

The reasons why women are considered a minority

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



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Introduction

In a world where women outnumber men, how are women still considered to be a minority? A minority is defined as the smaller number or part, especially a number or part representing less than half of the whole.

(Oxforddictionaries. com) Statistically, women are not are not the smaller group of people, but they tend to have less power, opportunities, privileges as men, pushing them into the minority category. Sociological perspectives can be incorporated in this topic including functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Many factors come into play regarding gender equality and is much more complicated than the fact that women are in actuality the majority, and not the minority.

Functionalism

A functional perspective views society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. During the mid-twentieth century, functionalist theorists argued that men filled instrumental roles in society while women filled expressive roles, which worked to the benefit of

society. (' All About the Sociology of Gender', 2018) This perspective suggests that gender inequalities exist as an efficient way to create a social system where one part of the population is clearly responsible for certain acts of labor and another part is responsible for other acts of labor. Historically, men go to work to provide for the family while woman stay at home to take care of the house and family. Once these rules were established, they were passed on through generations, perpetuating the idea of these functional gender roles. This restricts women to certain activities and responsibilities giving them less power than men, placing them in the minority category and enforces the superiority of men over women in our society. Although, this concept may seem outdated in this day in age, it is still what is considered " appropriate" and " normal" for women and men to assume these functional roles in our society.

Conflict Theory

According to the conflict theory, groups in society struggle for dominance by competing for scarce resources. (sociology text) Problems are created among society when certain groups overpower or suppress other groups, resulting in conflict. One article about this theory states " Conflict theory impels us to recognize that every dimension of social structure can be conceptualized in terms of winners and losers, and social conflict often causes disastrous and tragic consequences for the losers in the social struggle." (Simon, ' The Conflict Paradigm in Sociology and the Study of Social Inequality: Paradox and Possibility', 2016) So basically, men are still considered the dominant group, while women are viewed as the subordinate group. This idea continues to cause problems when both groups fight for

balance of power between genders. I believe that this theory is extremely relevant in today's struggle between roles and this fight for power is responsible for huge social changes including the Woman's Suffrage Movement, and women's rights in general.

Symbolic Interactionism

The symbolic interactionalist perspective on equality looks at how social interactions create unequal power dynamics within the sexes. This theory focuses on how we act toward people and things based on the meaning we interpret from them. Some sociologists view gender as a learned behavior and symbols of gender roles begin to shape as soon as we are born. If you are born male, you are treated as strong, powerful and tough. If you are born female, you are treated as soft, emotional or fragile in nature. The socially created meaning of gender shapes things like the kinds of toys and colors of clothes we give to certain sexes and even affects the way we speak to babies and what we tell them about themselves. Gender roles are built in society through the interactions we have with one another. Through this process we learn how we are supposed to talk, dress, and behave as related to our gender. With these social norms ingrained in us since birth, it is no wonder inequality still exists. I can honestly say that we have come a long way by just acknowledging gender stereotypes and by trying to change the way we think and of others and ourselves, but symbols of masculinity and femininity still have a strong presence within our daily interactions.

Conclusion

There are many theories and opinions as to why woman are still considered a minority, even though they technically outnumber men. Although, woman have made great strides in progress towards equal rights and shifting the views of woman in power, the female sex still faces hardships that men have yet to experience. In recent years, woman have continued to break through traditional roles of submissive housewives by forcing their way to become productive members of society. Now more than ever, more women are working outside the home and taking on the role of head of household, which until very recently was a spot reserved only for men. Even with this great amount of progress, we are still fighting for fair wages, political power, and freedom of sexist stereotypes, so the battle continues. Power comes in numbers, except when referring to women. The only way to break these chains of injustice due to discrimination and prejudice against women is by continuing to fight back. We can start with our own children by teaching them that the sex they are born with does not dictate who they can or cannot be in society.