# Importance of School in Gender Socialization

Unfortunately, teachers receive relatively little training in recognizing and combating gender stereotypes and prejudices - their own and others - and, as a consequence, teachers often model, expect, reinforce, and lay the foundation for gender differentiation among their pupils. Thus, most schools create and maintain rather than counter act - traditional gender stereotypes, biases, and differences. However, educators who adopt a commitment to gender egalitarianism and thus promote cross-gender interaction, expose pupils to counter-stereotypic models, and discuss and teach challenges to gender stereotyping and harassment optimize their pupils' developmental outcomes.

# Other Formal and Informal Organizations and Gender Socialization- PEER GROUP

## Peer Group

Besides the world of family and school fellows, the peer group (the people of their own age and similar social status) and playmates highly influence the process of socialization. In the peer group, the young child learns to conform to the accepted ways of a group and to appreciate the fact that social life is based on rules. Peer group socialization has been increasing day by day these days. Young people today spend considerable time with one another outside home and family. Young people living in cities or suburbs and who have access to automobiles spend a great deal of time together away from their families. Studies show that they create their own unique sub-cultures-the college campus culture, the drug culture, motorcycle cults, athletic group culture etc. Peer groups serve a valuable function by assisting the transition to adult responsibilities. Teenagers imitate their friends in part because the peer group maintains a meaningful system of rewards and punishments. The group may encourage a young person to follow pursuits that society considers admirable.

# Mass Media

## Mass Media

From early forms of print technology to electronic communication (radio, TV, etc.), the media is playing a central role in shaping the personality of the individuals. Since the last century, technological innovations such as radio, motion pictures, recorded music and television have become important agents of socialization. Television, in particular, is a critical force in the socialization of children almost all over the new world. According to a study conducted in America, the average young person (between the ages of 6 and 18) spends more time watch in the 'tube' (15,000 to 16,000 hours) than studying in school. Apart from sleeping, watching television is the most time-consuming activity of young people. Relative to other agents of socialization discussed above, such family, peer group and school, TV has certain distinctive characteristics. It permits imitation and role playing but does not encourage more complex forms of learning. Watching TV is a passive experience. Nowadays INTERNET and social networking sites are more popular than T.V.

# Importance of Formal as well as Informal organizations in Gender Socialization

The media has a very powerful effect on culture, shaping societal structures and operations. Dominant media forms have heavily assisted in constructing gender and generalized norms. Advertising and mass media forms display codes that are associated with representing male and female attributes. These gender codes shape the way in which society views gender and assists in determining what acceptable gender performance is. It is through media's reinforcement of gender stereotypes, codes and gender displays that shape the way in which society perceives and constructs genders.

# Importance of Formal as well as Informal organizations in Gender Socialization

The self-identification of being male or female is shaped through cultural, and social conditions. Media forms often present these social and cultural aspects and set these as ideals for gender performance. Mass media forms a set of societal standards for men and women. . These forms shape the way in which society views and identifies male and female characteristics. Often these gender assumptions cast negative representations that place barriers on women to develop and reach their true potential within society. These gender codes become heavily assimilated within mass media and marketing, as many advertisers display men and women to portray stereotypical gender norms and roles.

# Importance of Formal as well as Informal organizations in Gender Socialization

Often these advertisements illustrate men and women differently, altering the way in which society views the sexes. Women within advertisements are often displayed in a sexualized nature that exposes females as vulnerable defenseless figures. Men within advertisements are often seen in stances that embrace power and status. Male advertisements conform to gender stereotypes and use body language to convey men as powerful, aggressive beings. Body language within advertisements allows companies to construct gender identity and reinforce generalized norms. Creating advertisements that construct to gender enables these companies to effectively market, as they are able to evoke identity through these products.

# Importance of Formal as well as Informal organizations in Gender Socialization

- Advertisements marketed toward children expose gender identities and roles. These advertisements assist children in constructing gender identity, by displaying ads of children conforming to gender roles. For instance, famous toy company Hasbro Inc. created a product called the "Easy Bake Oven", which targeted young girls between the ages of 4-10 years old. The company created and marketed a product that was associated with feminine domestic roles and practices. The "Easy Bake Oven" advertisements featured young girls participating in feminine domestic practises (gender role), and deemed these domestic activities of baking as a fun hobby for girls.

# Importance of Formal as well as Informal organizations in Gender Socialization

Children at a very young age have a strong desire to fit in and feel accepted amongst their peers. Media images and mass messages in advertisements aid children in constructing identity by presenting gender roles as the 'norm'. Masculine and feminine functions become assimilated into modern culture, and are rendered to society as the common ideal for men and women. It becomes apparent that gender is socially and culturally constructed through media outlets. These media forms are extremely influential and can alter the way in which society perceives gender.

*THANK YOU*