Part-1

This part introduces topic of Research and has four chapters (Chapter 1-4). It contains Introduction, Significance of Study, Theoretical Orientation & Review of Literature.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
Gender affects our social lives. Gender relations are constituted in terms of the relations of power and dominance that shape human interaction and gender analysis seeks to unravel this equation. In this chapter we shall start by examining the meaning of gender and understand the sociological incorporation of this term in its lexicon. We then move on to examine what it means to be a man and woman in this society. Next, we examine this social being in terms of their role as a professional, followed by their role as a family person. Finally, we conclude this chapter by trying to understand and relate all the above.

What is 'Gender' in Sociology?

'Gender' emphasizes the social construction of masculinity & femininity and the social ordering of relations between men & women. The concept of gender can be said to be incorporated into mainstream sociology in the early 1970's.

Before that, research had been done on sex roles, though this was marginal to sociology's core concern. This was because sociology had for the most part studied the world of men by men.

The founding father of sociology (Comte, Durkheim, Marx &Weber) were mainly concerned with the social world of men, as women to them did not play any significant part in the social world.
Even when researches began including women subjects as part of their research on the social world, their activities and their place in society was seen to be as naturally given & nonetheless unproblematic because of sex. In fact some of the traditional ideas regarding the relations between men and women can be traced back to this era. For e.g., the separation of the work place from the domestic sphere was accompanied by the notion that women & men were suited to separate spheres and that a woman’s place was in the home (Hall 1992 Davidoff & Hall-1987)₁.

Early anthropological & sociological studies of sex roles paved the way for the later conceptualisation of gender.

One of the pioneering works on sex differences was anthropologist Margaret Mead’s work titled “Sex & temperament in three primitive societies”. Her study of three New Guinea societies concluded that male & female roles and attributes are culturally and not biologically scripted. Cultural scripts usually dictate specific roles as most cultures differentiate - rationally or irrationally - between the roles men are to play and those expected of women².

Contemporaneously with Mead’s study there were simultaneous studies by sociologist in the U.S. & U.K. questioning the social ordering of sex roles. Viola Klein in her book “The feminine character” exposes the andocentric biases prevailing in the social sciences. She points out that there is very little agreement about what constitutes femininity & concludes that it is socially constructed rather than biologically given & that domestic responsibilities produce an inequity between men & women³.
These studies and their likes challenged the existing notions in basically three ways. First, they called into question the social scientists assumptions about the naturalness of sex differences. Second, they cast doubt on the idea of an unproblematic complementarity’s between men & women’s roles. Third, they began to establish that sex roles were not merely indicators of differences between women & men, but marked a key social division & importantly a hierarchical one. Thus the stage was set for the more explicitly feminist analyses that were to emerge in the 1970’s.

Although there was a progression towards a more critical analyses of the social lives of men and women, it is worth mentioning that society was still being understood from a masculine standpoint even when dealing explicitly with gender. The prime example is Talcott Parsons (1950) functionalist analysis of the family. Parsons believed that there was a complementary division of labour between husbands & wives which stabilized the family and integrated it into the wider society. The potential strain between the instrumental ethos of industrial society & the emotional orientation of family life was minimized by men who worked outside the home specializing in instrumental (goal-oriented) roles & domestically oriented women specializing in affective (emotional) roles (Parsons & Bales 1956).

The resurgence of feminism infused many young sociologists to critically examine earlier sociological works along with contemporary feminist work for a better and insightful approach to gender studies. Of the key feminist works that influenced sociologist
a mention must be made of the French feminist and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir. According to her "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman." In her classic "the Second Sex" she said that bodily differences between women & men may be inescapable but in themselves they have no significance, since they depend for their meaning on the 'whole context' in which actual women & men live their lives (1949/1972: 66-7)⁵.

One of the first to elaborate on this discussion was a British sociologist Anne Oakley who in her work 'Sex, Gender & Society' identified masculinity & femininity as social, cultural & psychological attributes acquired through the process of socialization in a particular society at a particular time⁶.

