

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS FEMINISM AND THEORIES OF FEMINISM

By

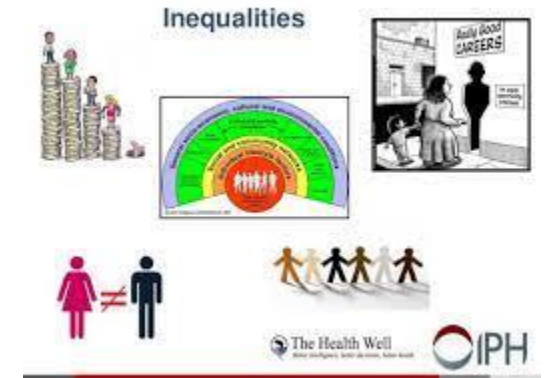
ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

COMMERCE AND TRADE

WhatsApp # +923004578032

Zahoor.elahi.gov@gmail.com

GENDER STUDIES



ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

CHAPTER #III

Feminist Theories and Practice

- ❖ What is Feminism
- ❖ Liberal Feminism
- ❖ Radical Feminism
- ❖ Marxist/Socialist Feminism
- ❖ Psychoanalytical Feminism
- ❖ Men's Feminism
- ❖ Postmodern Feminism

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

QUESTIONS # CHAPTER 3

CSS 2016: What is feminism? In what way Radical Feminism is different from Socialist Feminism?

CSS 2018: What type(s) of feminism can elevate the socio-cultural, economic and political status of women in Pakistan?

CSS 2019: Write short note on Postmodern Feminism

CSS 2020: 'Language is gendered', what does this simply? Explain with examples?

CSS 2021: Marxist feminism is a philosophical variant of feminism that incorporates and extends Marxist theory and analyzes the ways in which women are exploited through capitalism and the individual ownership of private property. Discuss the development of Marxist/Socialist feminism and the philosophical stance they hold to discuss gender issues and exploitation.

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

CSS 2021: Psychoanalytic feminism is a theory of oppression, which asserts that men have an inherent psychological need to subjugate women. As elaborated, give a detailed analysis of the gender oppression and women's subordination promulgated by Psychoanalytic Feminism.

FEMINISM

- Background (1871, 1896, 1892)
- Definitions
- Use and meanings of Feminism (Plato, US/Europe, UK)
- Approaches (Descriptive/Normative)
- Basic Feminist Ideas (Expanding H.ch, Working eq, eliminating G.St, Ending SV and obj.; rejecting discrimination, stereotyping & oppression)
- Defining Feminism
 - i. Speaking, writing, acting and advocating on behalf of women and identifying injustice in fields... ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)
 - ii. Includes ideas, beliefs and systematic efforts in organized activity for making changes in behavior to achieve equality of sexes.

THEORIES OF FEMINISM

1 → Liberal Feminism

- **Issues**

- sexual harassment
- voting/ education right
- fair compensation for work
- affordable childcare/affordable health care, and
- bringing to light the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Beliefs of Liberal Feminism

- Individual's right
- False belief
- Women's liberation and gender equality
- Individual autonomy/rights, liberty, and independence
- Favoured Heterosexuality
- Rejected penis envy theory
- Consciousness raising
- Opposed gendered job market

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

CRITICISM

- i. Not breaking down the deeper ideologies of society and patriarchy.
- ii. Also, it has been criticized for ignoring race and class issues.
- iii. Focused on white, middle class and heterosexual women.

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

2→ Radical Feminism

- **Issues**

- War against sex and individualism
- Expanding reproductive rights
- Breaking down traditional roles.

- **Focus:**

- women are superior to men in certain ways, such as that they are caring, creative and sensitive
- Radical feminists also aim to help all females, such as working class and non-white women

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Beliefs of Radical Feminism

- Sex/gender is the fundamental cause of women oppression (model for other oppressions)
- Elimination of male supremacy
- Root of women oppression in patriarchal gender (1960ss-2nd wave) instead of legal system or class conflict
- They feel that women may do a better job than men traditionally have

Beliefs of Radical Feminism ...Continue

- Radical feminists were opposed to patriarchy but not necessarily capitalism. Elaborate system of patriarchy & how male exercised them
- Sex class rather than economic class was the central concept
- Black feminists and women of other color supported it.
- Why women must adopt certain roles based on their biology and gender?
- CR Group

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Beliefs of Radical Feminism ...Continue

- Views On Prostitution
- Views on Pornography
- Views on heterosexuality (Radical lesbian)
- Radical feminists have divided into two groups with very different views.

a.Radical-Libertarian Feminism (reproduction, androgynous, hermaphroditic)

b.Radical-Cultural Feminism (reproduction, production)

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

CRITICISM

- i. Sex based discrimination
- ii. Apolitical
- iii. Focused white and middle class

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

3→ Marxist/Socialist/Materialist/ Feminism

- **Issues**
- Women are **not oppressed by men or by sexism, but by capitalism** itself. The position of women in the family serves the interests of the economy and the ruling class.

