KULIAH MINGGU 12
DIFFERENTIATING ‘SEX’ AND ‘GENDER’

• Although the terms “sex” and “gender” are often used interchangeably, sociologists differentiate between the two.

• **Sex refers** to an individual’s membership in one of two biologically distinct categories—male or female.

• **Gender refers** to the physical, behavioral, and personality traits that a group considers normal for its male and female members.
GENDER ROLES

• Patterns of attitude and behavior that a society expects of its member because they are female or male.

• Gender roles are based on:

1. **Stereotypes** – about how men and women behave

(i) Women: homemaker, take care of family
(ii) Men: work outside, provide food for family, security etc.
GENDER ROLES

2. Expectations – about how they should behave:

(i) Women: supposed to be shy, passive, weak, emotional, cry easily, sexually passive, dependent

(ii) Men: supposed to be ambitious, aggressive, strong, control emotions, sexually experienced, independent
GENDER ROLES SOCIALIZATION

• Is the **lifelong process of learning** to be masculine or feminine, primarily through four main agents of socializations:
  – Families
  – Schools
  – Peers
  – Media
GENDER ROLES SOCIALIZATION

• **Families** are usually the *primary source of socialization* and greatly impact gender role socialization.

• **Social Learning Theory** suggests that the babies and children learn behaviors and meanings through *social interaction and internalize* the expectations of those around them.

• Remember: we learn gender, we are not born knowing who wears pink right!
GENDER ROLES SOCIALIZATION

• **Schools** also socialize children into their gender roles.

• For instance, research shows that teachers *treat boys and girls differently*.

• This may teach children that there are **different expectations** of them, based on their sex.

• In most societies, peer groups are an important agent of socialization.

• Teens are rewarded by peers when they conform to gender **norms and stigmatized** when they do not.
Finally, there is no question that sex-role behavior is portrayed in a highly stereotypical manner in all forms of the media: television, movies, magazines, books, video games, and so on.
GENDER INEQUALITY

SEXISM

POLITICS

GENDER INEQUALITY

EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT
GENDER INEQUALITY - SEXISM

• Prejudice and discrimination based on one’s gender.
• The belief that women are inferior to men.
• If women tend to be aggressive, consider as abnormal in the society.

• Sexism produce inequality in two ways:
  – Active form of discrimination – men receive higher pay and rewards.
  – Less direct – being socialized to feel inferior, women may lower their expectation / aiming less.
GENDER INEQUALITY - EDUCATION

• Those days, **women are not allowed** to go to school or enter colleges.
• The more prestigious the educational institution, the more strongly it discriminated against women – Harvard’s was last to admit women, in 1963!
• Now, **more women attending and graduating** from college/universities
• Education has apparently provided **more equal opportunity** for young people of both sexes than any other social institution.
• More **women are studying in university** nowadays.
GENDER INEQUALITY - EMPLOYMENT

• **Women typically hold lower-status**, lower-paying jobs such as nursing, teaching, secretarial work and cleaning.

• These are **subordinate to** position held by men – nurse are subordinate to doctors.

• If women hold same jobs as men with same qualification and skills, yet they tend to earn less.

• Men need to **STOP** the discrimination against women.
GENDER INEQUALITY - POLITICS

- Women felt that politics is male activity and they shouldn’t involve in that dirty world.
- If women campaign, she is regarded as neglectful wife/mother but as for men - considered as great political assets.
- How many women are actively involved in Malaysian politics?
- We need more women to participate in politics and becomes leaders as well.
SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES: GENDER
FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE: INSTRUMENTAL VERSUS EXPRESSIVE ROLES

- It is functional for society to assign different tasks to men and women.
- This division of labor based on the physical differences.
- Two basic roles must be fulfilled in any group:
  - **Instrumental role** – requires performance of a task [going out to work, make money, assertiveness and dominance].
  - **Expressive role** – requires taking care of personal relationship [offering love & affection, emotional]
CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE: ECONOMICS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

• It’s arose because men were able to exploit women:

(i) Economics exploitation
• By restricting women to childbearing and household chores, men have ensured their own freedom.
• Men have directly exploited women by getting them to do a great deal of work with little or no pay.
• Working women also do most of the housework and child care even they work as much as men.

(ii) Sexual exploitation
• Some sociologist argues the fundamental motive is the desire for sexual satisfaction.
SYMBOLIC INTERACTION PERSPECTIVE: INTERACTION BETWEEN THE SEXES

(i) Verbal interaction

• Men usually talk more often, tend to interrupt, like to boast and women tend to speak more softly and politely.

• So because of their verbal aggression, men are considered highly competent, having their arguments and decisions accepted and getting promotions.

(ii) Non-verbal interaction

• Women give such low-status signals as smiling, nodding, holding arms to their bodies and keep legs together.

• Men are likely to use high-status gestures as smiling only occasionally, holding heads still and standing legs spread apart.

• Women showed non-aggressive gesture which make men more aggressive and show power.
THANK YOU