As the pace of gender studies picked up, we find sociologists seeing gender as distinct from, but related to, the biological bases of male/female relations. Most importantly, the concept of gender came to be seen as historically & culturally variable within any given society at anyone time, often reflecting other differences & inequalities such as those of class and race. Infact one important continuity has been the hierarchical relationship between women & men, which has persisted despite, many changes in the meaning of femininity & masculinity and in the social activities of women & men. While male dominance changes in form & degree, gender hierarchy can coexist with a wide variety of beliefs about gender & with differing divisions of labour between women & men. Gender thus denotes a hierarchical relationship between women & men, not
merely differences between them. Since, gender is socially constructed, it is seen as a product of social arrangements.

The Sociology of Gender

It took quite a while for gender studies to be incorporated into mainstream sociology though it had firmly established itself within feminist research.

British sociology of the 70’s viewed class as the only significant form of stratification. For eg. Parkin (1972) like his British contemporaries took class as an indicator & a predictor of a wide range of social attitudes & attributes as well as of lifestyle & life chances. The social class for all the members of a household was defined by the occupation of the male breadwinner & wives occupied exactly the same location as their husbands. Parkins argued that since women did not have ‘interest in opposition to their male kin’ the inequalities between different members of the family cannot really be said to provide the basis of a distinct form of social stratification (1972 : 15)7.

The American Sociologists however took a multidimensional approach to stratification, viewing all forms of inequality whether it be sex, status income or power (eg. Lenski 1966). This view assumed a meritocratic society of individuals who are ranked high or low on different indicators. So men & women could be seen to occupy different positions as a result of the status distinction between them8.
The problem with this approach was that it assumed a relatively open society & tended to treat all forms of inequality as equally salient not realizing how some forms of inequality are far more significant than others. Also, the focus was the individual and the ways in which systematic inequalities, tend to produce distinct social divisions between groups was overlooked.

Feminist work helped in reorienting sociological understanding of class. First by analyzing in more detail than ever before, sources of inequality within families and households and second by analyzing the ways in which the labour market itself was segregated by gender. However, some sociologists refused to take gender seriously as an analytical category which led to heated debates between feminists and mainstream 'stratification theorists' (Goldthorpe 19839, 198410; Stanworth 198411; Roberts 199312). Paradoxically, the barriers to gender understanding were also the potential gateways to its integration, when once class was the only significant inequality, gender and male dominance was invisible. When gender was rendered visible and its importance accepted, then the whole outlook towards the social world was changed. Sociologists questioned commonsense understanding of social arrangements as 'natural' & social problems as individual.

The study of gender became established fairly quickly in such core areas of the discipline as the sociology of the family and the sociology of work. Families came to be seen less as undifferentiated units or the locus of a harmonious integration of complementary
roles than as forms of social organization structured around hierarchies of gender and generation.

Also once it was recognized that gender played a key role in structuring the labour market and the workplace, it was no longer possible to analyze occupational hierarchy or workplace culture without also analyzing the gendering of jobs and places of work. Moreover, it became possible to rethink the relationship between the public sphere of work and the private sphere of the home, to recognize relationships between them and the extent to which an unproblematic acceptance of the public/private divide had marked similar social processes operating in both spheres. The classic example of this was that housework came to be seen as work, carried on within a hierarchical relationship within which women serviced men's need and at the same time contributed to the economy through preparing their husbands and themselves for work in labour market. Conversely, women's paid work and skills deemed to be feminine often mirrored the tasks women were expected to undertake in the home, such as caring of secretary, becoming an 'office wife', supporting her boss in all his [sic] endeavors (Pringle 1989)\textsuperscript{13}.

Sociology is still in the process of widening its horizon. The study of gender has opened up new areas to the sociological gaze, such as sexuality, the body and violence against women and children. However, there are still fields where there is considerable resistance to recognizing the significance of gender and areas of sociology that remain relatively untouched by gender, particularly
mainstream social theory (Maynard 1990). The conceptualization of
gender is still going on .....................

The Social Man and the Social Woman

Gender is an important variable in all human interaction. It was originally a grammatical concept that was taken over by feminist researchers in the beginning of the 70's, to emphasize an understanding of sex as socially constructed i.e. the 'social sex' in contrast to the biological sex.

