DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES
Facts

• DHC was found as 3rd most common issues in marriage (after fidelity/sexuality; financial) in a nationwide poll in USA

• Research showed that both men & women tend to “over reporting” on what they do

• In general, both spend comparable time working outside home

• Women still do more at home

• Both spent time on “different activities” differently (i.e. childcare for women = real “care”; men = play)
READ!!!

"Do you do your fair share of housework?" by gender, Married Persons 18-65 years old. Source: GSS, 2012.
Factors that influence DHC

Personal
Interpersonal
Contextual

What is equal? Fair?
• Marriage involves sharing of responsibilities of paid work, childcare and household work between spouses,
• but, often one spouse will take the lead in one area, while the other spouse will pitch in.
• Couples MUST discuss:
  – what an equitable distribution of responsibilities looks like,
  – who will take the lead in certain responsibilities, and
  – how the burdens of family life can be equitably divided.

Equitable sharing of responsibilities may not always mean that every responsibility is equally divided.
Things to do in DHC:

1. List down all tasks that are to be divided (between spouse / children)
2. Ensure the tasks are in accord with “ability, talent, degree of expertise @ what one does best” and not tradition-based only (for children – in accord with their developmental stages)
3. Identify if rotation is needed
4. Provide continual encouragement, recognition & appreciation on the efforts – doers – do you job at your level best
5. Be flexible and open for discussions, negotiation
6. Some jobs are best done “TOGETHER” – enjoy the time spent on the “togetherness”
7. Treat the tasks as “own duties and not just “helping the other(s)”
GENDER ROLE
ARE WOMEN & MEN DIFFERENT? T/F

1. Women are the weaker sex.
2. Boys are more group centered, active & aggressive than girls.
3. Women are more emotional than men.
4. Women talk more than men.
5. Women suffer more from depression.
6. Women are more likely than men to divulge personal information.
7. Men smile more often than women.
8. Women & men don’t care a baby is a boy or a girl (“just as long as it’s healthy”)
9. Most women are confident about managing their financial affairs.
10. A heart attack is more likely to be fatal for a man than for a woman.
WHAT IS

• SEX?

– Biological characteristics which we are born – chromosomal, anatomical, hormonal & other physical & physiological attributed

– Sex determines our behaviour i.e. – shaving, wear bras; but does not determine how we feel, think and act
WHAT IS

• GENDER?
  – Learned attitudes & behaviours that characterize people of one sex or the other
  – Based on social expectation (not physical traits)

***Think of gender & sex from the nature vs nurture perspective***
WHAT IS

• Gender identity?
  – Perception of self as either masculine or feminine
  – Typically responds to a person’s biological sex – learned in early childhood & fixed through-out life ( 
WHAT IS

• Gender roles?
  – Characteristics, attitudes, feelings & behaviours that society expects of females & males
  – Things that are learned through-out our socialization process

• Gender stereotypes? – expectations about gender roles based on sex

IS OUR LIFE “GENDERED”?
What is Gender Role

• The role or behaviour learned by a person as appropriate to their gender, determined by the prevailing cultural norms.

• “A set of behaviours that indicates one's gender, specifically the image projected by a person that identifies their femaleness or maleness; an overt public presentation of gender identity “

  http://www.dictionary.com/browse/gender-role

• Behaviours of men & women that are considered socially appropriate are called gender roles. Some researchers considered GR as cultural & personal
1. He is firm, but she is stubborn
2. He is careful, but she is picky
3. He is honest, but she is opinionated
4. He is raising good points, but she is “bitching”
5. He is a man of the world, but she is “been around”
Traditional Gender Roles - Men

- Men – family providers (esp. financially)
- Considered responsible for guiding the family.
- While they may listen to what their wives had to say, they made the final decisions.
- Men did not do household duties or childcare.
- They felt the need to be strong and refrained from showing too much emotion or sharing too many personal feelings, especially with those outside of the family.
Traditional Gender Roles - Women

• Women were expected to be in charge of running the household - laundry, prepare meals, and cleaning; take care of the children (them the care and attention that was required.

• The wealthier families might hire a nanny, and childcare became more widely used in the later 20th century.

• But the women were often in charge of directing the nannies and dropping off or picking up from daycare.

• Women were seen as more emotional than men, more likely and more encouraged to open up about their feelings.
How did we learn it?

