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Twelfth Edition

Child Development

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Gender Chapter 12 Outline

Influences on Gender Development

- Biological Influences
- Social Influences
- Cognitive Influences

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences

- Gender Stereotyping
- Gender Similarities and Differences

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Gender Chapter 12 Outline (continued)

Gender-Role Classification

- What is Gender-Role Classification?
- Masculinity in Childhood and Adolescence
- Gender-Role Transcendence
- Gender in Context

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Chapter 12 Preview

What exactly do we mean by gender? Gender refers to the characteristics of people as males and females.

A gender role is a set of expectations that prescribe how females and males should act, think, and feel.

Gender typing is the process by which children acquire the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are considered appropriate for their gender in a particular culture.

We will begin this chapter by examining various influences on gender development and then turn our attention to gender stereotypes, similarities, and differences. We will also discuss how gender roles are classified.

Influences on Gender Development

Biological Influences

- In the 1920s researchers confirmed the existence of *human sex chromosomes*, the genetic material that determines our sex.
- Humans normally have 46 chromosomes, arranged in pairs.
- A 23rd pair with two X-shaped chromosomes produces a female.
- A 23rd pair with an X chromosome and a Y chromosome produces a male.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Biological Influences

Hormones

- Estrogens
 - primarily influence development of female physical sex characteristics
 - help regulate the menstrual cycle
- general class of hormones
- In females, estrogens are produced mainly by the ovaries.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Biological Influences (continued)

Hormones (continued)

- Androgens
 - produced by the adrenal glands in males and females, and by the testes in males
 - primarily promote development of male genitals and secondary sex characteristics
- important androgen- testosterone

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Biological Influences (continued)

Hormones (continued)

- Unusual levels of sex hormones during early fetal development may result in anatomical anomalies and problems in gender development, such as:
 - Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH)
 - Androgen-insensitive males
 - Pelvic field defect
- In addition, inappropriate sex reassignment may also occur after birth.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Biological Influences (continued)

The Evolutionary Psychology View:

- holds that evolutionary adaptation during the evolution of humans produced psychological differences between males and females (Buss, 1995, 2000, 2004, 2007, 2008)
 - Males evolved dispositions that favor:
 - violence,
 - competition
 - risk taking
 - Females evolved dispositions devoted to:
 - parenting
 - choosing mates who can provide their offspring with resources and protection

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Biological Influences (continued)

The Evolutionary Psychology View (continued)

— Criticisms of evolutionary psychology

- Its hypotheses are backed by speculations about prehistory, not evidence,
- People are not locked into behavior that was adaptive in the evolutionary past.
- It pays little attention to cultural and individual variations in gender differences (Matlin, 2008; Smith, 2007).

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Social Influences

Social Role Theory:

- gender differences result from the contrasting roles of women and men
 - In most cultures around the world, women have less power and status than men have and they control fewer resources (Wood & Eagly, 2007).
 - In Eagly’s view, as women adapted to roles with less power and less status in society, they showed more cooperative, less dominant profiles than men.
 - The social hierarchy and division of labor are important causes of gender differences in power, assertiveness, and nurture (Wood & Eagly, 2007).

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Social Influences (continued)

The Psychoanalytic Theory of Gender:

- stems from Freud’s view that the pre-school child develops erotic feelings toward the opposite-sex parent.
- At 5 or 6 years of age, the child renounces these feelings and identifies with the same-sex parent, unconsciously adopting the same-sex parent’s characteristics.
- Developmentalists do not believe gender development proceeds as Freud proposed (Callan, 2001).

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Social Influences (continued)

The Social Cognitive Approach

- Children's gender development occurs through observation and imitation, and through the rewards and punishments children experience for gender-appropriate and gender-inappropriate behavior (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).
- Parents, by action and example, influence their children's and adolescents' gender development (Bronstein, 2006; Maccoby, 2007; Leaper & Friedman, 2007).
- Once the label girl or boy is assigned, virtually everyone, from parents to siblings to strangers, begins treating the infant differently.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Parents Influence Their Children's Gender Development by Action and Example.

