

Q- Write a comprehensive essay on the 'sex vs gender debate' in postmodernist philosophy and social science, reflecting nature vs nurture arguments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sex vs Gender debates refers to the debate that sheds light on a question of whether biological factors or social factors play a significant role in shaping the gender identity, behaviors, roles of an individual. On one hand the proponents of 'sex' side argue that gender differences are solely determined by the biological and genetic factors while on the other, the proponents of nurture side argue that a gender is a social product. To prove their view, they have given different social theories which will be discuss ahead.

2. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEX AND GENDER-

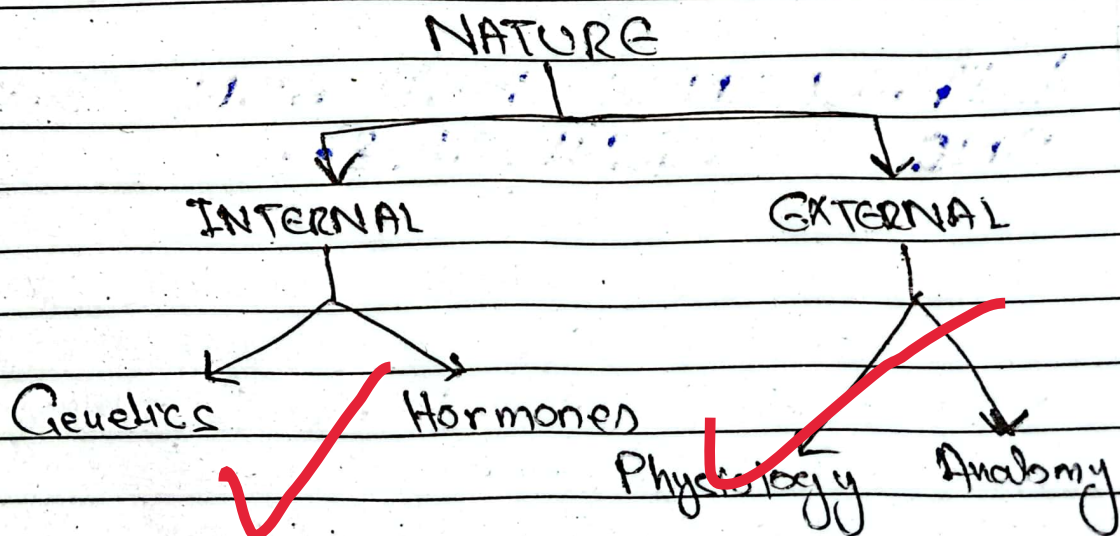
Robert Stoller in his book "Sex and gender: the development of Masculinity and Femininity" explains the differences between sex and gender. Stoller categorized the key characteristics of sex as universal, not variable, and

with time and space and falling into two categories: male and female. On the other hand, he states that gender is more of a cultural concept, which varies with time and space - hence, it is not universal. Additionally, it is developed over time and has moved from two categories.

3- NATURE VS NURTURE DEBATE

Although it is widely accepted that gender and sex both differ in their definitions, there is a difference of opinion among scholars upon the role of biology and physiology in the development of gender. The two sides views are gonna be discussed below.

"THE NATURE'S VIEW"



Extreme nature view suggests that

gender related patterns of behavior and gender roles are entirely determined by biological factors. They divide these biological factors into two categories internal and external factors. which further classified into Genetics. Internal factors include Genetics and hormones while external factors include Physiology and anatomy.

(1) INTERNAL FACTORS:-

Internal factors include the genetics and hormones, which are described below.

Do not elaborate to that extent

(a) Genetics

According to the nature view, genetics plays a role in determining an individual's biological sex, which is typically categorized as male and female based on the presence of specific sex chromosomes. In most of the cases, individuals with XX chromosomes are biologically females while individuals with XY chromosomes are biologically male. However, genetic variations can lead to intersex conditions where an individual's genetic sex does not fit strictly into male or female categories.

