**Chapter One:**

 **Gender Roles from Sociological Perspectives**

Sociology of Gender

**Introduction:** Sociology expanded enormously in both Europe and the United States in the 1960s and thereafter. In addition to theoretical diversification, new subfields came into being, such as the sociology of gender (spurred by feminist movements), which includes analysis of gender-based social roles and inequalities.

Sociology of gender is a prominent subfield of sociology. Since 1950 an increasing part of the academic literature and of the public discourse uses gender for the perceived or projected (self-identified) masculinity or femininity of a person. The term gender role is used to show all those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man, girl or woman, respectively. Cross-cultural studies indicate that societies dominated by men are much more common than those in which women play the decisive roles. Sociologists have turned to all the major theoretical perspectives to understand how and why these social distinctions are established. Each approach focuses on culture, rather than biology, as the primary determinant of gender differences.

A person's gender is complex, encompassing countless characteristics of appearance, speech, movement and other factors not solely limited to biological sex. Societies tend to have binary gender systems in which everyone is categorized as male or female, but this is not universal. There is debate over to what extent gender is a social construct and to what extent it is a biological construct. At the extremes of these views you have social constructionism which suggests that it is entirely a social construct and essentialism which suggests that it's entirely a biological construct.

* 1. **Basic Sociological Concepts**

All societies are structured around relatively stable patterns that establish how social interaction will be carried out. One of the most important social structures that organize social interaction is status. **Status** is a category or position a person occupies that is a significant determinant of how she or he will be defined and treated. We acquire statuses by achievement, through our own efforts, or by ascription, being born into them or attaining them involuntarily at some other point in the life cycle.

We occupy a number of statuses simultaneously, referred to as a **status set**, such as mother, daughter, attorney, employee, and passenger. Compared to achieved statuses occurring later in life, ascribed statuses are those immediately impacting virtually every aspect of our lives. The most important ascribed statuses are sex, race, and social class. Since a status is simply a position within a social system, it should not be confused with rank or prestige. There are high-prestige statuses as well as low-prestige statuses. In many societies, for example, a physician occupies a status ranked higher in prestige than a secretary.

All societies categorize members by status and then rank these statuses in some fashion, thereby creating a system of **social stratification**. People whose status sets are comprised of low-ranked ascribed statuses more than high-ranked achieved statuses are near the bottom of the social stratification system and vulnerable to social stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. To date, there is no known society in which the status of female is consistently ranked higher than that of male.

A **role** is the expected behavior associated with a status. Roles are performed according to **social norms** (shared rules that guide people’s behavior in specific situations). Social norms determine the privileges and responsibilities a status possesses. Females and males, mothers and fathers, and daughters and sons are all statuses with different normative role requirements attached to them. The status of mother calls for expected roles involving love, nurturing, self-sacrifice, home-making, and availability. The status of father calls for expected roles of breadwinner, disciplinarian, home technology expert, and ultimate decision maker in the household.

Because individuals occupy many statuses simultaneously-a status set-they perform multiple roles. Yet, the total number of roles usually exceeds the number of statuses because each status can involve performing several roles in relation to various other people. Robert Merton (1968) introduced the term **role set** to identify a number of roles attached to a single status.

Society allows for a degree of flexibility in acting out roles, but in times of rapid social change, acceptable role limits are often in a state of flux, producing uncertainty about what appropriate role behavior should be. People may experience **anomie** (normlessness) because traditional norms have changed but new ones have yet to be developed. For example, the most important twentieth-century trend impacting gender roles in developed nations is the massive increase of women in the labor force. Although women from all demographic categories contributed to these numbers, mothers with preschool children led the trek from unpaid home-based roles to full-time paid employment roles. In acting out the roles of mother and employee, women are expected to be available at given times to satisfy the needs of family and workplace. Because workplaces and other social institutions have not been modified in meaningful ways to account for the new statuses women occupy, their range of acceptable role behavior is severely restricted. As a result, family and workplace roles inevitably collide and compete with one another for the mother employee’s time and attention.

* + 1. **The Essence of Society and its Development**

**Society** refers to a group of people who share a defined territory and a culture. Society is often understood as the basic structure and interactions of a group of people or the network of relationships between entities. A distinction is made between society and culture in sociology. **Culture refers to the meanings given to symbols or the process of meaning-making that takes** place in a society. Culture is distinct from society in that **it adds meanings to relationships** (i.e., 'father' means more than 'other'). All human societies have a culture and culture can only exist where there is a society. Distinguishing between these two components of human social life is primarily for analytical purposes - for example, so sociologists can study the transmission of cultural elements or artifacts within a society.

The sociological understanding of societal development relies heavily upon the work of Gerhard Lenski(1995). Lenski outlined some of the more commonly seen organizational structures in human societies. Classifications of human societies can be based on two factors: the primary means of **subsistence** and the **political structure**. In this lesson we focus on the subsistence systems of societies rather than their political structures.

While it is a bit far-reaching to argue that all societies will develop through the stages outlined below, it does appear that **most** societies follow such a route. Human groups begin as **hunter-gatherers** (a way of life based on the exploitation of wild plants and animals), move toward **pastoralism** (a society in which the primary means of subsistence is domesticated Livestock) and/or **horticulturalism**(the cultivation of crops using hand tools), develop toward an **agrarian society**(the cultivation of crops using a mixture of human and non-human means), **industrial** (a society in which the primary means of subsistence is industry and **post industrial** (a society in which the primary means of subsistence is derived from service-oriented work, as opposed to agriculture or industry).The reason this is presented as a model is because not all societies pass through every stage. Some societies have stopped at the pastoral or horticultural stage, though these may be temporary pauses due to economic niches that will likely disappear in time. Some societies may also jump stages as a result of the introduction of technology from alien societies and culture. Another reason for hesitancy in presenting these categories as distinct groups is that there is often overlap in the subsistence systems used in a society. Some pastoralist societies also engage in some measure of horticultural food production. Industrial societies have agrarian components.

* + 1. **Key concepts for the Sociology of Gender**

As key components of social structure, statuses and roles allow us to organize our lives in consistent, predictable ways. In combination with established norms, they prescribe our behavior and ease interaction with people who occupy different social statuses, whether we know these people or not. There is an insidious side to this kind of predictable world. When normative role behavior becomes too rigidly defined, our freedom of action is often compromised. These rigid definitions are associated with the development of stereotypes. **Stereotypes** are oversimplified conceptions that people who occupy the same status group share certain traits in common. Although stereotypes can include positive traits, they most often consist of negative ones that are then used to justify discrimination against members of a given group. The statuses of male and female are often stereotyped according to the traits they are assumed to possess by virtue of their biological makeup.

Women are stereotyped as flighty and unreliable because they possess uncontrollable raging hormones that fuel unpredictable emotional outbursts. The assignment of negative stereotypes can result in sexism. **Sexism** is the belief that the status of female is inferior to the status of male. Males are not immune to the negative consequences of sexism, but females are more likely to experience it because the status sets they occupy are more stigmatized than those occupied by males. Compared to males, for example, females are more likely to occupy statuses inside and outside their homes that are associated with less power, less prestige, and less pay or no pay. Beliefs about inferiority due to biology are reinforced and then used to justify discrimination directed toward females.

Sexism is perpetuated by systems of **patriarchy** which is a male-dominated social structures leading to the oppression of women. Patriarchy, by definition, exhibits androcentrism. **Androcentrism** is a male-centered norms operating throughout all social institutions that become the standard to which all persons adhere. Sexism is reinforced when patriarchy and androcentrism combine to perpetuate beliefs that gender roles are biologically determined and therefore unalterable. For example, throughout the developing world beliefs about a woman’s biological unsuitability for other than domestic roles have restricted opportunities for education and achieving literacy. These restrictions have made men the guardians of what has been written, disseminated, and interpreted regarding gender and the placement of men and women in society.

Until recently, history has been recorded from an androcentric perspective that ignored the other half of humanity. This perspective has perpetuated the belief that patriarchy is an inevitable, inescapable fact of history, so struggles for gender equality are doomed to failure. Women’s gain in education is associated with the power to engage in the research and scholarship offering alternatives to prevailing androcentric views. We will see that such scholarship suggests that patriarchal systems may be universal, but they are not inevitable, and that gender egalitarianism was a historical fact of life in some cultures and is a contemporary fact of life in others.

* + 1. **The Concept of Culture and Gender**

“Culture means the whole complex of traditional behavior which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation”. However, speciﬁcity of the notion of culture with respect to a given human society was needed in order to study other societies. So the same citation goes on as: “A culture is less precise. It can mean the forms of traditional behavior which are characteristic of a given society or of a group of societies, or of a certain race, or of certain area, or of a certain period of time”. As a consequence, in the anthropological literature culture has been introduced as the concept denoting the object of study of cultural anthropology. Other definition was proposed and they largely vary. However, they seem to converge to the notion that culture is learned, it is associated with groups of people and its content includes a wide range of phenomena including norms, values, shared meanings, and patterned ways of behaving. In anthropological literature the usefulness of the idea of culture as a scientific tool has been attacked giving rise to the so-called “writing against culture movement” for a reaction against it. The culture as defined in anthropology usually refers to societies defined in national or ethnic terms; however, the concept of culture has been recently used for describing knowledge and behavior of other groups like in the concepts of corporate culture or organizational culture. Moreover, globalization has brought about the problem of interaction of cultures. On the one hand, such interaction leads to blurring boundaries between cultures, while on the other hand it leads to the increasing need of cultural-aware managers and professionals. Recent anthropology textbook definitions take into account the shift in meaning as, for example, in the definition by Peoples and Bailey: Culture is the socially transmitted knowledge and behavior shared by some group of people.

According to Anthropologist Edward B.Tylor in his book *Primitive Culture, published in 1871,*culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”

Culture is the distinctive patterns of ideas, beliefs, and norms which characterize the way of life and relations of a society or group within a society culturally determined gender ideologies define rights and responsibilities and what ‘appropriate’ behavior is for women and men. They also influence access to and control over resources, and participation in decision-making. These gender ideologies often reinforce male power and the idea of women’s inferiority.

The concept of gender in feminist writings and other sociological discourses became popular in the early 1970. In simple terms, gender explain the differences between men and women in social terms as men, and as what a man can do; as „woman‟, and as what a woman can or cannot do. Therefore, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate the biological difference between men and women.

The term gender is also used to describe the differences in behavior between men and women which are described as masculine‟ and feminine‟. Feminist writings focus on this aspect and claim that these differences are not biological but are social constructions of patriarchal society. Some theorists suggest that the biological differences between men and women also result in their mental and physical differences. They argue that biologically, men are physically and mentally superior to women. Other theorists suggest that the biological difference between men and women are exaggerated. The differences are socially constructed by the patriarchal system of society by which men are described as superior to women. Therefore women become subordinate to men in the society. Ann Oakley in her book, sex, gender and Society written in 1972 explores the term gender. Oakley says that in the Western culture women play the roles of the “housewife” and “mother”. This is because women are made to play these roles because of their biology. The western culture also believes that any effort to change the traditional roles of men and women in the society can cause damage to the social fabric of the society. Oakley concludes that this view regarding the roles of men and women helps to support and maintain the patriarchal society. Simone de Beauvoir in her book, The Second Sex says that “one is not born, but rather becomes a woman”. She explains that gender differences in the society make the man superior through his role as the bread winner. It gives him a position of power in the society and family. Gender differences are set in hierarchal opposition such that men are superior and women are subordinate. Women’s position is that of the “other” and women are the continual outsiders. Civilization was masculine to its very depth.

* ***How is gender related to culture?***

Expectations about attributes and behaviors appropriate to women or men and about the relations between women and men in other words, gender is shaped by culture. Gender identities and gender relations are critical aspects of culture because they shape the way daily life is lived in the family, but also in the wider community and the workplace. Gender, like race or ethnicity, functions as an organizing principle for society because of the cultural meanings given to being male or female. This is evident in the division of labor according to gender. In most societies there are clear patterns of “women’s work” and “men’s work,” both in the household and in the wider community, and cultural explanations of why this should be so. The patterns and the explanations differ among societies and change over time.

We noted that gender identities and gender relations are critical aspects of culture because they shape daily life. Changes in gender relations are often highly contested, in part because they have immediate implications for everyone, women and men. This immediacy also means that gender roles and particularly women’s roles as wives and mothers can be potent symbols of cultural change or cultural continuity. New cultural definitions are formed through a process in which some segments of society promote change through advocacy and example, while others resist it. In other words, societies are not homogeneous and no assumptions can be made about a consensus on “cultural values.”

* ***If it is “cultural”, is it unquestioned?***

As suggested in the point above, cultural values are continually being reinterpreted in response to new needs and conditions. Some values are reaffirmed in this process, while others are challenged as no longer appropriate. A member of the Cambodian government for example, uses a vivid image when describing the need to question the cultural norms that reinforce gender inequality. She says the aim is not to overturn the cultural identity of the nation, but to focus on the elements within it that oppress women.