Theory	Processes	Outcome
Psychoanalytic theory	Sexual attraction to opposite-sex parent at 3 to 5 years of age; anxiety about sexual attraction and subsequent identification with same-sex parent at 5 to 6 years of age	Gender behavior similar to that of same-sex parent
Social cognitive theory	Rewards and punishments of gender-appropriate and -inappropriate behavior by adults and peers; observation and imitation of models' masculine and feminine behavior	Gender behavior

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Social Influences (continued)

The Social Cognitive Approach (continued)

- Mothers and fathers often interact differently with sons and daughters.
- Phyllis Bronstein (2006) recently concluded:
 - **Mothers' Socialization Strategies**
 - Mothers socialize their daughters to be more obedient and responsible than their sons. They also place more restrictions on daughters' autonomy.
 - **Fathers' Socialization Strategies**
 - Fathers show more attention to sons than daughters, engage in more activities with sons, and put forth more effort to promote sons' intellectual development.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Expectations for Boys and Girls



Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

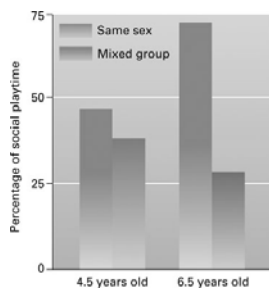
Social Influences (continued)

The Social Cognitive Approach (continued)

- Children also learn about gender from observing other adults in the neighborhood and in the media (Fagot, Rodgers, & Leinbach, 2000).
- As children get older, peers become increasingly important.
- Children show a clear preference for being with and liking same-sex peers, and this tendency usually becomes stronger during the middle and late childhood years (Maccoby, 2002).

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Developmental Changes in Percentage of Time Spent in Same-Sex and Mixed-Group Settings



Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Cognitive Influences (continued)

Cognitive Developmental Theory of Gender

- In this view, children’s gender-typing occurs after they think of themselves as boys and girls.
- Once children consistently conceive of themselves as male or female, children prefer activities, objects, and attitudes consistent with this label.

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Cognitive Influences (continued)

Gender Schema Theory:

- gender-typing emerges as children gradually develop gender schemas of what is gender-appropriate and gender-inappropriate in their culture
- **Schema:**
 - cognitive structure, a network of associations that guides an individual’s perceptions
- **Gender schema:**
 - organizes the world in terms of female and male

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Cognitive Influences (continued)

Gender Schema Theory (continued)

- **Gender constancy:**
 - understanding that sex remains the same, even though activities, clothing, and hair style might change

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

The Development of Gender-Typed Behavior According to the Cognitive Development and Gender Schema Theories of Gender Development

Theory	Processes	Emphasis
Cognitive developmental theory	Development of gender constancy, especially around 6 to 7 years of age, when conservation skills develop; after children develop ability to consistently conceive of themselves as male or female, children often organize their world on the basis of gender, such as selecting same-sex models to imitate	Cognitive readiness facilitates gender identity
Gender schema theory	Sociocultural emphasis on gender-based standards and stereotypes; children's attention and behavior are guided by an internal motivation to conform to these gender-based standards and stereotypes, allowing children to interpret the world through a network of gender-organized thoughts	Gender schemas reinforce gender behavior

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Cognitive Influences (continued)

Young Children's Gender Schemas of Occupations

- Despite the fact that increasing numbers of men and women are now entering jobs historically associated with the other sex, many occupations in the American culture remain strongly "gendered."
- Cognitive factors contribute to the way children think and act as males and females. Through biological, social, and cognitive processes, children develop their gender attitudes and behaviors (Lippa, 2005).

Influences on Gender Development (cont.)

Children's Judgments about the Competence of Men and Women in Gender-Stereotyped Occupations

	Boy	Girl
"Masculine Occupations"		
Percentage who judged men more competent	87	70
Percentage who judged women more competent	13	30
"Feminine Occupations"		
Percentage who judged men more competent	35	8
Percentage who judged women more competent	64	92

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences

Gender Stereotyping

Gender Stereotypes:

- general impressions and beliefs about females and males

Traditional Masculinity and Femininity

- early 1970s study- assessed which traits and behaviors college students believed were characteristic of females and which they believed were characteristic of males (Broweman & others, 1972).
 - traits associated with males were labeled *instrumental*:
 - included characteristics such as being independent, aggressive, and power-oriented
 - traits associated with females were labeled *expressive*:
 - included characteristics such as being warm and sensitive

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Stereotyping and Culture

- Recent research continues to find that gender stereotyping is pervasive (Travis, 2006).

Developmental Changes in Gender Stereotyping

- Even when adults don't explicitly engage in gender stereotyping when talking with children, they provide children with information about gender by categorizing gender, labeling gender, and contrasting males and females.
- Children use cues to construct an understanding of gender and to guide their behavior (Leaper & Bigler, 2004).

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Developmental Changes in Gender Stereotyping

- Gender stereotyping continues to change during middle and late childhood and adolescence (Ruble, Martin, & Berenbaum, 2006).
- By the time children enter elementary school, they have considerable knowledge about which activities are linked with being male or female.
- Across the elementary school years, children become more flexible in their gender attitudes (Trautner & others, 2005).
- By late adolescence, gender attitudes become more flexible.