XX → FEMALE

XY → MALE

VARIATION IN GENETICS → INTERSEX Gracy

~~(A) HORMONES~~

Nature Proponent view
Hormones are another factor contributing to gender identity. Hormones are chemical messengers produced by the endocrine system that regulate various bodily functions, including the development of secondary sexual characteristics. During puberty, sex hormones such as testosterone (more prevalent in males) and estrogen (more prevalent in females) influence the development of traits like breast development, facial hair growth, and changes in voice pitch. Hormones also play a role in sexual attraction and desire.

MALE → Testosterone → Aggressiveness

FEMALE → Progesterone → Nurturing & Care-taking Skills

(A) EXTERNAL FACTORS

External factors include the physiology and anatomy. They are discussed below.

~~(A) PHYSIOLOGY~~

Nature Proponent believed that physiology also play an important role in shaping gender identity. They believe men and women may

differ in muscle mass, bone density, and metabolism. These differences are influenced by hormonal variations and have implications for physical capabilities and health risks.

PHYSIOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES B/W MALE & FEMALE	
MALE	FEMALE
- Larger body size & composition	- Smaller body size & composition
- Higher Ratio of Muscle Mass to Body Weight	- Smaller Total Muscle Mass
- Physically Strong	Physically weak
- Rational	- Emotional

(B) ANATOMY :-

In the native view of gender identity, anatomy encompasses the physical structure and organs of the body, including the primary and secondary sexual characteristics such as genitalia, reproductive organs, and body hair distribution. These anatomical features are often associated with binary categories of males and females.

On the basis of all above factors, native state categorized the gender on the basis of sex. Hence, they

categorised gender as male, female and intersex.

"THE NURTURE'S VIEW"

In contrast to nature views, nurture believe that gender identity and its roles are socially constructed. To prove their argument, they presented different social constructionist theories such as theory of social construction, gender performativity, queer theory and so forth. These are all gonna be discussed below one by one.

1- OPERANT CONDITIONING

This theory was proposed by Skinner. According to him, behaviours are learnt depending their outcomes. If a behavior is continually rewarded, it will be learnt and will be consider "socially accepted" behavior. If a behavior that is punished will not be learned and will be consider "socially unacceptable".

For instance, it is generally observed that parents praise their children when they do something positive like cleaning their room, completing their homework on time. In contrast they will be punished if they do anything bad.

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late night. Hence, Operant conditioning is a method through which a gender become familiar with his/her role.

2- COGNITIVE LEARNING

Jean Piaget proposed the cognitive theory. According to this theory different social and learning factors in an individual's environment influence one's gender role. Individuals express and explore their gender roles based on what is deemed socially acceptable or popular in media.

For instance, it is generally observed in the society that nursing and teaching are "women's job," while engineering and computer science are "men's job." These stereotypes are reinforced through media, educational materials, and the behavior of adults.

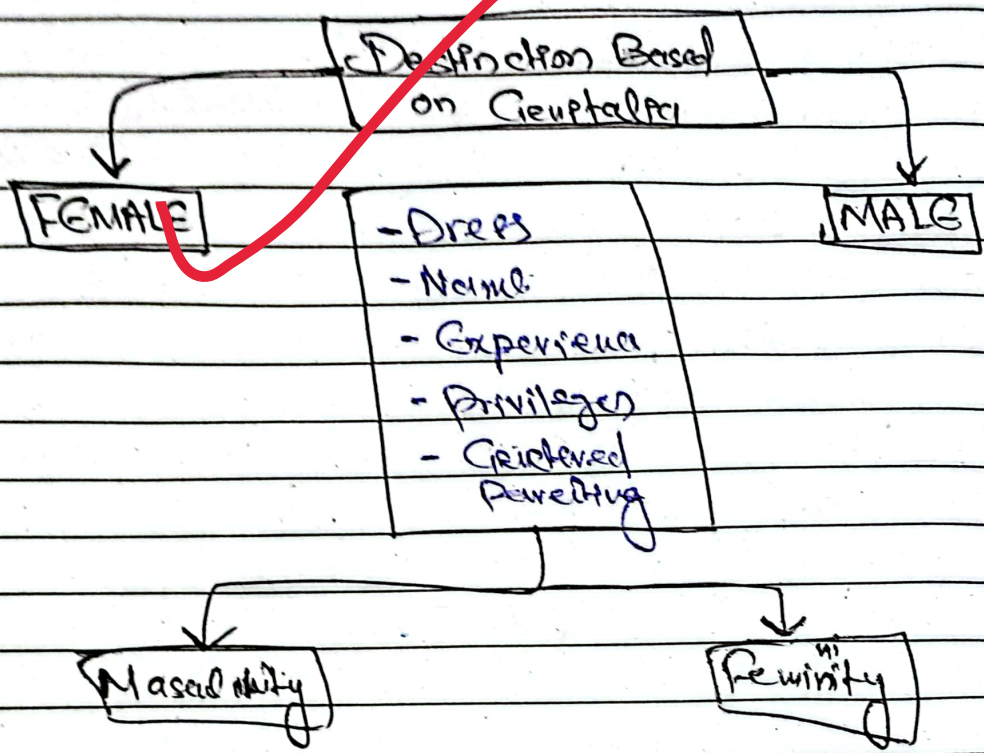
3 JUDITH LORBER'S SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