Gender relations are constituted in terms of the relations of power and dominance that structure the life chances of women and men. The gender divisions are rooted in the biological condition of reproduction & reinforced by religious, ideological & cultural systems prevailing in a society. Women are constantly defined in relation to man. Whether they are similar, different or complementary to them. Men, masculinity and male behavior are always the reference points. Women are thus defined not only in relation to men, but as dependent on men and subordinate to them. Men's specific gender is thus ignored, they represent the universal and the human to which women are the other. In fact, the statuses of men & women have been constructed around a whole series of dichotomous categories. The 'one' and the 'other', the public and private domains and work and home, rationality and emotionality, culture and nature, mind and body, autonomy and dependence to name just a few. The first of each of these pairs tends to be associated with men and positively valued while the second is associated with women and negatively valued.
The most basic division of labour within any society are based on age and sex. While age as category can eventually be achieved, sex is ascribed, permanent and immutable.

Biologically women have been given the role of bearing and nursing babies. As a result in most societies they shoulder everything related to nurturing the dependent and shouldering the domestic activities. Men on the other hand are allocated all the outside activities i.e. all the income generating labour. Many feminists have pointed out this tragic paradox of women's lives that the very bases of love, dependence and altruism in human life is linked to their historical oppression.

In a society, the sexual division of labour encompasses both reproductive and productive activities. However, the workload connected with the domestic activities which maintain or 'reproduce' daily life are mainly allocated to women while the more extroverted income generating activities are allocated to men. However, due to the changing economic and ideological times, there has been a need to refine our understanding of gender relations. Work, family and the labour market have been deeply transformed in the last fifty to seventy years and hence warrant an insightful and new understanding of the gender relations, especially in the family.

**The Professional Person**

With the global - informational economic and technological changes sweeping the societies coupled with the impetus provided by the women's movement a social transformation has been initiated.
First of all there has been a massive incorporation of women into paid work which has challenged the legitimacy of men's domination as provider of the family. To an extent the feminist movement can be credited for providing women motivation to work, by peer reinforcement especially to those women, who have felt ambivalent about pursuing careers outside their family life. The role of men as breadwinner of the family and women as child carers and housewives is no longer rigidly compartmentalized. Women are entering paid work for the same reasons that men do, namely for income, personal satisfaction or perhaps as a social service. Worldwide 854 million women were economically active in 1990, accounting for 32.1% of the global labour force. Among women aged 15 years and over, 41% were economically active (United Nation 1995).

Modern education and technological progress has awakened a new realization of individualism and technology has eased to an extent the physical drudgery in life. The increasing demand for skill and mobility in an industrialized economy tends to eliminate to an extent, the barriers of sex. Coupled with this there has been a radical change worldwide in the attitude towards the working mother. The technical & social development of the past few decades have given women the opportunity to combine and integrate their interests i.e. in home and in work.

Work of various forms, especially wage labour, constitutes a large part of most people's sense of self. Focusing on professions we find that modern societies are characterized by the presence of a
number of professions whose members perform a variety of specialized functions. These include lawyers, doctors, accountants, engineers, scientists, journalists and a host of others.

In India as well as abroad, the professions have come to acquire not only great functional importance but also high social prestige. Consequently, there has been an enormous expansion in these professions with an ever increasing demand. Professions are however not a product of modern society. We find their counterparts in earlier societies, through they are far more numerous today then at any previous historical epoch. Also their social importance far exceeds their numerical strength (Parsons 1968). It has been pointed out that the expansion of these professions was historically linked to the expansion of the bourgeois society (Perkins 1989).

There are certain important features that set apart professions from other jobs, the key being a high level of education and specialized training which involve an expenditure of time and money. The professions enjoy greater prestige in society and also a higher income.

By examining women and men’s position at the highest occupational level most particularly the professions which represent the heights of prestige, authority learning and income, we will be able to assess the changing status of women vis-à-vis men (Evelyne Rullerot, 1971).
The modern Indian professional family has its own set of norms & values and cannot be said to have identical characteristics of the nuclear family in the west.

Despite nuclearization, the Indian family remains distinctive in its orientation to marriage, career, parenthood and in its involvement in the wider kin ties. In this study we shall be focusing on the professional Indian couples.