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences

Physical Similarities and Differences

- Women have about twice the body fat of men, most concentrated around breasts and hips. In males, fat is more likely to go to the abdomen.
- On the average, males grow to be 10 % taller than females.
- Androgens promote the growth of long bones.
- Estrogens stop such growth at puberty.
- Many physical differences between men and women are tied to health.

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences (continued)

Physical Similarities and Differences (continued)

- Females have a longer life expectancy than males.
- Females are less likely than males to develop physical or mental disorders.
- Females are more resistant to infection and their blood vessels are more elastic than males'.
- Males have higher levels of stress hormones, which cause faster clotting and higher blood pressure.

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences (continued)

Physical Similarities and Differences (continued)

- Female and male brains are very similar (Hwang & others, 2004; Hyde, 2007a).
- However, researchers have found some differences (Goldstein & others, 2001; Hofer & others, 2006, 2007):
 - Female brains are smaller than male brains but female brains have more folds; the larger folds (*convolutions*) allow more surface brain tissue within the skulls of females than in males (Luders & others, 2004).
 - One part of the hypothalamus involved in sexual behavior tends to be larger in men than in women (Swaab & others, 2001).

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences (continued)

Socioemotional Similarities and Differences

- Relationships (continued)
 - Tannen believes that girls are more relationship-oriented than boys, but critics believe that the differences are overemphasized and depend on such contextual factors as:
 - group size
 - speaking with peers or adults
 - familiarity
 - age

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences (continued)

Socioemotional Similarities and Differences (continued)

- Aggression
 - Boys are more physically aggressive than girls.
 - Girls are more likely to engage in verbal or relational aggression.
- Emotion and Its Regulation
 - Males usually show less self-regulation than females, and this low self-control can translate into behavioral problems.

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Gender Stereotyping (continued)

Gender Similarities and Differences (continued)

Socioemotional Similarities and Differences (continued)

- Prosocial Behavior
 - A review of research found that across childhood and adolescence, females engaged in more prosocial behavior (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).
 - Females view themselves as more prosocial and empathic, and they also engage in more prosocial behavior than males (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006).

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Caring for Children

Guiding Children's Gender Development

Boys

- Encourage boys to be sensitive in relationships and engage in more prosocial behavior.
- Encourage boys to be less physically aggressive.
- Encourage boys to handle their emotions more effectively.
- Work with boys to improve their school performance.

Gender Stereotypes, Similarities, and Differences (cont.)

Caring for Children (continued)

Guiding Children's Gender Development (continued)

Girls

- Encourage girls to be proud of their relationship skills and caring.
- Encourage girls to develop their self-competencies.
- Encourage girls to be more self-assertive.
- Encourage girls' achievement.

Gender-Role Classification

What is Gender-Role Classification?

- Instead of describing masculinity and femininity as a continuum in which more of one means less of the other, it is proposed that individuals can have both masculine and feminine traits.

Androgyny:

- presence of masculine and feminine characteristics in the same person
- Gender experts argue that androgynous individuals are more flexible, competent, and mentally healthy than their masculine or feminine counterparts.

Gender-Role Classification (cont.)

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory: Are You Androgynous?

The following items are from the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. When taking the BSRI, a person is asked to indicate on a 7-point scale how well each of the 60 characteristics describes herself or himself. The scale ranges from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (always or almost always true).

EXAMPLES OF MASCULINE ITEMS	EXAMPLES OF FEMININE ITEMS
Defends open beliefs	Does not use harsh language
Forceful	Affectionate
Willing to take risks	Loves children
Dominant	Understanding
Aggressive	Gentle

Scoring: The items are scored on independent dimensions of masculinity and femininity as well as androgyny and undifferentiated classifications.

Gender-Role Classification (cont.)

Masculinity in Childhood and Adolescence

- There is a special concern about boys who adopt a strong masculine role in adolescence because this is associated with problem behaviors.
 - In the Western male adolescent culture, male adolescents believe they will be thought of as more masculine if they engage in premarital sex, drink alcohol, take drugs, and participate in illegal delinquent activities.

Gender-Role Classification (cont.)

Gender-Role Transcendence:

- an alternative to androgyny
- The view that when an individual's competence is at issue, it should be conceptualized on a personal basis rather than on the basis of masculinity, femininity, or androgyny.

Gender-Role Classification (cont.)**Gender in Context**

- Different gender roles might be more appropriate depending on the context or setting involved.
- Although gender roles in the U. S. have become increasingly similar in recent decades, in many countries deviations from traditional gender-role orientations are severely disapproved of.
- In many cultures, gender-specific behavior is pronounced and females have low-status positions with limited access to education; however, evidence of gender equality is beginning to appear around the world.

E-LEARNING TOOLS

To help you master the material in this chapter, visit the Online Learning Center for Child Development, twelfth edition at:

<http://www.mhhe.com/santrockcd12>