"Individuals are born sexed not gendered. However, they are taught to be masculine or feminine by the society."

(Judith Lorber)

According to Judith Lorber, gender is social construct. It begins with Gracy

a person's birth with assignment to a specific sex category based on genitalia and is then reinforced by various gender markers. She asserts that social construction of gender is manifest in childhood, middle age, and adulthood.



Hence, Lorber asserts that the agents of socialization determine what roles, responsibility and patterns of behavior are suitable for males and females on the basis of gendered norms, which are socially constructed.

4 Gender Performativity Theory

Gender Performativity theory contends that gender is a social construct shaped by

by of cultural norms, behaviors, and repeated performance. In this perspective, individuals learn and express their genders through interaction with society, challenging the notion of an inherent, inherent or fixed gender identity.

"People can change by stepping outside the socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity?"
(Butler)

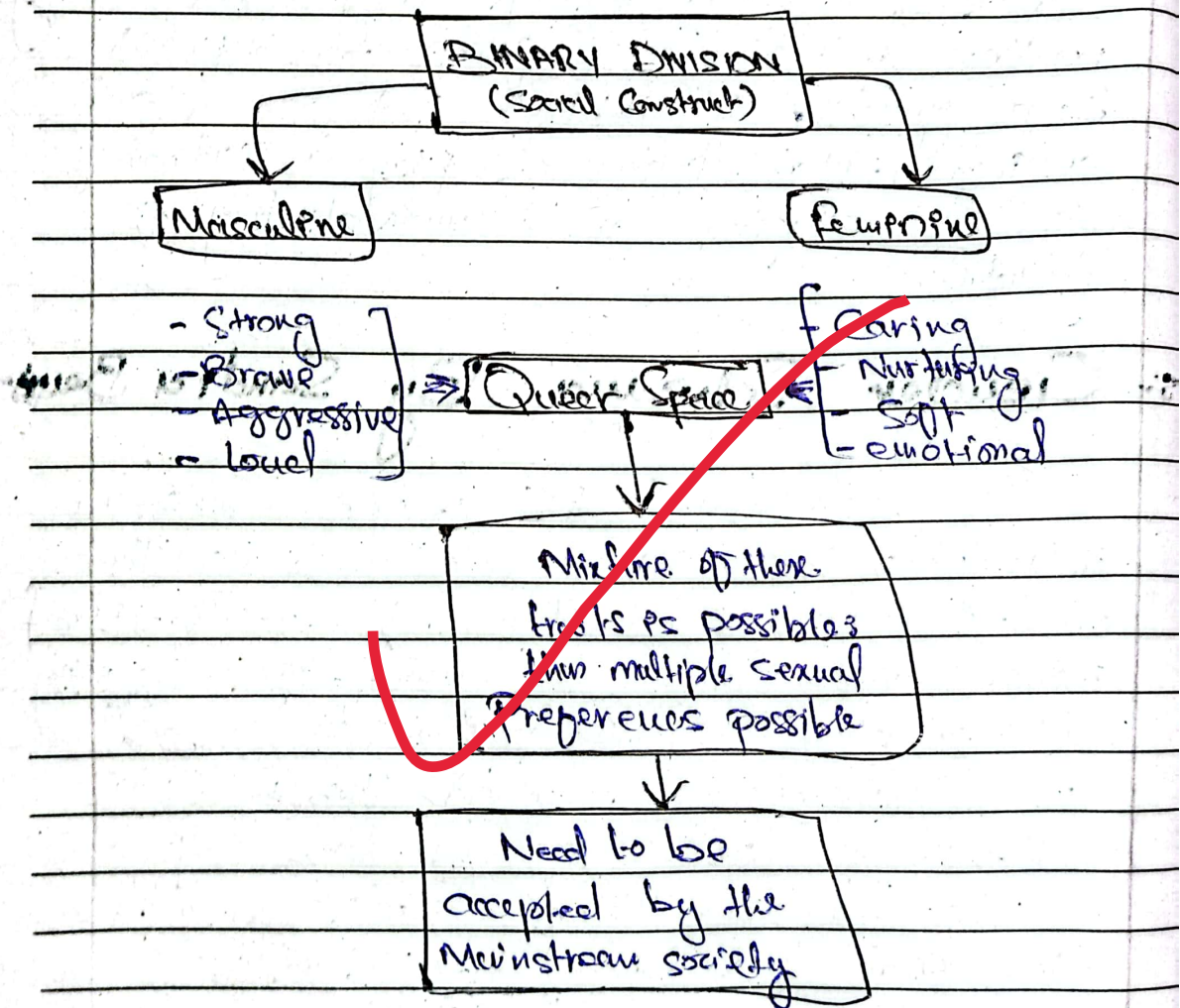
This theory rejects the binary gender norms, emphasizing fluidity and variability in how individuals perform and express their genders, highlighting that social and environmental factors play a central role in shaping one's understanding of gender.

5. Gender Schema By Sandra Bem

According to gender schema, individuals develop gender schemas that organize their perception of gender-related information from a young age, suggesting a cognitive predisposition to categorization and interpret the world through a gendered lens. This cognitive aspect of gender schema theory underscores the idea that certain gender-related cognitive processes may have a