As technology has altered organizational life, it has also affected our personal and family lives. With better opportunities - education wise and profession wise, there are more and more families in which both husband and wife are in the professions. There are many factors that are responsible for the emergence of dual career families (a term coined by Rapoport 1967). Among them are the desires of both men and women to achieve a better way of life with the feminist movement enlightening women and the equal opportunity laws and modern technology in the form of birth control helping women in this realization.

A dual career family is a family in which the husband and wife each has a career as opposed to a job. A career requires a high degree of commitment and a continuous developmental life. The individual pursues a career by undergoing extensive education and preparation and then by moving from one job level to another, until he or she achieves expertise and a position of responsibility. By its very nature, a career requires a fairly continuous pattern of involvement. So both husband and wife will have to take line (decision-making) and staff (implementing) positions, that are open-
ended as to time and commitment. Both may have to travel, both may have to relocate, both are on tight schedule and both earn better than average incomes.

There may be many factors that influence men and women to take to professions ranging from personal fulfillment to increased economic benefits, but one thing for sure is that each career requires a separate major commitment outside the marriage and that dictates crucial trade offs in the marriage as well as in the kind of family life that is then possible.

Over the past 50 years or so, the face of the health professions has been changed by a worldwide influx of women. Women do as well as men academically and it is but natural that then try for an entry into the professions that stand at the top of the occupational hierarchy.

According to earlier statistics available in India, regarding professional education of women in 1901-1902, the number of students in training school was 1412 and in medical school were 166. Next to teaching in India, medical career such as nursing, midwifery and medicine were popular. The dignity of the medical profession was established by the missionaries and pioneers of this field. Infact till today medicine as well as teaching are two such professions that are very favorably regarded by parents as professions for their daughters. According to the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resources Development, New Delhi, the number of females per 100 males in medicine grew from 18.5% in 1950-51 to 62.1% (Provisional figure) in 1998-99.
The Family Person

The wide variety of ways in which the human family and the roles of men and women are shaped, is in decisive measures, influenced by the ways in which economies and technologies are organized.

The American Sociologist Goode uses industrialization as a main explanation for the trend towards egalitarian relations within and outside the family. The industrialized economy and its need for a mobile flexible labour force is best served with a small independent family and the forces within the conjugal family, press for equality between husband and wife.

The philosophy of modern marriage emphasizes the need of a democratic power structure in the family where the husband and wife both have an important voice in decision making as equal partners. Infact marriage today, is usually thought of as a relationship between two equal partners based on love, intimacy and companionship. However, several decades of social research show that marital relations do not always live up to this ideal. Gender inequalities pervade the most personal of kinships and that what happens within the private life of each couple cannot be understood as separate from the wider social inequalities and cultural mores in which it is embedded.

How are male and female roles changing? How can changes benefit a marriage? How can they be detrimental to a marriage? What is the greatest benefit of dual-career marriage for husbands, wives and children are some of the questions that come into our mind.
Traditional arrangements and ideals are being renegotiated so that husband and wife are creating new ways to mesh their family and career life. Also there has been a transformation of intimacy, which creates the possibility of equality and emotional closeness in personal life by democratizing gender relationship more generally.

In 1956, Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein pointed out the duality of female role inherent in an industrial urban society which poses a succession of dilemmas for women at various periods of their life cycle. This situation becomes more salient in the case of dual career families, in which both husband and wife are engaged in demanding professions. No longer do the traditional role play operate with men in the role of breadwinners and women in the role of homemakers. In fact, a woman is expected to combine the roles of a career woman with that of a good and efficient housewife. So what are the roles and obligations of a husband and wife.

In the marriage partnership the husband and wife have reciprocal rights and obligations towards each other though not necessarily equal rights. Marriage gives rise to a unit which is marked by joint control and management of resources and responsibilities together with similarity of interests and goals. The degree of sharing of responsibilities and rights may vary from couple to couple and culture to culture. However, there is a common pattern in all societies with regards to a man's obligation to his wife which is usually dependent on -
1. *her performance of her duties to him* – i.e. on whether she is a *good wife* or

2. *her performance of her duties to 'his' children* – i.e. on whether she is *'good' mother* or

3. *her performance of her duties to his kin* – in on whether she is a *'good' daughter-in-law.*

The reverse does not seem to be common. In practice this means that men can exercise greater control over wives labour (good wife) and over their resource (good mother) than vice-versa.

