

## Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

**Programme:** Bachelor of Arts (Second Year)

**Subject:** Psychology

**Paper Code:** PSG 103

**Paper Title:** Psychology of Gender and Identity

**Unit:** Unit I - Introduction to Gender and Identity

**Module Name:** Gender in context

**Module No:** 07

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### Notes

When we categorize a person in terms of personality traits associated with femininity and masculinity, it may be helpful to think of personality in terms of person-situation interaction rather than traits alone. i.e. it is important to consider the situation or the context.

The differences between genders depend many a times on the context or the situation.

- Let us take an example.

‘She is emotional; he is not’ – that is the most widely held emotional stereotype about the two genders. However, like differences in behaviour, emotional differences in males and females depend on the particular emotion involved and the context in which it is displayed.

Males are more likely to show anger toward strangers, especially male strangers, when they feel they have been challenged. Males also are more likely to turn their anger into aggressive action.

Emotional differences between females and males often show up in contexts that highlights social roles and relationships. For e.g. Females are more likely than males to discuss emotions in terms of relationships, and they are more likely to express fear and sadness.

- Let us take the example of helping behaviour.

The stereotype is that females are better than males at helping.

However, this difference depends on the situation. Females are more likely than males to volunteer their time to help children with personal problems and to engage in caregiving behaviour. However, in situations in which males feel a sense of competence, especially circumstances that involve danger, males are more likely than females to help. For e.g. a male is more likely than a female to stop and help a person who is stranded by the roadside with a flat tire. So, as we can see in this example the personality trait of 'helping behaviour' is the same, however, it is the situation which decides which gender displays it.

To conclude, whenever we discuss gender and gender roles, it is important that instead of focusing only on the personality characteristics of a person, we should analyse the behaviour in terms of the context in which it is displayed.

The question is not presence or absence of trait leading to differences in behaviour. It is more about differences in the manifestation of a trait due to difference in context.