

Chapter 16

GENDER ROLES

Section 1: What Are Gender Roles?

Section 2: Gender Differences

Section 3: Gender Typing

Section 4: Variation in Gender Roles

Question: What are gender roles and gender stereotypes and how do they differ?

GENDER

- Gender Roles – widely accepted societal expectations about how males and females should behave
- Gender Stereotypes – fixed and oversimplified beliefs about the ways in which men and women ought to behave
- Gender roles are widely accepted standards of gender-specific behavior while gender stereotypes are rigid, distorted, and oversimplified beliefs about how men and women should behave

Question: How have some studies indicated gender differences in cognitive abilities, personality, and behavior?

GENDER DIFFERENCES

- Differences in Cognitive Abilities – it has been noted that males and females each outperform the other in certain tasks
- Differences in Personality and Behavior – women tend to exceed men in trust, nurturance and attention while men tend to exceed women in assertiveness

Question: What is gender typing, and what are several theories that explain how it may occur?

GENDER TYPING

Gender typing – different theories proposed to explain gender role developments

Question: What is gender typing, and what are several theories that explain how it may occur?

GENDER TYPING THEORIES

- Psychoanalytic Theory – gender typing can be explained in terms of gender identification
- Social Learning Theory – gender role behavior is acquired through two different learning processes – reinforcement and modeling

Question: What is gender typing, and what are several theories that explain how it may occur?

GENDER TYPING THEORIES *(continued)*

- Gender-Schema Theory – children play an important role in developing gender-appropriate behavior by forming their own concepts about gender and then shaping their behavior so that it conforms to their gender concepts

Question: How have gender roles changed over time, and in what ways can they vary from culture to culture?

CHANGE IN GENDER ROLES AND VARIATION

- Increasing participation of women in activities long considered appropriate for men only
- Men have taken on tasks previously performed by women
- Gender roles in one society may be viewed differently in another culture

Question: How have gender roles changed over time, and in what ways can they vary from culture to culture?

CHANGE IN GENDER ROLES AND VARIATION *(continued)*

- Men and women of different cultures could be expected to be aggressive or peaceful
- Cultures may also have different ideas about who should be primarily responsible for raising children