Q-4: Define the terms masculinity and feminity. In your opinion where do traditional gender roles comes from?

INTRODUCTION

Gender stereotype theory suggests that men are generally more masculine than female, whereas women are generally perceived as more feminine than men. Several scales have been developed to measure the fundamental aspects of gender stereotypes (e.g agency and communion, competance and warmth or instrumentality and expressivity). No doubt Gender is one of the first categories that children learn in today's societies and thus knowledge of gender stereotypes is urgent from early childhood. Gender differences in self ascriptions do continue to exist still, and there are attempts to measure different aspects of **masculinity** and **feminity** including e.g everyday behaviour such as house work, professional work, attitude etc.

MASCULINITY

Defining the Term:-

" Masculinity refers to set of qualities, behaviors and attitudes traditionally associated with or considered type of men or the male gender."

These characteristics can vary across cultures and time periods but often include traits like strength, aggressiveness

competitiveness, independence and lack of emotional expression.

According to Connell's theory of Masculinity:

"Hegemonic masculinity, as a specific form of masculinity in a given historical and society-wide social setting that legitimates unequal gender relations b/w man and women, between masculinity and feminity and among masculinities".

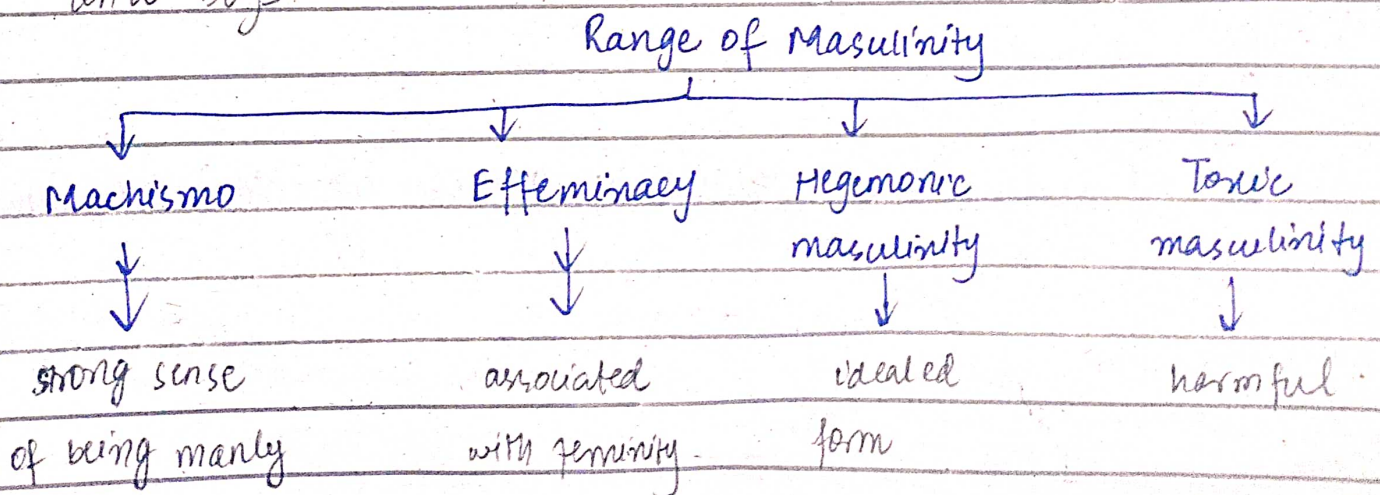## Signifiers of Masculinity:

Masculinity is signified and calculated on the basis of many attributes like

o) Physique and Muscular built.

o) Body and facial hair

o) Short hair.

o) Car and vehicle.

Range of Masculinity:-

Masculinities vary by social class as well. Studies suggest working class constructions of masculinity to be more normative than are those from middle class men and boys.

	Range of Masculinity		
Machismo	Effeminacy	Hegemonic masculinity	Toxic masculinity
↓	↓	↓	↓
strong sense of being manly	associated with feminity	idealed form	harmful

FEMINITY

Defining the term:
" feminity is a set of attributes, behaviors, and roles generally asso- ciated with girls and women."

According to Simone de Beauvoir, a prominent feminist philospher, argued in her book, "the Second Sex" that feminity is a social construct created by patriarchal society. She explored the ways in which women have been historically defined in relation to men and how traditional gender roles limit women's freedom and life.
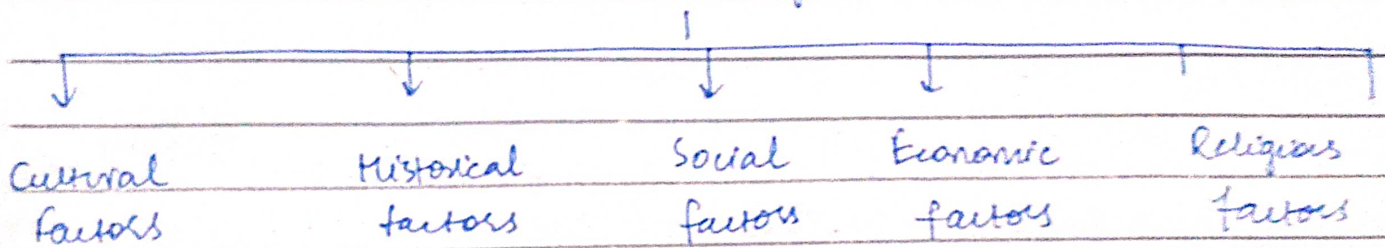
Signifiers of Feminity
feminity is differentiated on the basis of cultural clothing, physical appearance and many such signifiers
- Long hair
- lack of facial and body hair.
- Delicate body.
- thinness of body
- Bright colors in clothes.
- Narrow waist.
- clear skin
- Hijab ⟶ particularly Muslim signifier of Feminin

TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES: INDEPTH ANALYSIS

Traditional Gender roles are societal expectations based on one's perceived gender, historically assigning distinct roles and behaviors to men and women. These roles have been challenged in many parts of the world in pursuit of Gender equality and recognition of diverse gender identities, leading to changes in law, policies & societal norms.