There is a Cambodian saying that men are a piece of gold, and women are a piece of cloth. The piece of gold, when it is dropped in mud, is still a piece of gold. But a piece of cloth, once it’s stained, it’s stained forever. If you are a prostitute, if you have been raped, if you are a widow, you are no longer that virginal piece of cloth. But men, whether they are criminal or have cheated on their wives, they are still a piece of gold. When there is such a saying, a perception, then there is something wrong with that culture and that’s when you want to change it.

Sex is male and female and Gender is masculine and feminine. So, in essence sex refers to biological differences such as chromosomes, hormonal profiles, internal and external sex organs. Gender describes those characteristics that a society or culture delineates as masculine and feminine. Hence, sex as male or female is a biological fact- same in any culture and what that sex means in terms of gender role as a man or woman in society can be quite different cross culturally. Although conceptions of gender certainly vary, a universal pattern among world societies is some degree of patriarchy, literally “the rule of the fathers”, a form of social organization in which males dominate**.** While some degree of patriarchy may be universal, there is significant variation in the relative power and privilege of females and males around the world.

Patriarchy in technologically simple societies stems largely from lack of control by individuals over the natural differences of sex. Pregnancy and child birth limit the scope of women’s lives, while men’s greater height and strength allow them to overpower women. Technological advances, however, give members of industrial societies a wider range of choices in how the two sexes interact. Contraception has given women greater control over pregnancy, just as industrial machinery has diminished the primacy of muscle power in everyday life. Today, then, biological differences provide little justification for patriarchy. Categorical social in equality- based on race, ethnicity, and sex- also comes under attack in the more egalitarian culture of industrial societies. In many industrial nations, laws mandate equal employment opportunities for women and men and equal pay for comparable efforts. Nonetheless, in all industrial nations, the two sexes continue to hold different jobs and receive unequal pay.

Societies and cultures are not static. They are living entities that are continually being renewed and reshaped. As with culture more generally, gender definitions change over time. Change is shaped by many factors. Cultural change occurs as communities and households respond to social and economic shifts associated with globalization, new technologies, environmental pressures, armed conflict, development projects, etc

Change also results from deliberate efforts to influence values through changes in the law or government policy, often due to pressure from civil society. There are many examples of efforts to influence attitudes about race relations, the rights of workers and the use of the environment, to name three areas in which cultural values shape behavior. Efforts to reshape values about women and gender relations have focused on concerns such as the number of girls sent to school, women’s access to paid work, and public attitudes to domestic violence.

In sociological terms gender role refers to the characteristics and behaviors that different cultures attribute to the sexes. What it means to be a real man in any culture requires male sex with what various cultures define as masculine characters and behaviors; likewise a real woman needs female sex with feminine characteristics. To summarize man is equal to male sex with masculine social role and woman is equal to female sex with feminine social role.

* ***Why Sociologists Study Women?***
* Women are singled out in society for differential treatment.
* Women receive an unfairly small amount of society's rewards.
* Women's opinion and social contributions are less valued.

This has caused Sociologists to study about women who are the objects of racial or ethnic prejudice.

* ***Importance of Sociology of Women***

The Sociology of women as a branch of the scientific study of society where woman is the object is relatively new, although writings regarding this have existed from 1630s up to the present, women are considered to be more a objective thing rather than a subjective feeling. The study of Sociology of women relates to the study of social situation and social behaviors from the point of view of women. It is an investigation into the definition and role of women in any social situation. If they are present, what exactly they are doing and how they experience the situation in relation with others. What they contribute and what it means to them.

A general conclusion arrived at is that women are present in most social situations, Where and when they are not present, it is not for lack of their ability or interest but because there have been deliberate efforts to exclude them. Where they are present, women have along with men actively created the situations. Women's roles in most social situations, although essential, have not been identical to those of men in those situations; for they have been less privileged and subordinate to men.

The history of woman's subordination is as old as the social world itself but writings regarding this have been steady because women as oppressed members have found their protests subject to suppression by male interest. Until 1960 the Sociology of women has remained on the margin of sociology, ignored by the central male formulators of the discipline. Marx and Engel's, for instance have only touched the subject from the male view point and Talcott Parsons has been conventional in his treatment of the subject.

From hunting stage of human evolution to the post industrial service stage, important activities outside the household those economically gainful are performed by males and women are denied. Males (male child) are considered to be a matter of special satisfaction. Son is often a source of economic and old age security. Daughters are denied. The fact that gender ideology "Man is the master" is followed in almost all societies. In all societies women's status is governed by similar ideas which are purely cultural and manmade. This distinct ideology is based on certain stereotypes- which are part of the culture of s society.

* 1. **Sociological perspectives on Gender Roles**

As gender issues have become more mainstreamed in scientific research and media reports, confusion associated with the terms sexand genderhas decreased. In sociology, these terms are now fairly standardized to refer to different content areas. **Sex** refers to the biological characteristics distinguishing male and female. This definition emphasizes male and female differences in chromosomes, anatomy, hormones, reproductive systems, and other physiological components. **Gender** refers to those social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts. Sex makes us male or female; gender makes us masculine or feminine. Sex is an ascribed status because a person is born with it, but gender is an achieved status because it must be learned.Certainly the ascribed status of sex is less likely to be altered than the achieved status of gender. Some people believe, however, that they were born with the “wrong” body and are willing to undergo major surgery to make their gender identity consistent with their biological sex (**transgender**). **Sexual orientation**, the preference for sexual partners of one gender (sex) or the other, also varies.

Adding the concept of role to either sex or gender may increase confusion in terminology. When the sociological concept of role is combined with the biological concept of sex, there is often misunderstanding about what content areas are subsumed under the resultant *sex role* label. Usage is becoming rapidly standardized, however, and most sociologists now prefer to employ the term *gender role* rather than *sex role* in their writing. **Gender roles**, therefore, are the expected attitudes and behaviors a society associates with each sex. This definition places gender squarely in the socio-cultural context.

Sociologists explain gender roles according to several *theoretical perspectives*, general ways of understanding social reality that guide the research process and provide a means for interpreting the data. In essence, a **theory** is an explanation. Formal theories consist of logically interrelated propositions that explain empirical events. For instance, data indicate that compared to men, women are more likely to be segregated in lower-paying jobs offering fewer opportunities for professional growth and advancement. Data also indicate that the domestic work of women performed in or near their homes is valued less than the work of men performed outside their homes. Because the issue of gender crosses many disciplines, explanations for these facts can be offered according to the theoretical perspectives of those disciplines. Biology, psychology, and anthropology all offer explanations for gender-related attitudes and behavior.

* + 1. **Macro And Micro Sociological Perspectives**

Although this may be overly simplistic, sociologists’ views basically fall into two camps:macro-sociology and micro-sociology. Macro sociologists focus on the big picture, which usually means such things as social structure, social institutions, and social, political, and economic change. They look at the large-scale social forces that change the course of human society and the lives of individuals. Micro-sociologists, on the other hand, study social interaction. They look at how families, coworkers, and other small groups of people interact; why they interact the way they do; and how they interpret the meanings of their own interactions and of the social settings in which they find themselves. Often macro- and micro-sociologists look at the same phenomena but do so in different ways. Their views taken together offer a fuller understanding of the phenomena than either approach can offer alone.

The different but complementary nature of these two approaches can be seen in the case of armed robbery. Macro-sociologists would discuss such things as why robbery rates are higher in poorer communities and whether these rates change with changes in the national economy. Micro-sociologists would instead focus on such things as why individual robbers decide to commit a robbery and how they select their targets. Both types of approaches give us a valuable understanding of robbery, but together they offer an even richer understanding.

Macro-sociologicalperspectives on gender roles have a direct attention to the data collected on large-scale social phenomena, such as labor force, educational, and political trends that are differentiated according to gender roles. Micro-sociological perspectives on gender roles direct attention to data collected in small groups and the details of gender interaction occurring, for example, between couples and in families and peer groups. Micro-sociological perspectives overlap a great deal with the discipline of social psychology. We will see that theoretical perspectives may be differentiated according to macro- and micro-level of analysis, and perspectives from each level may be more or less compatible. When theoretical perspectives can be successfully combined, they offer excellent ways to better understand gender issues from a sociological perspective.

Early sociological perspectives related to gender roles evolved from scholarship on the sociology of the family. These explanations centered on why men and women hold different roles in the family that in turn impact the roles they perform outside the family. To a large extent, this early work on the family has continued to inform current sociological thinking on gender roles. The next sections will overview the major sociological perspectives and highlight their explanations regarding the gender–family connection.Within the broad macro camp, two perspectives dominate: functionalism and conflict theory, and within the micro campsymbolic interactionism.Let us discuss each of the dominant sociological theories sequentially.

* + 1. **Functionalism Theory/Structural Functionalism**

The functionalist perspective is based largely on the works of Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton. Functionalism, also known as structural functionalism, is a macro-sociological perspective that is based up on the premise that society is made up of interdependentparts, each of which contributes to the functioning of the whole society to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the system. For example, each of the social institutions contributes important functions for society: Family provides a context for reproducing, nurturing, and socializing children; education offers a way to transmit a society’s skills, knowledge, and culture to its youth; politics provides a means of governing members of society; economics provides for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services; and religion provides moral guidance and an outlet for worship of a higher power.

Functionalists assert that in the face of disruptive social change, society can be restored to equilibrium as long as built-in mechanisms of social control operate effectively and efficiently. Social control and stability are enhanced when people share beliefs and values in common. Functionalist emphasis on this value consensus is a major ingredient in virtually all their interpretations related to social change. Values surrounding gender roles, marriage, and the family are central to functionalist assertions regarding social equilibrium.

Functionalists suggest that in ***preindustrial*** societies social equilibrium was maintained by assigning different tasks to men and women. Given the hunting and gathering and subsistence farming activities of most preindustrial societies, role specialization according to gender was considered a functional necessity. In their assigned hunting roles, men were frequently away from home for long periods and centered their lives on the responsibility of bringing food to the family. It was functional for women who were more limited by pregnancy, childbirth and nursingto be assigned domestic roles near the home as gatherers and subsistence farmers and as caretakers of children and households. Children were needed to help with agricultural and domestic activities. Girls would continue these activities when boys reached the age when they were allowed to hunt with the older males. Once established, this functional division of labor was reproduced in societies throughout the globe.

Similar principles apply to families in ***contemporary*** societies. Disruption is minimized, harmony is maximized, and families benefit when spouses assume complementary, specialized, non-overlapping roles (Parsons and Bales, 1955; Parsons, 1966). When the husband–father takes the **instrumentalrole**, he is expected to maintain the physical integrity of the family by providing food and shelter and linking the family to the world outside the home. When the wife–mother takes the **expressive role**, she is expected to strengthen relationships and provide emotional support and nurturing activities that ensure the household runs smoothly. If too much deviation from these roles occurs, or when there is too much overlap, the family system is propelled into a state of imbalance that can threaten the survival of the family unit. Advocates of functionalist assumptions argue, for instance, that gender role ambiguity regarding instrumental and expressive roles is a major factor in divorce (Hacker, 2003).

**Critics to Functionalist Theory Related to Gender Roles**

* Its conservative theoretical perspective in which it emphasis on social equilibrium without considering the rapid social changes in the family system.
* Functionalism used as a justification for male dominance and gender stratification. Functionalism tends to support a white middle-class family model emphasizing the economic activities of the male household head and domestic activities of his female subordinate. Women function outside the home only as a reserve labor force, such as when their labor is needed in wartime. This model does not apply to poor women and single parents who by necessity must work outside the home to maintain the household.
* Research also shows that specialization of household tasks by gender in contemporary families is more dysfunctional than functional. Women relegated to family roles that they see as restrictive, for example, are unhappier in their marriages and more likely to opt out of them.
* A functionalist examination of their interdependence allows us to understand how female subordination and male superiority became reproduced throughout the globe. Neo-functionalists recognize that the gender based division of labor is artificial and dysfunctional when families need to cope with the growing interdependence called for in a global economy.
	+ 1. **Conflict Theory**

This theory is largely influenced by the work of Karl Marxand Friedrich Engels. With its assumptions about social order and social change, the macro-sociologicalperspective of conflict theory, also referred to as social conflict theory, is inmany ways a mirror image of functionalism. Unlike functionalists, who believethat social order is maintained through value consensus, conflict theorists assertthat it is preserved involuntarily through the exercise of power one social classholds over another.

Originating from the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883), conflict theory is based on the assumption that society is a stage on which struggles for power and dominance are acted out. The struggles are largely between social classes competing for scarce resources, such as control over the means of production (land, factories, natural resources), and for a better distribution of all resources (money, food, material goods). Capitalism thrives on a class-based system that consolidates power in the hands of a few men of the ruling class (*bourgeoisie*), who own the farms and factories that workers (*proletariat*) depend on for their survival. The interest of the dominant class is to maintain its position of power over the subordinate class by extracting as much profit as possible from their work. Only when the workers recognize their common oppression and form a *class consciousness* can they unite and amass the resources necessary to seriously challenge the inequitable system in which they find themselves (Marx and Engels, 1964; Marx, 1967).

Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), Marx’s collaborator, applied these assumptions to the family and, by extension, to gender roles. He suggested that the master–slave or exploiter–exploited relationships occurring in broader society between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are translated into the household. Primitive societies were highly egalitarian because there were no surplus goods, hence no private property. People consumed what they produced. With the emergence of private property and the dawn of capitalistic institutions, Engels argued that a woman’s domestic labor is “no longer counted beside the acquisition of the necessities of life by the man; the latter was everything, the former an unimportant extra.” The household is an autocracy, and the supremacy of the husband is unquestioned. “The emancipation of woman will only be possible when women can take part in production on a large social scale, and domestic work no longer claims but an insignificant amount of her time” (Engels, 1942:41–43).

Contemporary conflict theorists agree with Engels by suggesting that when women gain economic strength by also being wage earners, their power inside the home is strengthened and can lead to more egalitarian arrangements.

The conflict perspective is evident in research demonstrating that household responsibilities have an effect on occupational location, work experience, and number of hours worked per week, all of which are linked to the gender gap in earnings. Undesirable work will be performed disproportionately by those lacking resources to demand sharing the burden or purchasing substitutes. Because household labor is unpaid and associated with lack of power, the homemaker (wife)takes on virtually all domestic chores. Themore powerful spouse performs the least amount of household work.

**Critics to Conflict Theory Related to Gender Roles**

Conflict theory has been criticized for its overemphasis on the economic basis of inequality and its assumption that there is inevitable competition between family members. It tends to dismiss the consensus among wives and husbands regarding task allocation. In addition, paid employment is not the panacea envisioned by Engels in overcoming male dominance. The gendered division of household labor does not translate to significant wage reductions for employed women outside the home or reduced in-home responsibilities.

* + 1. **Symbolic Interaction Theory**

Symbolic interaction, also called “the interactionist perspective,” is at the heart of the sociological view of social interaction at the micro-level. With attention to people’s behavior in face-to-face social settings, symbolic interactionists explain social interaction as a dynamic process in which people continually modify their behavior as a result of the interaction itself. Herbert Blumer (1900–1987), who originated the term symbolic interaction, asserted that people do not respond directly to the world around them, but to the meaning they bring to it. Society, its institutions, and its social structure exist—that is, social reality is bestowed— only through human interaction (Blumer, 1969). Reality is what members agree to be reality.

Symbolic interactionists contend that concepts used to collectively categorize people—such as race, ethnicity, and gender—***do not exist objectively*** but emerge through a socially constructed process. People called “females” or “males” are endowed with certain traits defined as feminine or masculine. Concepts such as gender, therefore, must be found in the meanings people bring to them (Denzin, 1993; Deutscher and Lindsey, 2005:5). Gender emerges not as an individual attribute but something that is “accomplished” in interaction with others. People, therefore, are **doing gender** (Fenstermaker and West, 2002). In “doing” gender, symbolic interaction takes its lead from Erving Goffman (1922–1982), who developed a **dramaturgy** approach to social interaction. Goffmanmaintained that the best way to understand social interaction is to consider it as an enactment in a theatrical performance. Like actors on a stage, we use strategies of impression management, providing information and cues to others that present us in a favorable light (Goffman, 1959, 1963, 1971).

Think about the heterosexual bar scene where men usually sit at the counterand operate from a script where they are expected to make the first move. Ifa woman is with friends, she must disengage herself if she is “selected” by the man.It is probable that the women drove separately. Data from television also illustratethese concepts. Prime time television commonly depict traditionally scripted sexualencounters according to gender and beliefs about heterosexuality that sustainpower differences between men and women and between heterosexual andhomosexual men (Kim et al., 2007). Although there are many cultural variations,gender-scripted rules are laid out, negotiated, and acted upon in bars and meetingplaces for singles and witnessed by TV viewers across the globe.

Gender roles are structured by one set of scripts designed for males and another designed for females. Although each script permits a range of behavior options, the typical result is that gender labels promote a pattern of between-sex competition, rejection, and emotional segregation. This pattern is reinforced when we routinely refer to those of the *other* sex (gender) as the oppositesex. Men and women label each other as opposite to who they are, then behave according to that label. The behavior serves to separate rather than connect the genders.

Research on men and women in various social networks formed at school, work, and in volunteer activities further illustrates this process. From early childhood these groups are usually gender segregated. Gendered subcultures emerge that strengthen the perceptions of gender differences and erode the common ground on which intimate, status-equal friendships between the genders are formed (Rouse, 2002). Differences rather than similarities are much more likely to be noticed, defined, and acted on. When cross-gender social interaction occurs such as in the workplace, it is unlikely that men and women hold statuses with similar levels of power and prestige. Once the genders are socially constructed as different, it is easier for those with more power (men) to justify inequality toward those with less power (women). Social difference is constructed into social privilege (Fenstermaker and West, 2002).

**Critics to Symbolic Interaction Theory Related to Gender Roles**

* Symbolic interaction’s approach to understanding gender role behavior is criticized for its overall lack of attention to macro-level processes that often limits choice of action and prompts people to engage in gendered behavior that counters what they would prefer to do.
* Others argue that symbolic interaction’s emphasis on doing gender undermines its fluidity to recast gender norms in ways that benefit both men and women. Divorce allows for the “redoing” of gender housework, parenting, and breadwinning roles are repudiated (Walzer, 2008). Traditional gender accountability may no longer apply in the post-divorce lives of former spouses and children.
* Some argue that symbolic interaction’s doing gender approach needs to be abandoned. If gender accountability assumes that inequality is inevitable, research on ways of “undoing gender” should be the focus of sociological analysis.

**Chapter Two**

1. **Theories about the Construction of Gender Identity**
	1. **Biological Theory of Gender**

People often get confused between the terms sex and gender. **Sex** refers to biological differences between males and females. For example, chromosomes (female XX, male XY), reproductive organs (ovaries, testes) and hormones (estrogen & progesterone, testosterone)

**Gender** refers to the cultural differences expected (by society / culture) of men and women according to their sex. A person’s sex does not change from birth, but their gender can.

The biological approach suggests there is no distinction between sex and gender, thus biological sex creates gendered behavior. Gender is determined by two biological factors: hormones and chromosomes.

* **Hormones**

Hormones are chemical substances secreted by glands throughout the body and carried in the bloodstream. The same sex hormones occur in both men and women, but differ in amounts and in the effect that they have upon different parts of the body.

Testosterone is a sex hormone, which is more present in males than females, and affects development and behavior both before and after birth. Testosterone can cause typically male behaviors such as aggression, competitiveness, visuospatial abilities, higher sexual drive etc. At the same time testosterone acts on the developing brain. The brain is divided into two hemispheres, left and right. In all humans the left side of the brain is more specialized for language skills and the right for non-verbal and spatial skills.

Hormones that are present in large amounts in the female and in small amounts in the male are Estrogen and Progesterone. Estrogen and Progesterone makes conception in the female possible. They are also responsible for the changes in emotional status of the female.

* **Chromosomes**

The normal human body contains 23 pairs of chromosomes. A chromosome is a long thin structure containing thousands of genes, which are biochemical units of heredity and govern the development of every human being. Each pair of chromosomes controls different aspects of development, and biological sex is determined by the 23rd chromosome pair. Chromosomes physically resemble the letters X and Y.

Males = XY

Females = XX

* **SRY Gene (Sex-determining Region Y gene)**

At about 6 weeks, the SRY gene on the Y chromosome causes the gonads (sex organs) of the embryo to develop as testes. If the embryo has no Y chromosome, it will not have the SRY gene, without the SRY gene, the gonads will develop as ovaries.

Sometimes the SRY gene is missing from the Y chromosome, or doesn't activate. The fetus grows, is born, and lives as a little girl, and later as a woman, but her chromosomes are XY. Such people are, usually, clearly women to themselves and everyone else. One of the most controversial uses of this discovery was as a means for gender verification at the Olympic Games, under a system implemented by the International Olympic Committee in 1992. Athletes with a SRY gene were not permitted to participate as females.

* **Atypical Chromosomes**

Individuals with atypical chromosomes develop differently than individuals with typical chromosomes - socially, physically and cognitively. Studying people with ***Turner's syndrome*** and ***Klinefelter's syndrome*** might help our understanding of gender because by studying people with atypical sex chromosomes and comparing their development with that of people with typical sex chromosomes, psychologists are able to establish which types of behavior are genetic (e.g. determined by chromosomes).

* ***Turner's syndrome (XO)*** occurs when females develop with only one X chromosome on chromosome 23 (1 in 5000 chance). The absence of the second X chromosome results in a child with a female external appearance but whose ovaries have failed to develop. The physical characteristics of individuals with Turner's syndrome include lack of maturation at puberty, poor breast development and webbing of the neck.

In addition to physical differences, there are differences in cognitive skills and behavior compared with typical chromosome patterns. The affected individuals have higher than average verbal ability but lower than average spatial ability, visual memory and mathematical skills. They also have difficulty in social adjustment at school and generally have poor relationships with their peers.

* **Klinefelter's syndrome (XXY)** affects 1 in every 750 males. In addition to having a Y chromosome, these men also have an additional X on the 23rd chromosome, leading to the arrangement XXY.

Physically they appear male, though the effect of the additional X chromosome causes less body hair, breast development and under-developed genitals. The syndrome becomes noticeable in childhood, as the boy has poor language skills. At three years of age, the child may still not talk. At school, their poor language skills affect reading ability. When they are babies, their character is described as passive and co-operative. This calmness and shyness remains with them throughout their lives. This suggests that level of aggression have a biological rather than environmental component.

***2.1.1 Evolutionary Explanations of Gender***

As the evolutionary approach is a biological one, it suggests that aspects of human behavior have been coded by our genes because they were or are adaptive. A central claim of evolutionary psychology is that the brain (and therefore the mind) evolved to solve problems encountered by our hunter-gatherer ancestors during the upper Pleistocene period over 10,000 years ago.

The evolutionary approach argues that gender role division appears as an adaptation to the challenges faced by the ancestral humans in the EEA (the environment of evolutionary adaptation). The mind is therefore equipped with ‘instincts’ that enabled our ancestors to survive and reproduce. The two sexes developed different strategies to ensure their survival and reproductive success. This explains why men and women differ psychologically: They tend to occupy different social roles. These approaches argue that observed differences have arisen through evolution and are biologically adaptive. Thus, the power differences are not the result of culture or socialization, but are biologically, genetically inevitable.

To support the evolutionary perspective, the division of labor was shown to be an advantage. 10,000 years ago there was division of labor between males and females. Men were the hunter gathers, breadwinners, while the mother was at home acting as the ‘angel of the house’ and looking after the children. Hunting for food required speed, agility, good visual perception. So, men developed this skill. If a women was to hunt, this would reduce the group’s reproductive success, as the woman was the one who was pregnant or producing milk. Besides, the women could contribute to the important business of growing food, making clothing and shelter and so on. This enhances reproductive success but it also important in avoiding starvation an additional adaptive advantage.

***Critical Evaluation***

Deterministic approach which implies that men and women have little choice or control over their behaviors: women are natural ‘nurturers’ and men are naturally aggressive and competitive. The consequence are that in modern society equal opportunities policies are doomed to fail as men are ‘naturally’ more competitive, risk taking and likely to progress up the career ladder.

***2.1.2 The Bio-social Approach to Gender***

The biosocial approach (Money &Ehrhardt, 1972) is an interactionist approach where by nature and nurture both play a role in gender development. John Money’s (1972) theory was that once a biological male or female is born, social labeling and differential treatment of boys and girls interact with biological factors to steer development. *This theory was an attempt to integrate the influences of nature and nurture*. Gender role preferences determined by a series of critical events:

**Prenatal**: exposure to hormones on the womb (determined by chromosomes). It states that biology caused by genetics, XY for a boy and XX for a girl will give them a physical sex.

**Postnatal**: Parents and others label and react towards a child on the basis of his or her genitals.

Parents and other people label and begin to react to the child based on his or her genitals. It is when their sex has been labeled through external genitals, their gender development will begin. The social labeling of a baby as a boy or girl leads to different treatments which produce the child’s sense of gender identity. The way they are treated socially in combination with their biological sex will determine the child’s gender.

The approach assumes that gender identity is neutral before the age of 3, and can be changed, e.g. a biological boy raised as a girl will develop the gender identity of a girl. This is known as the theory of neutrality.

* 1. **Psychoanalytic or Identification Theory**

Psychoanalytic or identification theories emphasize individual personality development (Chodorow, 1989; Freud, 1925; Homey, 1926). They mainly emphasize the emotional dynamics of personality the deeply buried emotions in the subconscious of the psyche and the importance of early childhood in the patterning of these emotions. Particular importance is place on the early parent-child relationships.

Identification theories of why differences between the sexes occurred, such as those presented by Freud, Homey and Chodorow made few explicit distinctions between gender identity, gender role, and sexual orientation; all three were considered aspects of identification with the same-sex parent. Although Freud thought that women faced greater obstacles to developing gender identity, later theorists argued that boys faced greater difficulty (Chodorow, 1978, 1987, 1989; Dinnerstein, 1976).

Freud's analysis of the oedipal trauma emphasized the difficulties faced by girls in developing a gender identity. According to Sigmund Freud, women were second class human beings whose psychic (physical) nature fit them only for a lesser life than that experienced by men. Freud's theory of womanhood is centered on the masculine conviction that a woman is a castrated man with "penis-envy!". The whole feminine character or psychology of women, according to him is shaped by this anatomical difference. He mentions three major consequences of women's feminine character of psychology.

