



EMERGENCE OF GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER ROLES: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify gender and its role in society. Relationships between groups of women and men. An individual's concept of them, or gender identity. In this way the investigator identifies Gender socialization occurs through four major agents, family, education, peer groups, and mass media. Each agent reinforces gender roles by creating and maintaining normative expectations for gender-specific behaviour. Exposure also occurs through secondary agents, such as religion and the workplace.



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Introduction

Gender identity is defined as a personal conception of oneself as male or female (or rarely, both or neither). This concept is intimately related to the concept of gender role, which is defined as the outward manifestations of personality that reflect the gender identity. "Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. In general terms, "sex" refers to the biological differences between males and females, such as the genitalia and genetic differences. "Gender" is more difficult to define, but it can refer to the role of a male or female in society, known as a gender role, or an individual's concept of them, or gender identity.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is usually formed by age three. After age three, it is extremely difficult to change and attempts to reassign it can result in gender dysphoria. Both biological and social factors have been suggested to influence its formation. Our gender identity is how we feel in relation to being male or female - and there are different terms, descriptions and labels for different types of gender identities. We describe some of these terms.

Gender Identity Terms

- ▶ A gender
- ▶ Bi-gender
- ▶ Cis-gender
- ▶ Gender Expression
- ▶ Gender Fluid
- ▶ Gender queer
- ▶ Intersex
- ▶ Gender Variant

A gender

- ▶ Not having a gender or identifying with a gender. They may describe themselves as being gender neutral or genderless.
- ▶ Bi-gender: A person who fluctuates between traditionally “male” and “female” gender-based behaviours and identities.
- ▶ Cis-gender: A person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth are the same. For example they were born biologically as a male, and express their gender as male.

Gender Expression

- ▶ The external display of one’s gender, through a combination of how they dress, how they act and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity.
- ▶ Gender Fluid: A mix of boy and girl. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days.

Gender-Queer

- ▶ A gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with being a man or a woman, or as an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities.
- ▶ Intersex: A person born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside.
- ▶ Gender Variant: Someone who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society

Mx

- ▶ Is a title (e.g. Mr., Ms., etc.) that is gender neutral. Pronounced miks, (similar to Ms) it is often the option of choice for folks who do not identify as cisgender.
- ▶ Third Gender: A term for a person who does not identify with either man or woman, but identifies with another gender. This gender category is used by societies that recognise three or more genders, both contemporary and historic, and is also a conceptual term meaning different things to different people who use it.

Ze / Hir

Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral. Pronounced /zee/ and /here/ they replace “he” and “she” and “his” and “hers” respectively. Alternatively some people who are not comfortable/do not embrace he/she use the plural pronoun “they/their” as a gender ne

Transgender

A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on sex assigned at birth.

▶ Two-Spirit

Is an umbrella term traditionally used by Native American people to recognise individuals who possess qualities of both genders all societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of a person's self-identity in relation to other members of society.

- ▶ In most societies, there is a basic division between gender attributes assigned to males and females,
- ▶ Some people do not identify with some, or all, of the aspects of gender assigned to their biological sex.

Definitions

- ▶ Because there are more than two genders. Gender is a spectrum, not a binary. It's important to recognize this distinction because binary thinking around gender can exclude a large — and overlooked — part of the workforce.

Samantha McLaren. May 20, 2019

Age of Formation

There are several theories about how and when gender identity forms and studying the subject is difficult because children's lack of language requires. John Money suggested children might have awareness of, and attach some significance to gender, as early as 18 months to two years. Lawrence Kohlberg argues that gender identity does not form until age three. It is widely agreed that core gender identity is firmly formed by age three. At this point, children can make firm statements about their gender. Choose activities and toys which are considered appropriate for their gender (such as dolls and painting for girls, and tools and rough-housing for boys), Martin and Ruble conceptualize this process of development as three stages: (1) as toddlers and preschoolers, children learn about defined characteristics, which are socialized aspects of gender; (2) around the ages of 5–7 years, identity is consolidated and becomes rigid; (3) after this "peak of rigidity," fluidity returns and socially defined gender roles relax somewhat. Barbara Newman breaks it down into four parts: (1) understanding the concept of gender, (2) learning gender role standards and stereotypes, (3) identifying with parents, and 4) Forming gender preference.

Factors Influencing Formation

- Gender roles are influenced by the media, family, environment, and society.
- A child's understanding of gender roles impacts how they socialize with their peers and form relationships.
- Many children have a firm sense of their gender identity, while some children can experience gender identity confusion.
- Social factors which may influence gender identity include ideas regarding gender roles conveyed by family, authority figures, mass media, and other influential people in a child's life.

Language also Plays a Role

- Children, while learning a language, learn to separate masculine and feminine
- Characteristics and subconsciously adjust their own behaviour to these predetermined roles.

Biological Factors

- Several prenatal, biological factors, including genes and hormones, may affect gender identity.
- Social and environmental factors
- Social scientists tend to assume that gender identities arise from social factors.

It has been suggested that the attitudes of the child's parents may affect the child's gender identity, although evidence is minimal.

Parental Establishment of Gender Roles

- Parents who do not support gender nonconformity are more likely to have children with firmer and stricter views on gender identity and gender roles
- Many parents form gendered expectations for their child before it is even born, after determining the child's sex through technology such as ultrasound.

The child thus is born to a gender-specific name, games, and even ambitions

Gender Role

- Gender roles in society means how we're expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex.
- For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing.
- Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold
- Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations, but they can be very different from group to group. They can also change in the same society over time.
- For example, pink used to be considered a masculine colour in the U.S. while blue was considered feminine

Gender Stereotypes Affect People

There are four basic kinds of gender stereotypes:

- Personality traits
- For example, women are often expected to be accommodating and emotional, while men are usually expected to be self-confident and aggressive.
- Domestic behaviours
- For example, 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
- Physical appearance
- For example, 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 make-up).
- Gender roles are influenced both by our genes (a part of our biology) and our environment.
- Children often copy adult role models such as their parents or teachers.
- So if a boy sees his father mostly doing jobs like fixing the car, or a girl sees her mother doing most of the cooking, the child may think these are ‘men’s jobs’ and ‘women’s jobs’.
- However, it’s important that children know that girls can do well at games, sports and school subjects like maths, which society has typically associated with boys.
- Likewise, it’s important for boys to have the freedom to follow their interests, regardless of whether it fits what people have traditionally thought is appropriate for boys.

Here are some things you can do to help prevent your child from developing gender stereotypes when they are young.

- Give them games, media, books and puzzles that are gender-neutral or show men and women in non-stereotypical roles, e.g. a female fire fighter or male nurse.
- Give both girls and boys a wide range of toys to play with, e.g. trucks, dolls, action figures and blocks.
- Allow children to choose the sports or activities that interest them.
- Let your child see you doing a variety of tasks that may not be ‘typical’ of their gender. For example, dad could do the laundry and mum could mow the lawn.
- Praise both girls and boys for the same behaviour. For example, if they are neat, courageous, kind or physically active.
- Encourage children to make friends with both girls and boys.
- Try to use gender-neutral terms such as ‘fire fighter’ rather than ‘fireman’.

Gender Inequality

- Gender inequality emerges when people are treated differently and are discriminated against, based on their gender.
- It's important for children to learn how to develop social skills to communicate respectfully with each other and to learn appropriate boundaries, regardless of gender. At home, and through some school programs, children can be taught to:
 - Understand their emotions and how to handle them.
 - Solve problems effectively.
 - Manage bad moods and stress.
 - Know how to go to friends or others for help
 - Encourage relationships which are respectful and caring.

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