- **Focus**

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

dismantling of capitalism as a way to liberate women

Beliefs of Marxist/Socialist/ Materialist/ Feminism

- Marxist feminism states that **economic inequality**, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women are the root of women's oppression in the current social context.
- Marxism claims that individuals are under the oppression of a **dominant power structure**.
- Primarily concern with **division of labor** – lack of due reward.
- Marxists believe that we are **socialized according to our external influences**. They argue that socialization is an ideological process, in which its main aim is to transmit the ruling-class idea.
- **Subordination is not result of biological factors but social positions**—relationship b/w men and women & relationship b/w proletariat and bourgeoisie.
- Women are oppressed through system of capitalism and private property (exclusion from productive labor)

ZAHOOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Criticism?

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

4→ Psychoanalytical Feminism

- **Issues**

- Sigmund Freud: men have Phallus (dual relationship b/w child and mother. 1970- Freud's theory of “Penis envy”).
- How masculinity develops and sexual inequality is responded.
- Male functions are subjective while female functions are objective.

- **Focus**

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

- How social and cultural institutions build psyche of child.
- Family structure promotes heterosexuality, male domination, masculinity superiority and devaluation of women.

Beliefs of Psychoanalytical Feminism

- Psychoanalytic feminists explain women's oppression as rooted within psychic structures and reinforced by the continual repetition or reiteration of relational dynamics formed in infancy and childhood.
- Critical of Freudian and Neo-Freudian notions of women as biologically, psychically, and morally inferior to men, psychoanalytic feminists addressed political and social factors affecting the development of male and female subjects.
- Like radical feminists, they saw as key issues sexual difference and women's otherness in relation to men.
- The two major schools of psychoanalytic feminism are Freudian and Lacanian.

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Criticism?

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

5 → Men's Feminism

- Issues

- Men's movements/ Men's Feminism emerged at the time of the Women's Liberation Movement, and the groupings gathered together under this umbrella title were as heterogeneous as early radical feminist groups.

Focus

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

- In a sense they all seemed to be a reaction to feminism, but that could be either a positive or a negative one.

Beliefs of Men's Feminism

- Both men and women are essential for their survival so role of one individual is nothing without existence of other's role.
- Men's consciousness raising (CR) groups, emerging during the early 1970s,
- There was an acknowledgement that all men had at least the potential to be the oppressor and had greater opportunities for power
- Just as women in CR learnt a great deal about the processes of their own socialization, so men came to understand the ways in which they were educated to be 'men' and what that meant.
- Women in relationship to men
- Brings men into gender research
- Study of masculine characteristics & Men's behavior towards other genders.
- Men can be made free of their sexual roles. Whether men can perform feminine role? Simone de Beauvoir rejected this. ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)
- Western idea of homosexuality; homosexual are men but lower in scale
- Amalgamation of theories of feminism.

Criticism?

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

6→ Post Modern Feminism

- Issues

- language is complex which creates understanding reality e.g. sexual relations, domestic agreements, politics and raising children etc.

- Focus

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

- Destabilize identity – overcome differences among signifiers e.g. Doctor, Actor, Chairperson etc.

Beliefs of Post Modern Feminism

- Cultural change or deconstruction is required e.g bitch/sexy. Exp. Power is associated with men e.g. Machiavelli 'The Prince'.
- Issues in education: literature so these words/concepts should be used irrespective of sex e.g chairperson, actor, doctor etc.
- Men's writing is full of binary opposition e.g good/bad, active/passive, culture/nature, logos/pathos etc which help to create reality. This binary pair is hierarchical and patriarchal. Law of patriarchal society is law of Phallus.
- Patriarchy dominates and operates other systems e.g. social, economic and political systems etc which manifest binary roles. Examples: Women are used for sex.
- Women are defined as other. Equality comes when there is no differences among sexes
- Accept diversity. Queer theory & post-modern feminism in other discourses (Multiple roles, truths and entities)
- Female & male bodies, sexual desires are exhibited through these discourses; media
- Glorify homosexuality without questioning gender description
- Institution & structures

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Criticism?

ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)

Any Questions?



THANK YOU



ZAHOOR ELAHI (CSP)