* The girl finds herself insignificant, and feels lost in relation to others, almost mortified, and represses a good part of her sexuality.
* The girl may not be willing to accept her inferiority- and therefore strives to achieve what she lacks. Then there develops what Freud calls the "masculine complex" of women.
* She tries to compensate the "lack" and wish to be attached to a boy.

Chodorow suggested that exclusively female parenting produces women and men with different emotional needs. Women, she says, will unsuccessfully attempt to replicate (in adult relationships) the sense of unity with another that they experienced as children with a same sex parent (with whom they identified). She further argued that as a result of caretaking carried out primarily by females, boys initially identify with the mother. They must then form a masculine identity based on separation and denial, defining themselves as "not women".

**Criticisms**

The male bias in Freud's approach is his major weakness according to his critics Kete Millet (1973), Erich Fromm (1978) and Thompson (1973). Such a conviction would have hampered his understanding of the experience of woman in her feminine role. Freud would not have fully understood what women wanted to communicate through their rebellion. For Freud, woman's rebellion is an expression of their masculinity complex but it could well be that she is exercising her freedom. It never occurred to Freud, that the reference model of women need not be that of men. He believed that if one was free, he would tend to dominate others. Hence it was impossible for him to think that it was possible for women to live freely without having a tendency to dominate others. Thus it appears that the Freudian theory of women fits only into a culture where masculinity and femininity are defined in a particular way as described by him.

* 1. **Social Structural Theories**

Social structural theories (e.g. Lips, 1991) examine the way in which society creates and supports gender roles rather than the way in which individuals come to develop individual gender identity. These theories focus on the socio-cultural context; how relations between women and men are linked to gender roles and sex stereotypes, and the social structures which support these roles and stereotypes. Power and status differences are seen as crucial factors in developing and maintaining differences between men and women.

* 1. **Enculturated Lens Theory**

Enculturated lens theory focuses on the three lenses of gender that exist in the Western world and the United States: gender polarization, androcentrism, and biological essentialism. The lens of gender polarization centers on the concept that men and women are considered completely different, even opposite, from one another, which underlies the organization of society. The lens of androcentrism centers on the idea that men are superior to women and, as such, men and their experiences are the norm against which women are judged. The lens of biological essentialism both minimizes and justifies gender polarization and androcentrism by interpreting these lenses as biologically ordained; men’s presumed superiority, using men as the default category, and unequal power relations between men and women in society are viewed as the result of natural, unavoidable differences, rather than socially constructed differences, between males and females. These three lenses operate together to influence individuals to think and act in sex-typed ways that are supported by the culture and form their gender identity.

* 1. **Other Theories**

Other theories (Social Learning, Cognitive Development, and Social Interaction) focus on "how" gender differences occur, rather than" why" they occur (Lips, 1993). These three categories stress the processes through which males and females may come to adopt similar or dissimilar ways of being. These theories distinguish more clearly between gender identity and other gender related constructs than do the theories which examine why men and women differ. They also place greater importance on the individual's subjective experience of gender identity than do either the social structural theories or the evolutionary theories of gender differences.

**2.5.1 Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) proposes that both gender identity and gender role are learned through a process including observation, imitation, punishment, and reinforcement. This model supposes that parents and others map out gender roles for the child, who is differentially reinforced for sex-typed behaviors. As the boy or girl is repeatedly rewarded for sex-typed behaviors, it becomes rewarding to think of oneself as a boy or a girl. Sex-typing (the conformity to and adoption of a socially prescribed gender-role) precedes and forms the basis for development of gender identity.

For example, imagine three siblings, Robel (4 years), Kaleb (5 years) and Sara (6 years). Sara and Kaleb play ‘dressing up’ and both put on dresses. Their father reinforces Sara for this, by saying she looks pretty but punishes Kaleb by saying he looks silly and boys should not dress that way. In future, Sara is more likely to wear dresses and Kaleb is less likely. Robel, who has been watching all this, is unlikely to imitate the behavior of wearing a dress because he has seen his brother (who he perceives as similar to himself) getting punished for doing it.

**2.5.2 Cognitive Developmental Theory**

Cognitive developmental theory (e.g. Kolhberg, 1966) argues that sex typing occurs as a result of gender identity formation. This approach proposes that the concept of gender cannot be learned until the child reaches a certain stage of development. Between the ages of 3 and 5 years, the child acquires "gender constancy".

According to cognitive developmental theory, gender identity is assumed as the basic organizer and regulator of children's gender learning. Children develop the stereotypic conceptions of gender from what they see and hear around them. Once they achieve gender constancy (the belief that their own gender is fixed and irreversible) - they positively value their gender identity and seek to behave only in ways that are similar with that conception. Cognitive consistency is gratifying, so individuals attempt to behave in ways that are consistent with their self-conception. Kohlberg speculated the following cognitive processes that create and maintain such consistency: "I am a boy, therefore I want to do boy things, therefore the opportunity to do boy things (and to gain approval for doing them) is rewarding". In this view, much of children's conduct is designed to confirm their gender identity. Once children establish knowledge of their own gender, the reciprocal interplay between one's behavior (acting like a girl) and thoughts (I am a girl) leads to a stable gender identity, or in cognitive-developmental theory terms, the child achieves gender constancy.

Kohlberg defined gender constancy as the realization that one’s sex is a permanent attribute tied to underlying biological properties and does not depend on superficial characteristics such as hair length, style of clothing, or choice of play activities. Development of gender constancy is not an all or none phenomenon. Three distinct levels of gender understanding comprise gender constancy. From least to most mature forms of gender understanding, these are designated as the gender identity, stability, and consistency components of gender constancy. "Gender identity" requires the simple ability to label oneself as a boy or girl and others as a boy, girl, man, or woman. "Gender stability" is the recognition that gender remains constant over time -- that is, one's sex is the same now as it was when one was a baby and will remain the same in adulthood. The final component of gender constancy, "gender consistency", is mastered at about age six or seven years. The child now possesses the added knowledge that gender is invariant despite changes in appearance, dress or activity. Children are not expected to adopt gender-typed behaviors consistently until after they regard themselves unalterably as a boy or a girl, which usually is not achieved until about six years of age.

**2.5.3 Social Interaction Theory**

Social interaction process theories focus on the display and maintenance of gender related behaviors rather than the childhood acquisition of gender identity. **This contrasts with social learning and cognitive development theories, both of which emphasize childhood learning as a basis for lifelong gender roles.** Thus, social interaction theories are concerned with the processes that maintain continuity of gender-related behavior and that elicit such behaviors in specific social contexts. One example of such approaches is provided in the interactive model of gendered behavior presented by Deaux and Major (1987).

Deaux and Major presented a model relevant to gender identity that radically departed from the others described. This model examines the interaction with the immediate social environmentwhich influences the display of gender-related behaviors. Rather than examining long-term causes of gendered behavior, this theory implies that individuals have already defined their gender identity. This approach takes into account the ways in which individuals may depart from their sex-typed behaviors and still retain a secure gender identity.

* 1. **Theories of child Socialization and their gender implications**
		1. **Introduction**

Socialization is a term used by sociologists, social psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and educationalists to refer to the lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs, and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within his or her own society. Socialization is the means by which human infants begin to acquire the skills necessary to perform as a functioning member of their society and is the most influential learning process one can experience. Unlike other living species, whose behavior is biologically set, humans need social experiences to learn their culture and to survive. Although cultural variability manifests in the actions, customs, and behaviors of whole social groups, the most fundamental expression of culture is found at the individual level. This expression can only occur after an individual has been socialized by his or her parents, family, extended family, and extended social networks.

* + 1. **Childhood Socialization**

It is the most crucial phase of learning for an individual that occurs in the first years of life. In the early years of child hood, incredible complex learning must occur, and it occurs relatively quickly. This early child hood socialization is referred to as primary socialization. It is called primary because it supplies the foundation for all other learning and it must come first. Most often the child learns from the family through imitation, conditioning and reward for accomplishing the expected behavior. In primary socialization, the child must learn the basic skills necessary to function in society. The child must master or begin to master motor skills involving coordination and control of the body such as walking, grasping, and feeding himself or herself and so on. Language and the understanding of symbols and gestures must be mastered if any further learning is to take place.

* + 1. **Theoretical Perspectives of Childhood Socialization**

Theories of childhood socialization and development study the elements of the cognitive and social development that occur in childhood. Since the nineteenth century, childhood has been perceived as a unique phase in an individual’s life, and sociological theories reflect this. The main theories that psychologists and social scientists rely on today were developed in the twentieth century and beyond. These theories seek to understand why childhood is a unique period in one’s life and the elements of the cognitive and social development that occur in childhood. This section seeks to give an introduction to various theoretical perspectives on childhood.

* + - 1. **Freud Psychosexual Stage Development Theory**

Twentieth-century Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud was one of the first psychologists to theorize childhood and the significance of developmental stages. Freud believed that sexual drive, or libido, was the driving force of all human behavior and, accordingly, developed a psychosexual theory of human development. Children progress through five stages, each association with sexual satisfaction through a particular body part.Freud’s stages begin with the **oral** stage (0 to 1 year) in infancy and continue through the **anal** (1 to 3 years), **phallic** (3 to 6 years), **latency** (6 to puberty), and **genital** stages (puberty to adult).

1. **Oral Stage (0 to 1 year)**

In the first stage of personality development, the libido is centered in a baby's mouth. It gets much satisfaction from putting all sorts of things in its mouth to satisfy the libido, and thus its id demands.  Which at this stage in life are oral, or mouth orientated, such as sucking, biting, and breastfeeding. Freud said oral stimulation could lead to an oral fixation in later life.  We see oral personalities all around us such as smokers, nail-biters, finger-chewers, and thumb suckers.  Oral personalities engage in such oral behaviors, particularly when under stress.

1. **Anal Stage (1 to 3 years)**

The libido now becomes focused on the anus, and the child derives great pleasure from defecating.  The child is now fully aware that they are a person in their own right and that their wishes can bring them into conflict with the demands of the outside world (i.e., their ego has developed).

1. **Phallic Stage (3 to 6 years)**

Freud suggested that during the phallic stage, the primary focus of the libido is on the genitals. At this age, children also begin to discover the differences between males and females.​  The child becomes aware of anatomical sex differences, which sets in motion the conflict between erotic attraction, resentment, rivalry, jealousy and fear which Freud called the **Oedipus complex** (in boys) and the **Electra complex** (in girls). This is resolved through the process of identification, which involves the child adopting the characteristics of the same sex parent.

1. **Latency Stage (6 to puberty)**

No further psychosexual development takes place during this stage (latent means hidden).  The libido is dormant or inactive.  Freud thought that most sexual impulses are repressed during the latent stage, and sexual energy can be sublimated towards school work, hobbies, and friendships. Much of the child's energy is channeled into developing new skills and acquiring new knowledge, and play becomes largely confined to other children of the same gender.

1. **Genital Stage (puberty onward)**

This is the last stage of Freud's psychosexual theory of personality development and begins in puberty.  It is a time of adolescent sexual experimentation, the successful resolution of which is settling down in a loving one-to-one relationship with another person in our 20's.  Sexual instinct is directed to heterosexual pleasure, rather than self-pleasure like during the phallic stage.

**Critics:** Unresolved fixations in these stages were presumed to contribute to personality psychoses, such as dependency on others for those not resolving the oral stage and cleanliness and control for those not resolving anal stage. Freud’s theory has received both methodological and feminist critiques over the years (most notably, focused on Freud’s depiction of the phallic stage), but it remains alive in our scientific and cultural consciousness. Subsequent stage theories build upon Freud’s model. It is also a case study not an empirical research Freud conducted.

* + - 1. **Piaget’s Four Stages of Development**

One of the most widely applied theories of childhood is Jean Piaget’s theory of cognitive development. Piaget posited that children learn actively through play. He suggested that the adult’s role in helping a child learn is to provide appropriate materials for the child to interact and construct. He encouraged adults to make childhood learning through play even more effective by asking the child questions to get them to reflect upon behaviors. He believed it was instructive for children to see contradictions in their explanations. His approach to childhood development has been embraced by schools, and the pedagogy of preschools in the United States.Piaget outlined four stages in one’s development to adulthood:

* The first of Piaget’s stages of development is the **sensorimotor stage** (in which infants and toddlers explore the world, primarily from an egocentric perspective), which lasts from birth until about age two. During this stage, the child learns about himself and his environment through motor and reflex actions. The child learns that he is separate from his environment and that aspects of his environment, such as his parents or a toy, continue to exist even though they may be outside of his sensory field. This observation is called object permanence.
* The sensorimotor stage is followed by the **preoperational stage** (in which young children further develop motor skills and begin to weaken their egocentric focus), which begins about the time that the child begins to talk and lasts until about age seven. The developments associated with the preoperational phase all extend from the child learning how to deploy his new linguistic capabilities. The child begins to use symbols to represent objects. Children absorb information and fit it into preexisting categories in their minds.
* Next, children progress to the **concrete operational phase** (in which children develop logic but cannot yet reason abstractly), which lasts from about first grade to early adolescence. During this stage, children more easily accommodate ideas that do not fit their preexisting worldview.
* Finally, children enter the **formal operational stage** (in which older children and adolescents can think abstractly and from a non-egocentric perspective), which begins in adolescence and carries them through adulthood. This person no longer requires concrete objects to make rational judgments and is capable of hypothetical and deductive reasoning.
	+ - 1. **Ecological Systems Theory**

In 1979, psychologist UrieBronfenbrenner published “The Ecology of Human Development”, setting forth his theory known as ecological systems theory. Also called development in context theory or human ecology theory, the ecology systems theory specifies five different types of nested environmental systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. Each of these systems exerts influence on an individual, particularly children as they are robustly socialized.

