



# Social construction of Gender

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# What does it mean by social construction?

□ In contrast to “sex” we understood that “gender” is not biological, neither universal nor ahistorical.

□ But it is ***socially, region/culture specifically and historically constructed***

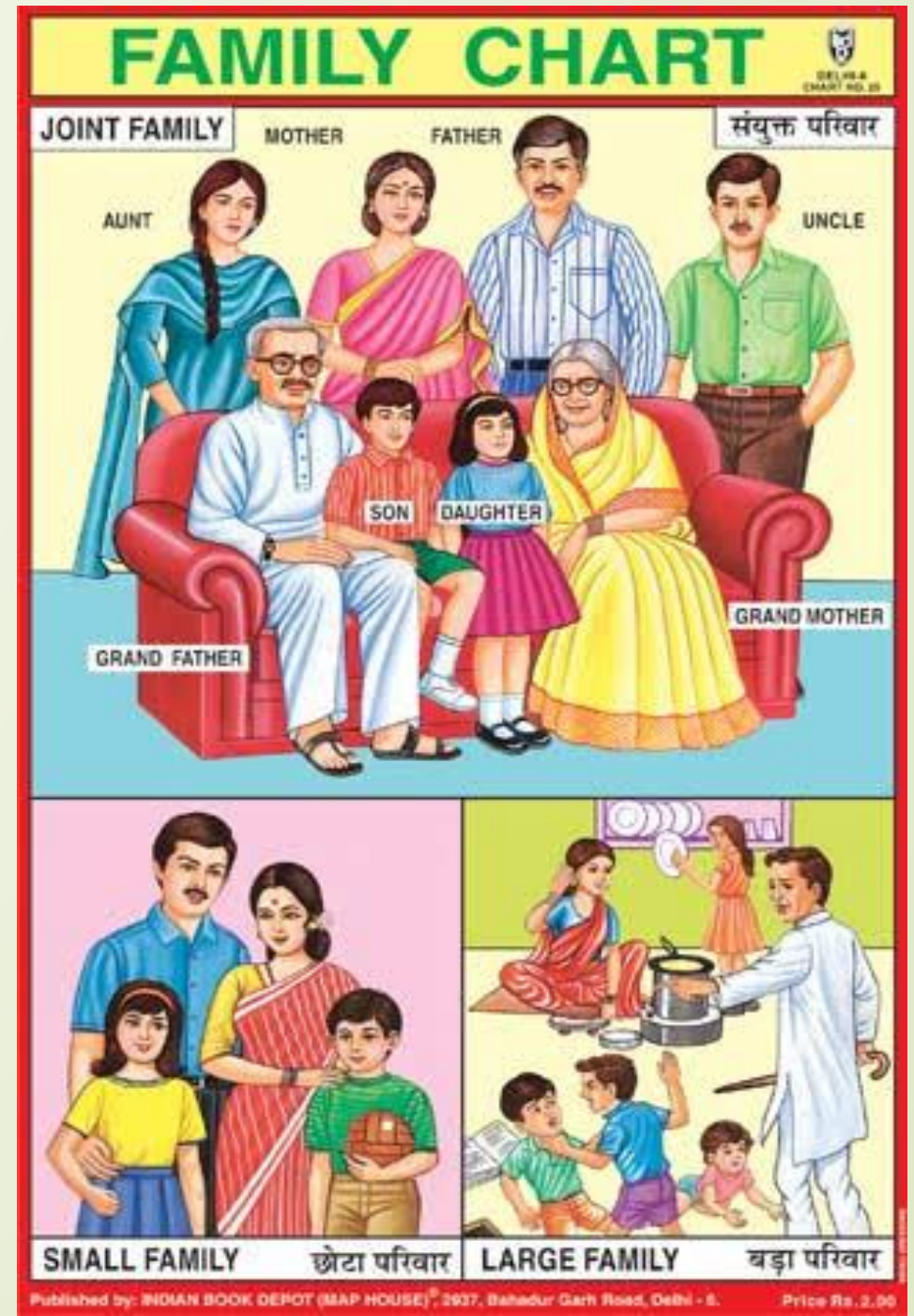
***Every society, every region/culture engineers/constructs its own gender and it changes from time to time***

# Gender definition

- 'Gender' can be best understood by juxtaposing it with another category called 'sex'. Sex, the category which is familiar to us, refers to the 'fact' of one's biology. It refers to the fact of one being a man/woman or male/female. It is precisely because of this that sex is considered as an universal and ahistorical category i.e. a category which is not affected by changes in place and time. Whereas gender is observed to be a social or a cultural category. It refers not to the 'fact' of one's biology, but to the set of traits, behaviours, qualities, values, notions, attitudes, spatial and bodily demarcations etc that are identified as masculine and feminine within a specific social, political and cultural context. Thus gender is neither a universal nor an ahistorical category like sex. But it is a historically contingent and culture-specific category. Gender can be best defined as a technology or the mechanism through which a particular patriarchal society divides us and the world we live in into male and female via a segregation and discrimination of certain bodies, qualities, natures, behaviors, attitudes, work, capabilities, spaces and so on as masculine and feminine.

## From where do we inherit our gender conceptions?

- Family, neighbours and society
- Stories
- Text books and nursery rhymes
- Language
- TV Programmes and advertisements, movies



## A quick recap...