- Gender roles are passed on through generations.
- From the age of 3, children are aware of the differences between girls & boys based on the actions of the parents and the nature of their environment.
- As the children grow, they start learning what behaviour is appropriate and expected.
- The behaviour is reinforced by praises or rewards for their children for their actions.
- They can also be punished and challenged to change, if it's considered inappropriate.
- Children are also encouraged to serve different roles in their interactions with the outside world.
- Boys are often encouraged to exert themselves in physical activity, and girls are typically given more attention to how they look and present themselves.
• Gender roles are cultural and personal.
• They determine how males and females should think, speak, dress, and interact within the context of society.
• Learning plays a role in this process of shaping gender roles. These gender schemas are deeply embedded cognitive frameworks regarding what defines masculine and feminine.
• While various socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, movies, television, music, books, and religion—teach and reinforce gender roles throughout the lifespan, parents probably exert the greatest influence, especially on their very young offspring.
• Since gender role is “learned” (not innate) – it is changable
Gender Role & Marriage

- As an internal asset, gender role attitude shapes one’s behaviour
- Influence communication, decision making, division of household chores, conflict management etc – maybe EVERY SINGLE ASPECT of married life
- Modernisation leads to many changes thus demand for changes in gender role
- More “blurry” on who does what
- More egalitarian
CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE
MARITAL QUALITY?

marital success/ happiness? satisfaction? adjustment
Definition

• An umbrella term to imply:

• Happiness, satisfaction, adjustment, stability etc. “all things considered, it is a good marriage”

• COMMON characteristics of long lasting marriages:
  – Mutual respect, common goals, supportive spouse, effective communication & problem solving
Marital Quality ? Marital Success?

- Key constructs: **Satisfaction & Stability**
- **Marital satisfaction** = subjective evaluation of one’s own marriage (as a good, satisfying or not) – often link with marital conflict, contentment, commitment, happiness
- **Marital stability** = whether the marriage is intact / whether any of the spouse has suggested / initiated divorce
Predictors of SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

Personal factors
Interpersonal factors
Contextual factors
The (not-so) secret recipe

- Compatibility
- Flexibility
- Positive attitude
- Communication & conflict resolution
- Emotional support
Conflict in Marriage

• Marriage may at times be looked upon as a power struggle.
• According to Reactance Theory, when someone tries to force us to engage in a behaviour, even though the behaviour is consistent with our attitudes, we are likely to resist and even change our attitudes.
• Lack of conflict is not necessarily the sign of a good marriage.
• Conflict is often taken as a negative construct – it is the handling of conflict that determines whether conflict is positive or not.
• Healthy marriages have some degree of conflict.
• Conflict can have both positive and negative consequences for a marriage. But conflict need not have deleterious consequences.
• Well-managed conflict also has a number of other positive functions:
  – conflict brings issues out into the open;
  – conflict helps clarify issues;
  – conflict can promote growth;
  – small conflicts help to defuse more serious conflict; and
  – conflict can create and maintain an equitable balance of power.
• If a marriage is generally satisfying, the amount of conflict tends to diminish over time.
• Conflict occurs about decisions; attention and rewards; division and fulfilment of responsibility; sex, and bad behaviour.
• People fight about everything and anything.
• WHY do they fight???
• Unresolved & prolonged conflict often resulted in deep wound that are hard to heal
Destructive Consequences of Conflict

• A. Frustration = when an important need is being blocked or when an important satisfaction is being denied.

B. Rejection and Betrayal - resulting in
  – Rejection follows conflict involving a basic needs going unmet
  – Emotional involvement with another person usually involves dropping the defenses we normally keep in place - Therefore: rejection by an intimate we have come to trust and upon whom we rely is a very basic form of Betrayal.
  – Lowered Self-Esteem
  – Displacement
MARITAL BURNOUT INDICATORS

1. Lost of interest in each other
2. Bored with each other
3. Lack of effective communication (poor listening)
4. Having so little in common
5. Deep down, you want a divorce
6. Lack of flexibility; can no longer compromise
7. Minor irritations become major issues
8. No longer try to del honestly with important issues
9. Making family decisions alone
10. No desire for physical intimacy (even touching)
11. Relationship with other people are more intimate than relationship with spouse
12. Children began to act up (school problems, fights etc)
13. Control over spouse via tantrums, violence, threats
14. Put individual interest before the good of marriage
15. Can not talk on any sensitive subject – sex, money, politics, religion etc
16. Avoid each other
17. Humiliate spouse in public
18. Increasing health problems
19. Substance abuse
20. Decrease attendance in family functions
21. Easily irritated, sarcastic
22. Staying in the relationship because it is easier than being on your own
23. Refusal / do not engage in join activities

Source: Stinnett & Defrain, 1985; & Kayser, 1993
READ MORE

- Conflict management
- Research on marital success / marital quality / marital stability