* The microsystem refers to the institutions and groups that most immediately and directly impact the child’s development, including the child’s family, school, religious institution, neighborhood, and peer group.
* The mesosystem recognizes that no microsystem can be entirely discrete and refers to the relationship between microsystems. For example, a child who has been completely abandoned by his family might find it difficult to bond with teachers.
* The exosystem describes the link between a social setting in which the individual does not have an active role and the individual’s immediate context. For example, a child’s experience at home may be impacted by a mother’s experience at work.
* The macrosystem refers to the culture in which individuals live. A child, his school, and his parents are all part of a cultural context whose constituents are united by a sense of common identity, heritage, and values. Microsystems, and therefore mesosystems and exosystems, are impossible to understand when divorced from their macrosystemic context.
* The chronosystem refers to the patterning of environmental events and transitions over one’s life course, as well as broader sociohistorical developments. For example, the impact of divorces on children has varied over history. When divorce was more culturally stigmatized, it had a different effect on children than today, when many children have divorced parents.
	+ - 1. **Identity Formation Theory**

Identity formation is the development of an individual’s distinct personality, which is regarded as a persisting entity in a particular stage of life by which a person is recognized or known. This process defines individuals to others and themselves. Pieces of the individual’s actual identity include a sense of continuity, a sense of uniqueness from others, and a sense of affiliation. Identity formation clearly influences personal identity by which the individual thinks of him or herself as a discrete and separate entity. This may be through individuation whereby the undifferentiated individual tends to become unique, or undergoes stages through which differentiated facets of a person’s life tend toward becoming a more indivisible whole.

Individuals gain a social identity and group identity by their affiliations. Self-concept is the sum of a being’s knowledge and understanding of himself. Self-concept is different from self-consciousness, which is an awareness of one’s self. Components of self-concept include physical, psychological, and social attributes, which can be influenced by the individual’s attitudes, habits, beliefs, and ideas. Cultural identity is one’s feeling of identity affiliation to a group or culture.

Similarly, an ethnic identity is the identification with a certain ethnicity, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry. Further, national identity is an ethical and philosophical concept whereby all humans are divided into groups called nations. Members of a nation share a common identity and usually a common origin in their sense of ancestry, parentage, or descent. Lastly, a religious identity is the set of beliefs and practices generally held by an individual, involving adherence to codified beliefs and rituals and study of ancestral or cultural traditions, writings, history, and mythology, as well as faith and mystic experience.

* 1. **Forms of socialization**
		1. **Primary socialization**

Primary socialization in sociology is the acceptance and learning of a set of norms and values established through the process of socialization. Primary socialization for a child is very important because it sets the groundwork for all future socialization. Primary socialization occurs when a child learns the attitudes, values, and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture. It is mainly influenced by the immediate family and friends. For example if a child saw his or her mother expressing a discriminatory opinion about a minority group, then that child may think this behavior is acceptable and could continue to have this opinion about minority groups.

* + 1. **Adult/ Secondary socialization**

Adult socialization is the learning that builds on and modifies primary socialization and is required all of us as we move into new stages of life and face a changing environment. Adult socialization is sometimes called secondary socialization.

We may have, for example, learned the basic framework of marriage and parenthood from both primary and anticipatory socialization. But the actual adjustment to marriage and the ability to get along with your specific partner require some learning and adaptability.

Significant differences exist between child hood socialization and adult socialization. Some of them include:

* Child hood socialization usually takes place in a situation that is specifically geared to teaching and learning. Adult learning on the other hand usually occurs on the job or on the family.
* Children tend to be emotionally involved with those who socialize them- parents, teachers and peers while relations between adults and their socializers tend to be less likely emotional.
* Adult socialization tends to be voluntary.
	+ 1. **Reverse socialization**

Reverse socialization refers to the process of socialization where by the dominant socializing persons, such as parents, happen to be in need of being socialized themselves by those whom they socialize, such as children. This idea seems to be associated with the fact that socialization is a two-way process. It involves the influences and pressures from the socializes that directly or indirectly induce change the attitudes and behaviors of the socializers themselves. In reverse socialization the children, for example, may happen to socialize their parents in some roles, skills and attitudes which the latter lack.

* + 1. **Anticipatory socialization**

It is adopting the attitudes and behavior of group or category before one joins it. It is useful in helping the upwardly mobile adapt to their new position in society. One way of learning the roles we will play in our lives is to rehearse them.

Anticipatory socialization refers to learning roles by practicing those we anticipate playing in the future. In child hood, for example, children play house-boys practice playing the father and husband roles, while girls rehearse the behavior they see in their mothers. Numerous examples of anticipatory socialization can be found at various stages in our lives.

Children, as well, spends hours copying role models from Television. Here, toys and games give children the opportunity to experience, through play, a taste of what they may do in the future. There are for example, toys for children to practice occupations such as doctor, firefighter, teacher, etc.

Anticipatory socialization is a part of primary socialization, but is not restricted to it. We continue to rehearse though much of our lives because rehearsal functions as a powerful learning tool. It serves as a means of preparation by which people gain some certainty and confidence regarding their performance before others.

* + 1. **Re-socialization**

In the lives of individuals, as they pass through different stages and life experiences, there is the need for re-socialization and de-socialization. Re-socialization means the adoption by adults of radically different norms and life ways that are more or less completely dissimilar to the previous norms and values. It signifies the rapid and more basic changes in the adult life. A drastic shift that involves giving up one way of life for another that is not only different from it but also incompatible with it. This is quite often happens as adult life in modern societies demands sharp transitions and changes.

E.g. Brainwashing – is rejecting old beliefs and ideas and accepting new ideas, Rehabilitation of criminals, Religious conversion of sinners. In all of these cases, a person breaks with the past and is made over.

De-socialization typically precedes re-socialization. De-socialization refers to stripping individuals of their former life styles, beliefs, values and attitudes so that they may take up other partially or totally new life styles, attitudes and values. The individuals have to abandon their former values and take up new ones in order to become part of the new social group.

NB. De-socialization and re-socialization of adults often takes place in what is called **total institutions**, an environment which is an all-encompassing and often isolated from the community such as religious places, prisons, military units, mental hospitals etc. they demand a thorough de-socialization of the new entrants before they assume full-fledged membership. In each case, persons joining the new setting have first to be de-socialized, before they are re-socialized.

Re-socialization may also mean socializing individuals again into their former values and norms, after they rejoin their former ways of life, spending a relatively longer period of in total institutions. This is because they may have forgotten most of the basic values and skills of the former group or society. This kind of re-socialization may also be regarded as reintegration, helping the ex-community members renew their memories of their former life ways, skills, knowledge, etc.

* + 1. **Gender socialization**

Sociologists and other social scientists generally attribute many of the behavioral differences between men and women to socialization. Socialization is the process of transferring norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors to future group members. In regards to gender socialization, the most common groups people join are the gender categories male and female. Even the categorical option of gender an individual may choose is socialized; social norms act against selecting a gender that is neither male nor female. Thus, gender socialization is the process of educating and instructing potential men and women how to behave as members of that particular group.

* **Socialization before Birth**

Preparations for gender socialization begin even before the birth of the child. One of the first questions people ask of expectant parents is whether the baby will be a boy or girl. This is the beginning of a social categorization process that continues throughout life. Preparations for the birth of the child often take the expected sex into consideration, such as **painting the infant’s room pink or blue.**

* **Early Life Socialization**

One illustration of early life gender socialization can be seen in **preschool classrooms.** Children in preschool classrooms where teachers were told to emphasize gender differences saw an increase in stereotyped views of what activities are appropriate for boys or girls, while children with teachers who did not emphasize gender showed no increase in stereotyped views. This clearly demonstrates the influence of socialization on the development of gender roles; subtle cues that surround us in our everyday lives strongly influence gender socialization.

* **Adolescent Socialization**

The process of gender socialization continues as adolescents enter the workforce. Research has found that adolescents encounter stereotypes of gendered performance in the workforce in their first jobs. First jobs are significantly segregated by sex. Girls work fewer hours and earn less per hour than boys. Hourly wages are higher in job types dominated by boys while girls are more frequently assigned housework and childcare duties. The impact of these first experiences in the professional world will shape adolescents’ perspectives on how men and women behave differently in the workforce.

* **Learning the Gender Gap**

The gender pay gap is the difference between male and female earnings expressed as a percentage of male earnings, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The European Commission defines it as the average difference between men and women’s hourly earnings. There is a debate as to what extent this is the result of gender differences, implicit discrimination due to lifestyle choices, or because of explicit discrimination. If it is a result of gender differences, then the pay gap is not a problem; men are simply better equipped to perform more valuable work than women. If it is a result of implicit discrimination due to lifestyle choices, then women’s lower earnings result from the fact that women typically take more time off when having children or choose to work fewer hours. If it is explicit discrimination, then the pay gap is a result of stereotypical beliefs, conscious or unconscious, from those who hire and set salaries.

Most who study the gender wage gap assume that it is not due to differences in ability between genders – while in general men may be better at physical labor, the pay gap persists in other employment sectors as well. This implies that the gender gap stems from social, rather than biological, origins.

* **Gender Messages in the Family**

Gender role theory posits that boys and girls learn the appropriate behavior and attitudes from the family and overall culture in which they grow up, and that non-physical gender differences are a product of socialization. Social role theory proposes that social structure is the underlying force behind gender differences, and that the division of labor between two sexes within a society motivates the differences in their respective behavior. Division of labor creates gender roles, which in turn, lead to gender-specific social behavior.

Family is the most important agent of socialization because it serves as the center of a child’s life. Socialization theory tells us that primary socialization – the process that occurs when a child learns the attitudes, values and actions expected of individuals within a particular culture – is the most important phase of social development, and lays the groundwork for all future socialization. Therefore, the family plays a pivotal role in the child’s development, influencing both the attitudes the child will adopt and the values the child will hold. Socialization can be intentional or unintentional; the family may not be conscious of the messages it transmits, but these messages nonetheless contribute to the child’s socialization. Children learn continuously from the environment that adults create, including gender norms.

For example, a child who grows up in a two-parent household with a mother who acts as a homemaker and a father who acts as the breadwinner may internalize these gender roles, regardless of whether or not the family is directly teaching them. Likewise, if parents buy dolls for their daughters and toy trucks for their sons, the children will learn to value different things.

* **Gender Messages from Peers**

Peer groups can serve as a venue for teaching members gender roles. Gender roles refer to the set of social and behavioral norms that are considered socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex in the context of a specific culture, and which differ widely across cultures and historical periods.

Through gender-role socialization, group members learn about sex differences, and social and cultural expectations. Biological males are not always masculine and biological females are not always feminine. Both genders can contain different levels of masculinity and femininity. Peer groups can consist of all males, all females, or both males and females.

Peer groups can have great influence on each other’s gender role behavior depending on the amount of pressure applied. If a peer group strongly holds to a conventional gender social norm, members will behave in ways predicted by their gender roles, but if there is not a unanimous peer agreement, gender roles do not correlate with behavior. There is much research that has been done on how gender affects learning within student peer groups. The purpose of a large portion of this research has been to see how gender affects peer cooperative groups, how that affects the relationships that students have within the school setting, and how gender can then affect attainment and learning. One thing that is an influence on peer groups is student behavior.

Knowing early on that children begin to almost restrict themselves to same-gendered groups, it is interesting to see how those interactions within groups take place. Boys tend to participate in more active and forceful activities in larger groups, away from adults, while girls were more likely to play in small groups, near adults. These gender differences are also representative of many stereotypical gender roles within these same-gendered groups. The stereotypes are less prominent when the groups are mixed-gendered.

When children do not conform to the appropriate gender role, they may face negative sanctions such as being criticized or marginalized by their peers. Though many of these sanctions are informal, they can be quite severe. For example, a girl who wishes to take karate class instead of dance lessons may be called a “tomboy,” facing difficulty gaining acceptance from both male and female peer groups. Boys, especially, are subject to intense ridicule for gender nonconformity.

* **Gender Messages in Mass Media**

Gender socialization occurs through four major agents: family, education, peer groups, and mass media. Because mass media has enormous effects on our attitude and behavior, notably in regards to aggression, it is an important contributor to the socialization process. This is particularly true with regards to gender. In television and movies, women tend to have less significant roles than men. They are often portrayed as wives or mothers, rather than as main characters. When women are given a lead role, they are often one of two extremes: either a wholesome, saint-like figure or a malevolent, hyper-sexual figure. This same inequality is similarly pervasive in children’s movies.