bases in an individual's natural cognitive development, contributing to their gender identity formation. For instance, boys may be encouraged to play with toy cars, footballs, while girls are given dolls and cooking sets. This example proves that certain activities associated with different genders are learnt from the young age.

6. Queer Theory Pioneered By Judith Butler :-



Queer theory is pioneered by Judith Butler and developed by Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman. It, reflects the binary and oppositional male and female categorical thinking. In a society where heterosexuality is considered the norm, the queer theorists call for the recognition and mainstreaming of queer characters including lesbians, gay and others.

"About 17% of the people feel too neatly fall into the binary male-female categories." (Sterling Foundation)

So, Butler argues that socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity ought to be challenged and a call for the mainstreaming of the queer characters in the larger social settings.

4- CONCLUSIONS

From the discussion above, we can conclude that social, cultural and environmental factors are very important in shaping gender identity and behavior. For perspective, underscores that individuals learn about gender through their interaction with society and experience imposed upon them. Gender is not predestined but is constructed through socialization and cultural norms. Hence, it is Gracy

You need to organize it

First add differences between sex and gender and then elaborate the debate

safe to conclude that gender is a social construct.

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Q Marxist feminism is a philosophical variant of feminism that incorporates and extends Marxist theory and analyze the way in which women are exploited through capitalism and the individual's ownership of private property. Discuss the development of Marxist / Socialist feminism and the philosophical stance they hold to discuss gender issues and exploitation.

