CHAPTER 6

Gender Comparisons in Social and Personality Characteristics

Social Constructionist Approach

Social Factors Related to Size of Gender Differences in Social and Personality Characteristics

1. Gender differences are usually largest when other people are present.
2. Gender differences are generally largest when gender is prominent and other shared roles are minimized.
3. Gender differences are usually largest when the behavior requires specific gender-related skills.

Communication Patterns

Verbal Communication

Talkativeness
Interruptions
Status
Language Style
The Content of Language

Nonverbal Communication

Personal Space
Body Posture
Gaze
Facial Expression
Smiling
Anger
Decoding Ability
Facial Expressions
Vocal Cues

Potential Explanations for Gender Differences in Communication
- Power and Social Status Explanations
- Social Learning Explanations
- Conclusions

Characteristics Related to Helping and Caring

Altruism
- Heroism
- Social Role

Nurturance
- Who finds babies interesting and engaging?
- Operational Definitions

Empathy
1. Females and males are equally empathic when the operational definition requires physiological measures.
2. Females and males are equally empathic when the operational definition requires nonverbal measures.
3. Females are more empathic than males when the operational definition is based on self-report.

Moral Judgments About Social Relationships
Theoretical Background
- Relational Model
- Differences Perspective
  - Cultural Feminism
- Similarities Perspective
  - Liberal Feminism
- Carol Gilligan vs. Lawrence Kohlberg
  - Justice Approach
  - Care Approach

Subsequent Research
Summary of Moral Judgments

Friendship
The Nature of Women’s and Men’s Friendships
- What friends do
Intimacy & self-disclosure
Characteristics important for an intimate friendship
How Women and Men Help Their Friends
Characteristics Related to Aggression and Power

Gender and Aggression: The Social Constructionist Perspective

The Language of Aggression
Cultural Constructions of Aggression

Physical Aggression Versus Relational Aggression

Physical Aggression
Relational Aggression
Preschoolers

Gender and Aggression: Other Important Factors

1. Gender differences are relatively large when measuring spontaneous aggression.
2. Gender differences are relatively large when the individuals know each other.

The Myth of the Nonaggressive Female

1. If women see themselves as weak and nonaggressive, they may believe that they cannot defend themselves against men’s aggression.
2. Because competitiveness is associated with aggression, women may be denied access to professions that value competition.
3. Aggressiveness may be seen as normal for males, so men may choose not to inhibit their aggressive tendencies.

Leadership

Leadership Style
- Transformational style of leadership
- Transactional style of leadership

Leadership Effectiveness
- Gender of leader
- Gender of rater
- Gender-consistent roles

Persuasion

Who is more persuasive?
Gender and assertiveness
Nonverbal behavior
Double bind for women