Television commercials and other forms of advertising reinforce inequality and gender-based stereotypes. Women almost exclusively appear in ads that promote cooking, cleaning, or childcare-related products. In general, women are underrepresented in roles, or ads, that reference leadership, intelligence, or a balanced psyche. Particularly concerning are instances when women are depicted in dehumanizing, oppressive ways, especially in music videos. Different music video demonstrates how harmful gender messages can be disseminated through mass media. In the video, women are objectified and portrayed as only existing to serve men. They wear little clothing and are walked around on leashes by men.

**Chapter Three**

**Culture, Gender and Power**

* 1. **Introduction**

Gender’ is one of the most persistent **causes**, **consequences** and **manifestations** of power relations. Understanding gender can therefore significantly enhance our understanding of power and vice versa. Yet donors, for example, have largely neglected ‘gender’ in their efforts to understand power relations in partner countries. In particular they are often blind to the ways in which ***power and politics in the ‘private’ sphere shape power relations at all levels of society***; the ways in which ***gender hierarchies mark wider economic, political and social structures and institutions***; and ***the opportunities for peace and prosperity emanating from feminized sources of power.*** By addressing these blind spots, a focus on gender can significantly enhance donors’ insights into power dynamics and their ability to ‘think and work politically’ overall. At the same time, ***focusing on power can improve donor support to gender equality by pointing to the need for*** more politically-informed approaches. This would involve, among other things, developing a deeper understanding of the local context, engaging a wider range of powerful actors, providing better support for women’s mobilization and, importantly, taking a closer look at gendered power relations within donor organizations themselves.

* 1. **The Culture of Domination**

Domination has power asymmetry as its goal and is dependent on it. It represents a kind of relationship that most people, in most cultures, most readily associate with the word ‘power’, i.e., meaning power over people and things, as against the capacity to do something or the responsibility to act on behalf of the others. There are many different vehicles for the exercise of power over others; wealth, control of resources and terms of trading; language, education, fashion, political structures and practices; law (their enactment and application); imprisonment and physical violence or the threat of it, on whatever scale, including military systems and wars. Violence, the harmful and destructive exercise of power over others, is both the means and the outcome of domination. A culture of domination is a culture of violence.

The oppression of women is often explained and indeed justified, in terms of culture. Gender can be defined as the social construction of sex differences, expressed in constructions of masculinity and femininity. As traditionally constructed, gender differences are integral to the culture of domination, having power asymmetry at their heart. Masculinity is constructed as powerful, aggressive, controlling; femininity as inferior, weak, submissive, serving or (more positively) nurturing. In the more extreme version of the construction, women are regarded as a subspecies, to be treated by men as their chattels. Since women are those who also spend the most time with children and are their chief educators, it is clear that they participate in the perpetuation of this cultural viewpoint. The domination of men over women is the most fundamental and widespread form of power asymmetry in human society and societies.

In some part of the world, the oppression of women by men is lessening; in others it continues as unabated. However, in most (if not all) societies, domestic violence against women is common and in many it is tacitly, if not explicitly, sanctioned. In some countries, women’s movements and activists are restricted and their treatment under the law is harsh and discriminatory. Women are also oppressed economically. The work that they do, overall, far exceeds that which is done by men, yet they earn on average far less than men, control a small fraction of the world’s wealth and are often debarred from inheritance. In global terms, then, there is a clear power asymmetry between men and women.

* 1. **Gender as a system of power**

Gender shapes power relations at all levels of society. In fact, the set of roles, behaviors and attitudes that societies define as appropriate for men and women (‘gender’) may well be the most persistent cause, consequence and mechanism of power relations from the intimate sphere of the household to the highest levels of political decision-making.

Feminist literatures highlight these links and can therefore significantly enhance our understanding of both power and gender. These works use the concept ‘gender’ in different ways, each of which opens up a different perspective on power. Yet it is important to keep in mind that most of these are developed from Northern perspectives and may therefore provide only a starting point for understanding gender and power in other contexts.

This section summarizes some of the key takeaways for scholars and practitioners. Wherever possible it provides examples from a small number of existing political economy and power analyses that have highlighted these dynamics.

* **One of the most persistent patterns in the distribution of power-over is huge inequalities between men and women.**

This becomes apparent as soon as gender is considered by simply differentiating individuals into ‘men’ and ‘women’. For example, one of the most consistent features of political decision-making is women’s lack of influence. This is in turn often the result of what feminist scholars have problematized as perhaps the most pervasive, institutionalized and detrimental power-over relationship in our world: the domination of women by men. These patterns of power can have important consequences for development outcomes.

* **Gender roles arepower relations**

Gender is not only a cause but also a consequence, instrument and embodiment of power-over relations. It is a key mechanism through which power not only constrains but constitutesindividuals and is perhaps the most persistent form of ‘invisible power’ in our world. This can be seen by problematizing the ways in which societies define appropriate masculine and feminine behavior. In many contexts, *what it means to be a woman is to be powerless; it is considered ‘feminine’ to be quiet, accommodating, and obedient*. By contrast *it is considered ‘manly’ to exercise power-over, that is, to get others to do what you want them to do*. In this way, “women/men is a distinction not just of difference, but of power and powerlessness…Power/powerlessness is the sex difference.”

As a result of these associations, gender roles can reify men’s power over women. Men and women consequently often consider women’s lack of power ‘natural’ and appropriate. This, for example, significantly reduces women’s access to decision-making as they may lack the self-confidence or be actively prevented from speaking up in public meetings. Recognizing these dynamics, work on women’s empowerment has stressed women’s sense of self-worth and self-knowledge (power-within) as a critical aspect of the process for change.

* **The private sphere is an arena of power and politics**

Mainstream scholars tend to view the family and household as removed from ‘public’ concerns of power and politics, and thus irrelevant to their debates. Feminist scholars have revealed that this ***public/private divide leads to significant blind spots in our understanding of power***. Unlike men’s power over other men, men’s power over women has often been accomplished “in intimate contexts, as everyday life. ***Power relations in the ‘public’ and ‘private’ spheres often interact in complex ways to shape development outcomes***. In Ethiopia, for example, a power analysis highlighted that “political power structures are learnt, or embodied, through family power relations from a young age: men are superior to women, elders to younger” (Nordlund: 2014). This results in a rigidly hierarchical culture, which is a key constraint on democratic governance.

* **Gender interacts with other hierarchical power relationships**

Feminist scholars of colour and from developing countries in particular have argued that ***gender must be studied as one of several systems that divide power, including those based on ethnicity and class***. These often interact in shaping the distribution of power in society (‘***intersectionality’***). Focusing on only one of these divisions reduces each group to the views of their most powerful members and so reinforces hierarchical power relations. Offering several approaches for addressing such complexity, “feminists are perhaps alone in the academy in the extent to which they have embraced intersectionality… as itself a central category of analysis.

* **Wider structures and institutions shape the distribution of power by reinforcing and relying on gender roles**

Scholars have gained further insights into power by analyzing gender as a characteristic of wider social structures and institutions. These were often built by privileged men for privileged men. As a result they are often tailored to men’s life experiences, rely on unequal power relations between men and women, and idealize characteristics associated with masculine behavior. As a result, wider structures and formal and informal institutions can in diverse ways perpetuate both men’s power over women and the dominance of those men who conform with masculine ideals over others.

* **Our understandings of power may themselves be the result of men’s power over women**

This is because power has been conceptualized by and hence from the perspective of privileged men. Feminist scholars have argued that our concepts are therefore derived from a masculine life experience “conceived as (and fact) inhabited by a number of fundamentally hostile others whom one comes to know by means of opposition (even death struggle) and yet with whom one must construct a social relation in order to survive.” This leads to the concept of power as power-over.

* **We may be neglecting women’s specific forms and sources of power**

Some feminist scholars suggest that woman’s roles as carers and mothers lead in an opposite direction from the hostile world of masculine experience. Rather than in opposition, women construct themselves in relation and continuity to others. Rather than to dominate, the purpose of women’s activity is often to build capacity in others. This suggests an alternative conception of ***power as a specific kind of power-to: “the capacity to transform and empower oneself and others”***. While this concept may risk homogenizing and essentializing women it can shed light on forces for change that may otherwise be neglected.

While different areas of feminist scholarship offer differing perspectives on how gender shapes power and vice versa, a shared conclusion is that gender is fundamentally a question of power. In Ethiopia, for example, a power analysis pointed to women as key players in (re)producing political culture given their critical role in socializing new generations. In Nepal research highlighted that healthcare usage and outcomes improve for children as they improve for women. In this way it docu­mented women’s power to enhance the health and productivity of future generations.

* 1. **Evidence for Gender and Hierarchy, Power and Prestige**

Sociological empirical research provides evidence that ***there is a socially constructed gender hierarchy which leads to an unequal division of power and prestige between men and women***. Connell’s works are, according to Giddens, modern classics that integrate masculinity and patriarchy into an umbrella theory on gender relations and gender inequalities. Connell considers that ***male social power creates a social structure that leads to female subordination*** and conceptions of masculinity and femininity lead to continued ***male dominance reproduced through socialization of both men and women.*** Connell argues that this gender order is produced through three components: **labor** (domestic and in the market), **power** (physical and through sites of authority) and **cathexis** (intimate relationships including parenting). While separate components, they cross cut and interrelate to produce a gender hierarchy. The masculinities-femininities hierarchy, illustrated by reference to masculine and feminine ideal types, pervades aspects of the public and private spheres through cultural dynamics. Connell argues that hegemonic masculinity (as evidenced principally through marriage and heterosexuality, authority, paid work and physical strength) is hierarchically dominant and resistant femininity subordinate. That is not to say that all men embody or subscribe to hegemonic masculinity but many men will benefit from it and be complicit in it. He considers that there are a number of subordinated masculinities including homosexual masculinities ranked at the bottom of the masculine scale, but that femininities are hierarchically equal to, or below, subordinate masculinities and thus well below hegemonic masculinity. Interestingly emphasised femininity (ranked at the level of homosexual masculinity), is deemed to complement hegemonic masculinity through *‘compliance, nurturance and empathy’* as well as sexual availability. At the bottom of the hierarchy are subordinated femininities including resistant femininities and those that reject the emphasized versions of femininities. Consequently, ***Connell argues that gender difference is really gender inequality as a result of gender power and hierarchy***.

In the contemporary era, Connell argues that there is a crisis of institutionalization in that the institutions that have supported male dominance – the family and the state- are being challenged. Further, male domination over women is being eroded through legislative measures such as divorce, domestic violence provisions and linked measures such as tax and pension provisions. The crisis of sexuality is weakening heterosexuality’s pre-eminence and absolute dominance as women’s sexuality is being encouraged (some may say exploited by the market) and mainstreamed. Dominant modes of (social) interest formation are being contradicted by gender equality policies and legislation, by men becoming more involved and more interested in being more involved in child rearing (the rise of ‘the new man’) and women’s growing interest and/or ability to play a full role in the labor market (what may be described as the rise of or the freedom of ‘the new woman’). Pay differentials between men and women in full-time employment have been narrowing.

* 1. **Gender, power and politics**

**What policy and operational messages follow from a focus on gender and power?**

1. **Without thinking about gender, we’re not politically smart**

Feminist perspectives on power reveal that debates on ‘thinking and working politically’ (TWP) and political economy analysis (PEA) have missed one of the most significant systems shaping power relations worldwide: gender. If gender is at all considered in PEA, the term is usually understood as synonymous with ‘women’ and the discussion confined to some observations about women’s unequal representation in formal institutions or legal discrimination against them.

This at best superficial consideration of gender means that PEA and the TWP agenda are blind to key components of the workings of power: the ways in which power and politics in the ‘private’ sphere shape and are influenced by power relations at all levels of society; the ways in which wider economic, political and social structures rely on and reproduce gender power relations; and the opportunities for peace and prosperity emanating from feminized sources of power. These gendered blind spots have real and detrimental consequences for development work.

However, current conceptions of power in the ‘thinking and working politically’ debate would miss these connections, and are therefore inadequate for achieving the task that proponents of this approach have set for themselves: informing effective development.

1. **If we’re politically smart, we’ll provide better support to gender equality**

Understanding the links between gender and power can also enhance efforts to support gender equality. It reveals that gender and gender inequalities are a cause, consequence and component of power relations at all levels of society. In other words, gender inequalities are deeply political. This means that if they are to be addressed successfully, they must be addressed as such. A focus on gender and power points to the need not only for more gender-sensitive approaches to thinking and working politically but also for more politically-informed approaches to supporting gender equality. This would involve, among other things:

1. **Developing a deeper understanding of the local context**

Developing a deeper understanding of the local contextand in particular of the ways in which gender inequalities are tied to wider power structures, such as political settlements.

1. **Focusing on the critical role of a wider range of powerful actors**

It is imperative to focus on the critical role of a wider range of powerful actors, including customary institutions and political parties. Highlighting that “women/men is a distinction not just of difference, but of power and powerlessness”, feminist perspectives draw particular attention to how women’s (subordinate) roles are defined in relation to men’s (dominant) roles. In practice this means that making space for the realization of women’s rights also requires changes in masculine roles and claims to power. Engaging men will therefore help make interventions effective.