Housework is taken for granted in our postindustrial economy although the work done within the privacy of the home comprises the number one full-time occupation with virtually all adults engaging in it to some degree. Housework or the work performed within the home economy, consists of childrearing and the provision of food, clothing and shelter. When we have families in which both husband and wife are in the professions than the problem of managing the home front comes up. Mostly the women end up juggling with their career, the home and the children since both husband and wife have a career which is seen as being of precedence. Thus power, negotiation, conflict are issues which reside in a marriage. Sometimes, these issues become so pertinent that in a country like Malaysia, the men are being asked to pay for their wives housework by opening pension fund accounts for them. So how does a working professional couple in India deal with this situation is a pertinent question.
The Big Question?

The social and economic roles of men and women within a society vary greatly from culture to culture. However, one key element recurs across the cultures i.e. that women give birth to children while men do not. Along this basic division between the sexes grew the division of rights and responsibilities of the genders. Some tasks are done by women and some are done by men, but who does what may vary from culture to culture.

The industrial urban society poses a succession of dilemmas for men and women as their roles are no longer clearly defined. Technology has affected our organizational lives, our family lives, and our personal lives. There has been a significant increase in the number of women entering the paid work force and all indications point to an increase in the number of working couples in the future. How does this affect the family set up? Are these working couples fulfilling their career demands? These are some of the questions that are of interest to sociologists.

A profession requires a high degree of commitment and continuous involvement. With both husband and wife having a profession, the management of the family and the household is a tricky balance. It is said that family is one of the main battle ground of the sexes in which gender is constructed. Men and women struggle with each other to have their own needs met and to further their own advancement – often while also trying to further their collective good. Thus the family is far from an unproblematic arena in which men and women collaborate in terms of a set pattern of sex roles and relations.
The roles of men and women have changed over time, but living in our society remains a different experience for women and for men. Gendered messages and social organization influence people's behavior, attitudes and options. For example, the feminist movement encouraged women to step out of their homes and have careers like men. The epitome of a 'Super mom' became the ideal, that is women balancing a career and a family and being successful in both was deemed possible. On the other hand during the 1980's, the 'new-male' (or liberated male) cultural message emerged according to which men are expected to value tenderness and an equal relationship with women.

So how are men and women to direct their home lives and their career lives? Jessie Bernard (1972) argues that the husband's marriage and the wife's marriage are not identical. Structurally and experimentally they differ so that the account each partner gives of the reality of their marriage are commonly discrepant. This is a question not merely of differences, but of profound inequalities. Since then, research has continued to demonstrate that marriage is rarely an equal partnership. Neither the division of labour nor the distribution of resources between husband and wife is likely to be equitable.

**Summary**

Gender emphasizes the social construction of masculinity & femininity and the social ordering of relations between men & women and gender analysis seeks to understand this equation. The study of gender became established fairly quickly in such core areas of the discipline as the sociology of family and the sociology of work.
In our country, men represent the universal and the human (i.e. their specific gender is ignored) to which women are the other. The gender divisions are rooted in the biological condition of reproduction and reinforced by religious, ideological and cultural systems prevailing in a society.

However, modern education and technological progress has awakened a new realization of individualism and technology has eased the physical drudgery of work – whether work at home or work outside the home. This is coupled with the demand for a skilled labour force in today's modern industrialized economies, and has therefore given rise to the need for a pool of professionals. The wide variety of ways in which the human family and the roles of men & women are shaped is in decisive measures influenced by the ways in which economies and technologies are organized. The American Sociologist Goode uses industrialization as a main explanation for the trend towards egalitarian relations within and outside the family. The philosophy of modern marriage emphasizes the need of a democratic power structure in the family where the husband and wife both have an important voice in decision making as equal partners.

However, the social and economic roles of men & women within a society vary greatly from culture to culture. Hence, there is a need to study this relationship, in order to gain an insight into the gender relations in a professional family's personal & professional life.
References


