

Gender Roles and Gender Norms

Gender Roles refer to the tasks, behaviours, and functions society associates with people based on their gender.

Examples include:

- Men are considered breadwinners and caretakers. Women are considered responsible for taking care of the home and children.
- Men are assumed to be doctors while women to be nurses.
- Daughters are expected to be nurturing and helpful. Boys are encouraged to follow their ambitions and given more freedom.

Gender Norms are unwritten rules that dictate how women and men should exist, behave, and interact with others within a specific society or community based on their gender. They can be harder to detect as they operate on a deeper level of core beliefs.

Examples include:

- Boys don't cry. Women are too emotional.
- Aging in men is a sign of maturity. Aging in women is viewed negatively.
- Caregiving and household chores are women's work.

Gender norms can vary between cultures and time periods as they depend on society's constantly evolving expectations.

Gender norms are developed and reinforced through media, socialization, family, educational institutions, social institutions, and culture.

- Different play environments, toys, and clothing for girls compared to boys (girls play with dolls, boys play sports, girls help mom in the kitchen, etc.).
- Teachers or parents may praise girls for being quiet or discourage boys from sharing their feelings.
- TV and movies may depict male characters as heroic and violent, while female characters as objects of desire.

Children or adults who resist these gender norms are often criticized or ridiculed.