1. **Better support for women’s mobilization**

Civil society activism has provided “new democratic spaces” where women can take leadership, advocate their rights and develop leadership skills with less obstruction from the gendered power relations that often mark formal institutions. Donor support to women’s mobilization is therefore critical. However, donors currently disproportionately focus on English-speaking, educated, capital-based elites, therefore reducing ‘women’s interests’ to those of their most powerful group members. As feminist perspectives on intersectionality would anticipate, this can silence voices of women from different class, ethnic or religious backgrounds and reinforce power relations. Donors should do more to take into account these intersections and build effective coalitions across divisions. They may also need to take some risks by searching for partners beyond the usual elite, capital-based suspects.

1. **A closer look at gendered power relations within donor country organizations**

These organizations can bring their own gendered institutional cultures to development work. Partly as a result, top management of international bodies engaging in developing countries do not tend to prioritize gender, and their staff lack incentives for taking it into account. Gender advisors in donor agencies tend to work in silos rather than in cooperation with governance or conflict-focused colleagues. They also tend to be asked to add a gender lens to analysis and plans that have already been developed, rather than to be included from the start.

Working on this gender-specific composition and culture will enable donors to provide more effective support. Importantly, this includes considering how the concepts of power they bring to development may themselves “reproduce and reinforce power structures and power relations” by removing gender from the analysis.

**Chapter Four**

**The Dynamics of Gender and some Contemporary Responses behind**

**4.1 Gender and Class**

Gender, as socially constructed differences between men and women and thebeliefs and identities that support difference and inequality, is also present in allorganizations. Gender was, in the not too distant past, almost completely integratedwith class in many organizations. That is, managers were almost alwaysmen; the lower-level white-collar workers were always women.

Class refers to a status group in a society. Here status indicates economic prosperity. Thus, class is a person’s economic position in a society. If an individual is having good education, receiving attractive salary, owns splendid house and vehicle of a particular brand is regarded as an elite class where as a person who neither has no land of his own, no earning source nor owns any vehicle is regarded as lower class. Thus, the economic prosperity defines a person’s class. The word class has been defined in numerous ways; for sociologists, class is one of the fundamental type of social stratification. Individuals are grouped into classes according to their economic positions and similar political interest with in the stratification. Most societies have their own notion of social class. Marx defined class in term of social group having control over the means of production. According to Marx society consisted of two classes capitalist or bourgeois class (those who own means of production) and proletariat class (those who don’t own means of production or the labor class). In Max Weber’s opinion class is not merely a product of the economic relations in society there are other factors that influences class like ‘status’ (the differences between social groups in the social honor or prestige) and ‘party’(a group of individuals who work together due to the fact that they have common backgrounds, aims or interests) in society. In societies where classes exist, a single class is determined by few factors like occupation, education, income, wealth, family background etc. Marx has talked about class antagonism but class harmony and multiplicity of classes between haves and the have-nots are other important factors that cannot be ignored.

Class relations inthe workplace, such as supervisory practices or wage-setting processes, wereshaped by gendered and sexualized attitudes and assumptions. The managerialranks now contain some women in many organizations, but secretaries, clerks, servers,and care providers are still primarily women. Women are beginning to be distributedin organizational class structures in ways that are similar to the distributionof men. Gender and class are no longer so perfectly integrated, but gendered andsexualized assumptions still shape the class situations of women and men in differentways.

* 1. **Changes in the Family Structure and its Gender Implications**
		1. **Female Headed House Holds**

A family, by definition, is a social institution that has a personal function of the reproduction and replacement of members. It is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, owned or adopted, of the sexually cohabitant adults. In contrast, the household has another meaning and it is "the basic residential unit in which economic production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing, and shelter are organized and carried out"; the household "may or may not be synonymous with family.

The headship of the household is usually identified with the person who has the greater authority in the family or household. Power and authority in turn may be vested in the member who has control over the general affairs of the family unit, including decision-making concerning its economic, social and political interactions.

The household is regarded as the fundamental social and/ or economic unit of society. Transformation at the household form, therefore, has impact at the aggregate level of a country. For instance, changes in household composition and structure have an impact on the distribution of goods and services, and on the planning of the public institutions, requirements for schools, housing and health infrastructure.

In recent decades the new form of households emerged. House headed by women have become more significant phenomenon worldwide in the last half of 20th and 21th century. In 1960 only 9 % of families with children in united state were headed by none married women; by 1999 the number was over 20 %. A more recent occurrence in this direction is the increasing number of women headed households in developing countries that are emerging as a result of economic changes, economic downturns and social pressures, rather than as a product of cultural patterns. In many countries in the third world, like Asian or Latin American countries, in recent years, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of female-headed households (FHH).

This is critically important when considering that female-headed households (most of which are headed by lone mothers, are rising in number and proportion in most developing regions, currently constituting an estimated 13% of all households in the Middle East and North Africa, 16% in Asia, 22% in sub-Saharan Africa, and 24% in Latin America. As the study of the status of female household heads and their households is becoming important and is given a fairly new emphasis among women's issues, it is the belief of both policy makers and functionaries working in the area of gender and development that researches on areas related to female heads and their households should be given special priority and concern.

The gender of the head of the household is one of the most important characteristics of the household. When households are headed by women, it is generally hypothesized that these households are more likely to be economically deprived and to lack the proper emotional environment for psychosocial development in children.

According to International Labor Organization (ILO) female-headed household is defined as: Household where either no adult male are present, owing to divorce, separation, migration, non-marriage or widowhood, or where men, although present, do not contribute to the household income. In line with this definition there are many reasons for the creation of FHH. Among the main reasons, male migration, the deaths of males in civil conflicts and wars, divorce, and family disruption. In respect of routes into female household headship, it is fair to say that these are more usually ‘involuntary’ than ‘by choice’ i.e. in cases where women get pregnant and do not marry, or fall victim to separation or divorce, men are more often the ones in the position of determining and/or instigating the process. This is partly because in most societies the pressures on women to contain their sexuality within a stable partnership and/or to keep marriages afloat are greater than for men.

What are the reasons behind the proliferation of FHHs in different regions? They vary, but in Europe and the United States an important reason has been the greater longevity of women compared with men, and the large percentage of women aged 60 and above. Another reason, pertinent to these regions, is the greater social acceptability of single mothers, female participation in the modern economy, and access to housing. Who constitute female-headed households? It is helpful first to distinguish between de jure and de facto FHHs. De facto FHHs are those households where the male head is absent the majority of the time. De jure FHHs are those usually headed by widows or unmarried, divorced or separated women. In other words, De jure FHHs maintain their households alone, while de facto FHHs may include men who are unable or unwilling to work. Female-headed households may consist of elderly women (widowed or divorced) with no dependents, or younger women (divorced or never-married) with dependent children. FHHs may be permanent or transitory or embedded in a wider kin network of support. They may represent family breakdown or a conscious lifestyle choice.

The majority of women in FHHs in developing countries are widowed, and to a lesser extent divorced or separated. In the developed countries most female-headed households consist of women who are never married or who are divorced. Perhaps because of flexible definitions of female headship, as well as inadequate data, estimates on the extent of FHHs tend to vary.

* + 1. **Child Headed Households**

The definition of CHH may be controversial as the term ‘child’ may mean different things to different people and nations. The most acceptable definition of a child refers to a person under the age of 18 years; however, one should be cautious about the use of a quantitative number in differentiating a child from an adult. One also needs to be cognizant of the term ‘childhood’, the meaning of which may vary in different cultures.

 A household is a unit that traditionally accommodates a family. Usually a household is characterized by several aspects, such as, culture, religion, legal frameworks and social dynamics of particular communities. It is also an economic unit where ‘members eat from the same pot’ or ‘sleep under the same roof’. The construct of a household is problematic due to the fluid nature of its changing membership. The composition and structure of households may change as a result of death, disease, crime, migrant labor, unemployment, conflicts, war, separation and desertion which may contribute to CHH, however, there is a distinction between a family and a household. In the former the people are related, but in the latter they may not necessarily be related even if they live together.

The Department of Social Development (2005) defines CHH as occurring when:

… a parent or primary caregiver of a household is terminally ill or has died; there is no adult family member available to provide care for the children in the household; and a child has assumed the role of a primary caregiver in respect of a child or children in the household in terms of providing food, clothing and psychological support.

In other words, a child-headed family or child-headed household is a family in which a minor (child or adolescent) has become the head of the household. They are most common in developing countries and areas of war, where the children's parents have been killed by conflict or disease. In some cases, relatives of the children adopt them after the parents die. Situations where a child, usually the eldest, has to provide for the family happen when there are no adult relatives to take the children or the relatives cannot afford to support more children. Whether and how much the government helps the orphaned family depends on the country. Most help comes from charity and aid organizations like UNICEF.

Child-headed families are most common in Africa. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has led to many situations where both parents have died and left behind a family of orphans. The children may begin taking over their parent's responsibilities before the last surviving parent has died, when the parent is sick or too weak to work. The eldest children often have to stop going to school and get a job instead in order to gain income for the family. A study by Cornell University in 2005 showed that, in Namibia, the average age of the children acting as parents in their families was 17; some were as young as 9 years old. The number of children heading households in sub-Saharan Africa is reported to be growing. A survey in South Africa in 2006 showed that 122,000 (0.67%) of the country's children were living in child-headed households.

In Rwanda, it is estimated that the 1994 genocide left at least 60,000 households to be run by children. Many of the girls who were raped during the conflict are left to raise both their siblings and their own children.

Generally speaking, CHHs have faced several challenges that are experienced by children living in such households. Some of these challenges are: increased responsibility of a nurse and care for sick family members, the difficulty of dealing with the stigma of family members being sick or dead due to HIV/AIDS, the lack of grief support, shortage of resources, increased risk of starvation and malnutrition, increased school absenteeism and withdrawal, poor school performance, inadequate access to medical care and the sexual exploitation of girls. The challenges experienced by children in CHH clearly reflect their social disempowerment and devastating experiences of poverty, which are further exacerbated by the lack of adequate social support from their families and communities. While much focus has been given to the challenges of CHH, one should also be cognizant of the fact that there are several children in such households who display strong resilience.

* 1. **What's Affirmative Action?**

Affirmative action is the policy of giving special consideration to minorities and women. This policy is used in an attempt to prevent discrimination and to level the playing field. It can be used in a variety of different situations.

* ***Support for Affirmative Action***

There are numerous reasons given by supporters as to why affirmative action needs to be used. Some examples include:

* To reverse the negative effects caused by years of discrimination
* To make sure minorities are represented at schools and in the workforce
* To create an equal opportunity for everyone by helping those individuals with a disadvantage
* Discrimination continues to deny opportunities to minorities and women to this day
* Diversity creates a better learning and work environment

Most supporters claim that affirmative action is never used to force a school or employer to choose an unqualified person. It's used to help minorities and women when they're qualified. The hope is that schools and the workforce will become more diverse with qualified individuals through the use of affirmative action.

* ***Opposition against Affirmative Action***

There are just as many arguments against affirmative action as in favor of it. Some examples include:

* Reverse discrimination shouldn't be used to fix past discrimination
* People should be chosen based on merit and not by race or gender
* Minorities and women from lower classes aren't helped by affirmative action, only those individuals from privileged backgrounds
* Diversity of opinion isn't created by diversity of race or gender
* Devalues the hard work of many minorities and women
* Increases racial tension

Opponents claim that no group should be favored over another group based on the sex of a person or the color of his skin. It wasn't right when schools and employers favored white men in the past, and it isn't right to favor minorities and women now. They want all schools and employers to be blind to race and gender when choosing students or employees. This blind method will create the best, most qualified group of individuals.

**Chapter Five**

1. **African Cultures from a Gender point of View**
	1. **The Notion and History of Patriarchy**

In many African countries, the majority of women remain silent. This is because traditional African societies have cultural and traditional practices that hold them together and act as their codes of conduct and this has been compounded by social, economic, political and cultural structures built on assumptions that are deeply rooted in our societies. These assumptions are taken by many women as well as men to be part of the order of things, a part of the landscape rather than a man made edifice built upon gender oppression. Through centuries of male chauvinism, the woman has come to accept the misconception that: “To be a woman is a natural infirmity and every woman gets used to it. To be a man is an illusion, an act of violence that requires no justification.” She has therefore become the passive sacrificial lamb, always ready to be sacrificed on the altar of man’s bloated ego. The situation has been compounded by religious fundamentalism and cultural nationalism.

Patriarchy literally means rule of the father in a male-dominated family. It is a social and ideological construct which considers men (who are the patriarchs) as superior to women. Patriarchy is based on a system of power relations which are hierarchical and unequal where men control women’s production, reproduction and sexuality. It imposes masculinity and femininity character stereotypes in society which strengthen the iniquitous power relations between men and women. Patriarchy is not a constant and gender relations which are dynamic and complex have changed over the periods of history. The nature of control and subjugation of women varies from one society to the other as it differs due to the differences in class, caste, religion, region, ethnicity and the socio-cultural practices

The word patriarchy which is frequently used by feminists and writers literally means the rule of the father or the 'patriarch' in a family where the eldest male is the head of the family and controls his wife, children, other members of the family and slaves. According to GerdaLemer, the period of the establishment of patriarchy was not one event but a process which developed over a period of nearly 2500 years from approximately 3100 to 600 BC. As time passed the word patriarchy came to be generally used to refer to male domination in the family, society, polity etc whereby men are the decision makers in all aspects of life. It is a system of social structures and practices in which men selfishly dominate and exploit women to their own satisfaction. It can also be said to be an ideology in which men are seen as superior to women, that women are and should be controlled by men and that they are part of men's properties.