1- INTRODUCTION

Feminism emerged in the world around the middle of the nineteenth century. Most scholars associated its emergence with the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. Feminism has been introduced to the new concepts with the passage of time including Marxist feminism and others. Marxist feminism, also known as socialist feminism, integrates Marxist analysis with a focus on gender issues and exploitation. It emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as an intellectual response to the limitation of both traditional marxism and liberal feminism.

in addressing the specific experience of women within capitalist societies.

2. HISTORICAL ROOTS OF MARXIST FEMINISM

Marxist feminism finds its root in the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who idealized class struggle as a fundamental aspect of society. They emphasize the role of capitalism in perpetuating inequalities and exploitation.

Early socialist feminists like Clara Zetkin and Alexandra Kollontai, active in early 20th century. They began to explore the intersection of class and gender, recognizing that women's oppression was linked to both capitalism and patriarchy.

3. KEY PHILOSOPHICAL STANCES

Marxist feminists argue that capitalism is inherently patriarchal and both systems work together to exploit and oppress women. They believe that capitalist benefits from women's unpaid labor in the household and their underpaid labor in the workplace. Similarly, private property plays a central role in women's subjugation. The concept of private ownership reinforces

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the idea that women as property, contributing to their objectification and subordinate status.

4- CAPITALISM - IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF WOMEN OPPRESSION

Marxist feminism draws on Marx's analyses of the social structure of capitalism. According to Marx, the owners of means of production exploits the workers to increase profit.

Marxist feminists incorporate women in the larger context of Marx's analyses of capitalism's structure.

Women cater to the physical needs of workers & bosses by providing food, washing, clothes and care.

Women reproduce the next generation of bosses and workers by giving birth and raising them.

Women are not paid to do this work, their endeavors benefit her family whereas men, as an individuals gain nothing out of it.

This reinforces the system of capitalism. Women's position in the domestic sphere and their relatively restricted access to paid work are caused by capitalism.

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Capitalism, puts women in great disadvantage and lead her exploitation and oppression by coupling with patriarchy.

5- PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE SPHERE

Marxist feminists have divided the world into two spheres, the public sphere and the private sphere. The labor of the public sphere, which is associated with men, is remunerated whereas that of the private sphere which deals with the household and is traditionally associated with women, goes uncompensated. This division is strengthened via nuclear family where adult members divide the tasks among themselves.

6- RECIPE FOR WOMEN EMANCIPATION - ROOTING OUT CAPITALISM

Marxist feminists believe that we will have Communist states, even after owning the means of production, giving maternity benefits to women, and introducing child care policies, do not fully emancipate women. They believe that state-dominated policies antithetical to the interests of women. So, simultaneously replacing the Capitalist

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cooperatively with a welfare communist state and rooting out patriarchy will lead to women emancipation.

7- CRITIQUE

Marxist feminism has invited a lot of critique.

(A) Too Much Focus On Economics

Critics argue that Marxist feminism entirely focused on economics, without paying due attention to the societal and sociological roots of the gender issue, and the sociological factors that contribute towards perpetuation of gender disparity.

(B) No Individualism

Critics state that Marxist feminism assumes that all women have same issues and does not pay due attention to the other issues like with respect to social class, race, ethnicity etc. For instance, China being a communist country imposed one child policy and took away women's reproductive rights demonstrating the inequality women have to suffer at the cost of decision.

is made by men in power.

(c) The Root Cause, Patriarchy, is not addressed.

As we know, Socialist feminism is a two pronged theory that attempts to harmonize the radical and Marxist feminism narrative. It states that women subjugation is a result of both capitalism and Patriarchy. However, their complete focus was on economic conditions of women that doesn't address the patriarchy issue.

8- CONCLUSION

Friedrich Engels, in his book, "The origin of the family, private property and the state," stated that the emancipation of women will only be possible when women can take part in production on a large scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of her time.

Both, Marxist and Socialist feminism introduced a new perspective in the world of feminism. Despite the criticism they brought about, they brought about a unique theory.

You need to elaborate women exploitation part e.g

Wage differences, unremitting domestic responsibilities under this philosophy

which to an extent plays a role
in the current situation of
gender inequality

X--X--X--X--X--X--X