Factors For Promoting Traditional Gender Roles

Cultural Factors	Historical factors	Social factors	Economic factors	Religious factors

1. Cultural Factors

Various cultural aspects are there that contribute to development and perpetuation of traditional gender roles.

a) Role of Culture in Shaping Gender Roles : Culture plays a pivotal role in molding and influencing the norms related to gender.

This includes the ways in which cultural beleifs, practices and values contribute to defining what is considered typical or acceptable behaviour for individuals of different gender.

b) Cultural Norms and Stereotypes.
Cultural norms set the standards for behaviour in society and stereotypes often rise from these norms.

leading to perceived ideas about the roles and capabilities of men and women.

c) Influence of Tradition and Rituals.

It considers how customs and ceremonies can reinforce expectations related to the roles and responsibilities of individuals based on their gender.

Example: Meal Preparation

In many cultures meal preparation is traditionally seen as primarily a women task. Men on the other hand may not be encouraged to participate in these tasks & may not possess cooking skills.

2- Historical Factors

Many historical influences have contributed to the development and perpetuation of traditional gender roles. It delves into how past events, societal structures and cultural norms have shaped contemporary expectations related to gender.

- •) Evolution of Gender : Gender roles have changed and
  roles over time   developed through different historical
                         periods; shedding light on the shifts
                         in social expectations.

- •) Early Societal divisions : It delves into how these initial
  based on gender   divisions laid the foundation for
                         contemporary gender roles.

- •) Historical influence   Many specific historical events,
  on contemporary gender : figures and structures that have
       roles   had a long lasting impact on
                         gender roles we see today.

Examples

- "Sati" was a practice that emerged in India during the 18th and 19th centuries. It involved the self immolation of widows on their husband's funeral pyres. It reinforced the traditional gender roles that expected women to be devoted to their husbands even in death.

3. Social Factors

a) Socialization and Gender Expectations

The process of socialization, through interactions with family, peers, education and media plays a vital role in shaping and perpetuating traditional gender roles.

b) Family and Gender Socialization

Here, the focus is on how families, a primary social unit, contribute to the socialization of children regarding gender roles. It explores how parents, guardians and family dynamics influence the development of children's understanding of gender expectations.

c) Education and Peer group influence.

Educational institutions and peer groups impact the socialization process, particularly in shaping children's beliefs and behaviours related to traditional gender roles.

Example:

Boys are often encouraged to play with toys associated with action, construction and vehicles. On the other hand, girls are often encouraged to play with toys associated with caregiving, domestic roles and asthetics.

4. Economic Factors

- If men earn a lot more money than women for same work, it can make people think men should make money and women should stay home.
- When women don't have much money or ways to get money, they depend on men. This can make people think that men should control the money.

Example

- If women of the house earn more than men, it is considered as a uncommon practice. Either it comes down to being awful or male consider it a hurt to their ego.

5- Political Factors

There are many factors that can contribute in shaping these traditional gender roles. Such as:
- °) Government policies and legislation
- °) Women rights movements
- °) Influence of gender in political representation

If country has laws and policies that don't support women's participation in politics and decision making, it can send message that women's voice is not as much important.

Example

In many countries, the majority of political leaders are men and few seats are given to women. This reinforces the traditional gender role that men are better suited for leadership.

6- Religious Factors

Influence of religious beliefs, practices and institutions on traditional gender roles, exploring how religious factors shape societal expectations related to gender. In many ways:

- •) **Intersection of religion & gender**: Religious beliefs and practices intersect with gender, affecting the roles and expectations assigned to individuals based on their gender.

•) Interpretations of religious Texts: How religious texts and holy scripts and teachings are interpreted within different religious traditions and how there interpretations can impact the understanding of gender roles within those traditions.

•) Influence of Religious institutions: This part investigates the roles of religious institutitutions like mosque, churches, temples, in shaping and enforcing traditional gender roles within religious communities and societies.

7. Media and Pop Culture

TV, movies, advertisements & pop culture contributes in shaping our ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman. It looks at how these forms of media often show certain behaviours or roles as "normal" for men and women.

Example

When we watch TV or film or drama, men are always shown rough, strong and women are shown pretty, caring and weak. However, now TV shows depict a wider range of roles and behaviours for men and women.

A GLANCE AT GLOBAL STATICS

o— According to Global Gender Gap Report 2023, the Global Gender Gap Index is 68.4%. worldwide with followings of ages in different dimensions:

1.	Economic participation & Opportunity Index	60.1%
2.	Educational attainment Sub index	95.2%
3.	Health & survival "	96.0%
4.	Political empowerment "	22.1%

-- The statics are following for Pakistan

Pakistan	2022			2023		
	Rank		Score	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	0-1	Regional	Global	0-1
	8/9	145/146	0.564	7/9	142/146	0.575

Though there has been slight improvement as compared to 2022, yet a lot more work is to be done.

CONCLUSION

In short, the concepts of Masculinity and femininity are the pioneers of the traditional gender roles prevailing today in world. The various religious, political, social, economic factors have played a vital role in the today's distorted concept of gender. In a nutshell, traditional gender roles have deep-seated roots in various aspects of society. However, its essential to recognize that these traditional gender roles are not fixed and can be influenced by changing social dynamics, activism and evolving norms.

" Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development, and building good governance."

(Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General)