Patriarchy can be seen in almost all the societies in the world. But is should be noted that its nature is different in different societies, in different classes in the same society and also in different periods of history. The family, which is the basic unit of society, can be said to be the most patriarchal. A man is assumed to be the head of the family and it is he who controls women's labor or production and mobility. Decisions about reproduction are also generally under the control of the male members. It is from family that the first lesson of patriarchy is taught and where a hierarchical system is created. The family not merely mirrors the order in the state and educates its children to follow what is being taught; it also creates and constantly reinforces that order. When the children follow this order, the next generation is socialized into those patriarchal ideas through the family.

Men also control the economic institutions. In African countries where majority of the people live in rural areas, land is an important significant form of property. Land determines a person's economic well being, social status, and political power. Men are the ones who own most of the land and hence they tend to have more power than women and very often women had to be subservient to them. So, women had to be dependent on the male members of the family and had to be under their authority. Women even have no control over their own production. They often had to submit whatever they earn to their husbands or to the male head in the family. Even if both the husband and wife are earning, the wife's earnings are mainly used for family maintenance while men kept back their income for spending on food and drinks. So it can be said that women have little access to resources and also have little control on the distribution of the products of their labor. They also have no control on reproduction. The numbers of children were often determined by the husband.

* ***Elements or characteristics of Patriarchy***

Some aspects, elements or characteristics of modern Patriarchy are the following:

1. Patriarchy had a beginning and therefore can have an end. Even if we still do not know how exactly it came into being we do know it came about after millenniums of different more egalitarian human organizing. The earliest forms of Patriarchy only began at the most 6 millenniums ago.
2. We also know that there are different models of Patriarchy at different times and in different cultures and places but the lower value given to women and their roles as compared to men and their roles remains constant in all models. In other words, Patriarchy co-exists with very different forms of government and socio religious political organizing such as empires, kingdoms, theocracies, republics, democracies, etc. and can co-exist very well with capitalism, socialism, etc. However, due to the globalization of neoliberal capitalism, almost all existing Patriarchies today can be categorized as capitalist Patriarchies.
3. In all known Patriarchy negative meanings are attributed to women and their activities through symbols and myths (not always explicitly expressed). These symbols and myths are different in different cultures but within each culture they attribute negative meanings to women or the feminine.
4. Patriarchy is made up of structures or institutions that exclude women from participation in, or contact with, spaces of higher power, or what are believed to be the spaces of greatest power economically, politically, culturally and religiously.
5. Despite the above, women are not treated identically in Patriarchy, nor are all women excluded in the same way from spaces of power. In fact this different treatment is a mechanism by which the lack of solidarity and competitiveness among women is promoted. This lack of solidarity and competitiveness among women sometimes escalate to outright contempt for each other, thus ensuring their loyalty to men and male values.
6. Patriarchy is produced by and at the same time promotes, a mindset based on dichotomous, hierarchical and sexualized thinking. This mindset divides reality into two dichotomous categories placing all of perceived reality either into things and acts associated with nature or things and acts produced by culture. Furthermore, everything placed within the category “culture” is overvalued while everything associated with nature is undervalued. By situating men and the masculine under the higher category of culture, and woman and the feminine under the less valued category of nature, “man” and masculinity become the parameter, model or paradigm of humanity, while the subordination of women is justified based on their alleged inferior "natural roles".
7. In Patriarchy, gender roles and stereotypes may be different in each social class, age and culture but through the mechanisms, structures and institutions mentioned previously, it makes these roles and stereotypes seem natural and universal.
8. In any given Patriarchy all men will not enjoy the same privileges or have the same power. Indeed, the experience of domination of men over women historically served for some men to extend that domination over other groups of men, installing a hierarchy among men that is more or less the same in every culture or region today. The male at the top of the patriarchal hierarchy has great economic power; is an adult and almost always able-bodied; possesses a well-defined, masculine gender identity and a well-defined heterosexual identity, adding a few more features by region.
9. Across Patriarchy’s different models, women are exposed to different degrees and types of violence, some common to all and others specific to each cultural, religious or economic model adopted by the Patriarchy.
10. Patriarchy was the first structure of domination, subordination and exclusion which is recognized as such by History with a capital H (recognized patriarchal history) and still remains a basic system of domination. Ironically, while being the most powerful and enduring system of inequality, it is hardly ever perceived as such even by women themselves. In fact, precisely because the invisibilization of Patriarchy is one of its institutions, even some feminists deny its existence.
	1. **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation(FGM) is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, reflecting deep-rooted inequality between the sexes. Since FGM is almost always carried out on minors, it is also a violation of the rights of children. FGM comprises all procedures that involve ***partial*** or ***total removal*** of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Families, communities and cultures in which FGM is performed have different reasons for doing so. A major motivation is that the practice is believed to ensure the girl conforms to key social norms, such as those related to sexual restraint, femininity, respectability and maturity.

FGM differs from most forms of violence against girls and women in that women are not only the victims but also involved in perpetration. A girl’s female relatives are normally responsible for arranging FGM, which, in turn, is usually performed by traditional female excisers. FGM is also increasingly being done by male and female health-care providers.

FGM also differs from most other forms of violence against women in that, in practicing communities, it is done routinely on almost all girls, usually minors, and is promoted as a highly valued cultural practice and social norm.

* **Types of Female Genital Mutilation**
* **Type 1 – Clitoridectomy:** partial or total removal of the clitoris (a small, sensitive and erectile part of the female genitals) and/or in very rare cases only, the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris).
* **Type 2 – Excision:** partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (the labia are the ‘lips’ that surround the vagina).
* **Type 3 – Infibulation:** narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris.
* **Type 4 – Other:** all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area.
* **Prevalence of FGM in Africa**

There are population-based data on FGM prevalence from all African countries in which the practice has been documented. Estimates suggest that: 100–140 million girls and women worldwide are living with the consequences of FGM; approximately 3.3 million girls are at risk of FGM each year; and in the 28 countries from which national prevalence data exist (27 in Africa and Yemen), more than 101 million girls aged 10 years and older are living with the effects of FGM. FGM is known to be practiced in: 27 countries in Africa and Yemen, especially in the eastern, north-eastern and western regions.

In the 27 countries in Africa for which data are available, national prevalence among women aged 15 years and older ranges from 0.6% (Uganda, 2006) to 97.9% (Somalia, 2006) . There are some regional patterns in FGM prevalence. According to Demographic Health Surveys done during 1989–2002, within north-eastern Africa (Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia and northern Sudan), prevalence was estimated at 80–97%, while in eastern Africa (Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania) it was estimated to be 18–38%. However, prevalence can vary strikingly between different ethnic groups within a single country.

* **Consequences of FGM**

FGM has no health benefits. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and interferes with the natural functions of girls’ and women’s bodies. All forms of FGM can cause immediate bleeding and pain and are associated with risk of infection; the risk of both immediate and long-term complications increases with the extent of the cutting. Socially, the practice is performed in response to strong social conventions and supported by key social norms; thus failure to conform often results in harassment and, exclusion from important communal events and support networks, as well as discrimination by peers. Economically, FGM is a potential financial burden to health systems. A study based on data from six African countries found that costs associated with the medical management of obstetric complications resulting from FGM were equivalent to 0.1–1% of total government spending on women of reproductive age.

* 1. **Early Marriage and Forced Marriage**

In the traditional African setting, marriage was not an option, but an obligatory experience for all adults. It was associated with procreation and without procreation there was no marriage. In an appreciable number of societies, marriages are arranged, and negotiations are handled by the immediate families or by go-betweens. Sometimes betrothals are completed while the future partners are still children. In contrast, the western concept of marriage is different in that the two people getting married choose their partners and decide when to get married. In this case, marriage is seen as a companion between two people to the exclusion of all others and procreation need not result from the union.

Age at marriage varies with societies and at different times. In Africa, for example, age at marriage for females is relatively low. This is because marriage laws do not strictly spell out a minimum age. Kenyan communities, for instance, supported early marriages. It has, however, been observed that with educational opportunities, the median age at marriage is going up. In the industrialized countries, however, marriage before age eighteen was relatively uncommon among the older group of women and continues to remain so among young women.

Early marriages, sometimes referred to as child marriages, fall within the context of arranged marriages. They are still practiced by several communities in African countries including Niger, Chad, Mali, Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Burkina Faso and others.

Child/Early marriage refers to any marriage of a child younger than 18 years old, in accordance to Article 1 of the Convention on the Right of the Child. While child marriage affects both sexes, girls are disproportionately affected as they are the majority of the victims. Their overall development is compromised, leaving them socially isolated with little education, skills and opportunities for employment and self-realization. This leaves child brides more vulnerable to poverty, a consequence of child marriage as well as a cause. Child marriage is now widely recognized as a violation of children's rights, a direct form of discrimination against the girl child who as a result of the practice is often deprived of her basic rights to health, education, development and equality.

Advocates for gender equality and the abandonment of harmful traditional practices (HTPs) argue that early marriage is one of the most harmful practices as it usually denies girls educational opportunities, leads to poverty and economic insecurity and has a serious negative impact on their health and decision-making capacities. It also reinforces other forms of gender-based violence and problems. Early marriage is mostly common in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. It is rampant in Ethiopia, although prevalence varies from one region to another. At the national level, 62% of Ethiopian women aged 20-49 get married before the age of 18.

Types of early marriage in Ethiopia include ***promissory marriage***, whereby a verbal promise is made at infancy or even childbirth by the parents to have their children married; child marriage, in which children under the age of 10 are wedded; and adolescent marriage, which involves girls aged between 10 and 15. In most cases, the child bride is taken to her in-laws immediately after the wedding; in other cases the parents agree that the girl stays with her parents until she is mature enough to live with her husband. In general, husbands are much older than their young wives. Early marriage is a violation of the fundamental rights of the child. Article 21 of the 1990 African Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child states that child marriage and betrothal of girls and boys shall be prohibited and effective action including legislation shall be taken to specify the minimum age of marriage to be 18 years. Also, the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (October 2005) and the newly adopted criminal law of Ethiopia (2005) acknowledge the minimum age of marriage for women to be 18 years and state that marriage shall only take place with full consent of both parties. Unfortunately, knowledge of and respect for the law is limited among many rural communities.

A forced marriage is defined as a marriage "conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and is a marriage in which duress whether physical or emotional is a factor". Some believe that any child marriage constitutes a forced marriage**,** in recognition that even if a child appears to give their consent, anyone under the age of 18 is not able to make a fully informed choice whether or not to marry. Child marriages must be viewed within a context of force and coercion, involving pressure and emotional blackmail and children that lack the choice or capacity to give their full consent.

* **Causes of early marriage**
* ***The desire or need to maintain the family‘s good name and social standing***. For men in particular, the success of their children is a measure of manhood and community status, and a daughter‘s success rests in her making a good marriage and linking her family to another family.
* ***Poverty and economic transactions:*** poverty is a critical factor contributing to child marriage and a common reason why parents may encourage a child to marry. Where poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older - sometimes even elderly - man is believed to benefit the child and her family both financially and socially. In communities where child marriage is practiced marriage is regarded as a transaction, often representing a significant economic activity for a family. A daughter may be the only commodity a family has to be traded and sometimes girls can be used as currency or to settle debts. In Africa the monetary value of bride price, or bride wealth, is linked with marriage.
* ***Notions of morality and honor:*** dominant notions of morality and honor are important factors encouraging the practice of child marriage. These are influenced greatly by the importance placed on maintaining 'family honor' and the high value placed on a girl's virginity. It is considered that a girl brings shame to her family if she was not a virgin when she married. Therefore, in order to ensure that a girl's virtue remains intact, girls may be married earlier, in order to ensure their virginity. Young girls may also be encouraged to marry older men, due to the perception that an older husband will be able to act as a guardian against behavior deemed immoral and inappropriate.

To sum up, reasons for getting married (in order of importance) are:

* It is a tradition
* To strengthen relationships
* For prestige
* Difficult to get married if older
* The family will be victim of gossip
* To earn dowry
* To protect virginity and avoid premarital sex.
* **Consequences Early Marriage**

Early marriage has severe consequences for the health and wellbeing of girls and women.

* Marital instability
* Termination of education
* Married adolescent girls’ inability to negotiate safer sex and other social pressures represent a critical channel of vulnerability to HIV infection.
* Inability to plan or manage families
* Impact on sexual health of women and girls
* Vulnerability to HIV infection
* Higher risks during pregnancies, such as heavy bleeding, fistula, infection, anemia, etc.
* Psychological and social consequences of early marriage are about the imposition of huge responsibility for a young girl to become a wife and mother.