

## Gender Roles and Social Impact

Have you ever been persuaded or felt obligated to act a certain way based on the people around you? Gender is defined as the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. Gender plays a major role in how we act in front of different sexes. Gender is in our lives everyday whether we realize it or not and we are affected by it in the way we interact with people socially.

Gender I believe is almost entirely stemmed from society's opinion of how we should act and what is considered socially acceptable and what is not. Men and Women are expected to act a certain way and the world has created a standard on what is the “normal way” a man should act and what is the way a woman should act. Gender is explained in two forms being masculine and feminine. Men are associated with masculine attributes and women are associated with feminine attributes. Civilization controls how genders dress, speak, and how emotions are shown. All of these aspects are part of a performance that is put on by the standards of gender.

The first way gender roles are shown is the most obvious and that is the way people dress. Have you ever noticed how overtime styles change, but no matter what changes about the style men and women's clothes never intertwine. The style changes for women as well as men, but with this change gender clothes never cross. Clothes are associated with masculine and feminine looks. Men are supposed to wear something that shows their toughness and to have no emotion when it comes to colors. Men tend to wear colors that are not bright and excessive, this is why most men do not wear pink or purple. On the other end women's clothes are normally associated with bright and flamboyant colors. Most women's clothes also involve showing off

would be judged by society. If a man were to wear a dress he would be dressing out of society's concept of gender.

Another way society has controlled gender is how people speak to each other. It has become a standard for men to be strong spoken and independent and for women to be soft spoken. It has been an outlook of society that when a man raises his voice he is defending himself or voicing his opinion and when a woman speaks up she is “overreacting”. I believe this is changing, but from a day to day standard it seems that collectively humanity still views it this way.

Society also impacts Gender associated emotions for each masculine and feminine attribute. Whether or not a man or woman wants to feel a certain way we have created a basis for how we should act around other people in a group based on our gender emotions. Masculinity with emotions has been a very strong correlation over the years. We have made a standard where men are not supposed to show any emotions when it comes to sadness. If a man is seen crying he is seen as weak and vulnerable, this is seen as the opposite for females and feminine emotions. Since there has been a culture created for these emotions we can often feel judged if we do not fit into these emotional categories created.

A reason for the push for Gender in society and why it continues to thrive throughout the years is because of collective consciousness. Collective consciousness is best defined as a set of shared beliefs, ideas, and moral attitudes which operate as a unifying force within society. People like to feel safe and accepted by people around them and do not like to feel out of place. So if a law is set then most people are going to follow it whether they agree or disagree with it, but if everyone else follows it they too will begin to want to become a part of a system. Collective

displaying the same qualities and feelings as them.

Along with collective consciousness Erving Goffman's theory of the self is a tool that furthers society's impact of gender. Goffman said that when you are in front of a crowd a performance occurs and you play a role to be accepted. The front stage and back stage are a vital tool that people use to prepare for judging gender roles. The front stage is when the performance occurs and the backstage is the safe space you have created to prepare for the front stage. The reason for this is for people to believe what they think they look like in front of other people.

In the case of dressing the collective consciousness plays a big part in this factor. There is a standard for how men and women should dress. Collective consciousness creates a moral way of dressing for each gender. Even if a man or woman does not want to dress a certain way pertaining to their gender they would feel obligated to because of the moral boundary created through a combined moral standard applied. The collective consciousness created a set of beliefs that a man must always wear masculine clothes and a woman must always wear feminine clothes. This is why we don't see women or men wearing clothes of the opposite gender's. Society has agreed upon a shared gender narrative and this causes people to create a culture that creates unity among gender of what is appropriate clothing.

Erving Goffman's theory of the self impacts society's impact on gender greatly. Since the standard on gender is established clearly people tend to act a certain way when around others. This particularly pertains to acting their gender while putting on a performance of what their assigned gender relates to. While for example a woman is around a group she feels obligated to act feminine in hopes of others accepting her performance and her being incorporated into what is considered an acceptable act. This act is considered the front stage and while performing this

own gender. The front stage helps a man or woman establish their gender further. The backstage is a person's safe space to observe and learn how to become more like their gender.

For example the collective consciousness impacts a gender to pressure and a domino like effect occurs. Throughout time people have based around and it caused this to become normal for men to be seen as weak if they do not defend themselves when conflict arises. Think of it like if a fight were to break out, if one man wanted to fight and started calling the other guy hurtful names and the other man didn't want to fight he would be seen as weak. This is because humanity has built and shared collective consciousness that men must be tough and show their masculinity. This also is why many conflicts happen because it creates a sense of defence mechanism for men when their masculinity is put into question. This also plays into effect when it comes to feminine qualities. There has been an impact on women to always be beautiful no matter the time of day. Society has created a standard through many outlets for women's beauty including movies, beauty commercials, and social media. This causes humanity to create a collective belief that women always have to look like a supermodel and if they don't they are seen as below the standard and are not accepted by some part of humanity in a way. Even though this is completely wrong it continues to be a standard because it has been embedded in people's minds and if someone were to break this standard they would be seen as an outcast. This is the reason why strong gender roles have stayed very strong throughout the years because it holds the thought of being alone in people's consciousness.

An example of Erving Goffman's theory of the self and how it plays into gender is quite simple. Men and women have learned that when they are in front of other people they must put on a masculine and feminine performance in front of others in order to be credited or receive

person is being monitored in a way to see if their performance is credible or not. In this case the group is investigating to see if the man is putting on a credible masculine performance and if the woman is putting on a credible feminine performance. This performance is only seen as credible when the group believes the performance is true. This can be done in many ways for a man. It might be talking about sports or girls that they are interested in. For women it could be looking beautiful or talking about shoes they are interested in. This act is known as the front stage when in action. This is where the gender roles are put into play and is part of the performance being put on. The front stage is the part that is being prepared for in the backstage part of the performance. In this case the back stage can be a place where the man or woman prepares for their performance and how they will get credible facts to become credible. This can be done when people are finding ways to fit into their gender role.

Gender is ever changing masculine and feminine traits are almost entirely impacted by the people we surround ourselves with and what that group's standard of gender roles is. We are affected by society's collective consciousness and what the new accepted gender roles will be. Society as a whole will always control how each gender dresses, speaks, and how emotions are shown in a group setting. The collective consciousness of humanity will not be controlled through one individual's outlook, but as a collective thought of what is an acceptable performance by a man or a woman. In the case of Erving Goffman people will always want to fit in and be accepted by others, implying that no matter what one individual feels gender should be they will continue to prepare for their gender performance in front of others. The front stage will always be the main critical point for someone to feel accepted. Gender has been and will continue to change with time, but it is not until society as a whole agrees for it to change that any

acceptable to be displayed in society.