

Assignment No # 01.

QNO # 01 Write a note on the status of women's studies in Pakistan and give your views on the autonomy/integration debate in Women's Studies.

Answer STATUS OF WOMEN'S

STUDIES IN PAKISTAN.

Status of women's studies in Pakistan as described by Rubina Seegal in the State of the Discipline of Women Studies in Pakistan social studies in Pakistan as a social discipline within women's movement and feminist struggles raged across the country.

Although the field of the Women Studies as a discipline established three

to four decades ago but it has a long history upto the enlightenment era.

Throughout the history women of Pakistan have been expressing their desires, need, wants, pain, love, joy and hate to

centuries through the traditional way of storytelling, singing and lullabies etc.

The Ministry of Women Development (MoWD) is committed to the overall development

of the ministry are to enhance women literacy rate, level of attainment

of women at all educational levels, Reorientation

of the curricula and making the gender sensitive. Furthermore, The Nation

Action Plan on the status of women also aimed at encouraging the generation

of information, analysis and studies relating to the women and gender studies. Both these institutions are thus integrally related to the state of women's studies as a discipline and has as strong base in activism and implementation.

NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

It was endorsed in 1998. It recommended the promotion of inter-disciplinary field of women studies in public and private educational and training institutions. One of the main actions recommended was the development of women studies centers at five universities throughout the Pakistan and their funding should be ensured through the ministry of Education and Higher Commission.

It was suggested that there must be a linkage and information exchange between all the public and private women studies institutions.

WOMEN STUDIES CENTERS.

In 1989 the Ministry of Women's Development established 5 Women studies centers in 5 universities, initially it was a five year project. Main objective behind women studies centers are-

- 1- Critical examination of all those factors responsible for rendering women invisible in scientific investigation and development.
- 2- Reorientation of the curricula to include

2023.09.20 10:47

knowledge on women and including the contributions made by female writers.

3. Creating awareness of women studies.

4. Development of introductory courses for the students of universities.

1. WOMEN STUDIES DEPARTMENT at Allama Iqbal Open University.

It was established in 1997 with the funding of Ministry of Women Development.

It introduced women studies as an academic discipline through the distance learning program. It also created awareness and sensitization of gender issues through seminars and workshops. The courses offered include a course on the Psychology of women, the role of women writers in Pakistani literature, research methods in women studies and feminist theories. TV program was also prepared.

2. WOMEN'S RESEARCH AND RESOURCE CENTER AT THE FATIMA JINNAH WOMEN UNIVERSITY RAWALPINDI:-

The Women Research and Resource Center at Fatima Jinnah Women University was established in 1999. It aimed at creating awareness especially among the students of this university and enhancing educational and employment opportunities.

It emphasized on research in various gender and social issues. The WRRC offers various courses on women and development, women in management, self-esteem and mental health.

2023-09-20 10:47

It started a course called **Status of Women in Pakistan** is offered for PhD candidate of the University. It has developed MA in Gender Studies in coordination with the University of Glasgow.

3- **Institute of Women Development Studies at University of Sindh Jamshoro.**

This institute was established in 1994 by the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. The aim of the institute is to replace the educated value system with the new one based on equality and mutual respect for both sexes and also to remove disparities in the provision of educational facilities. Unfortunately this institute conflated the discipline of women studies with Home Economics which recreates and reinforces the gender division of labor as indicated in the "Women of Pakistan: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back" by Mumtaz, Khawar and Shahzad Farida.

OTHER WOMEN CENTERS AND INSTITUTIONS

Women studies center at Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, Centre of Excellence for Women Studies programme at Karachi University, Women Studies centers at University of Balochistan in Quetta, Department of Women Studies, Punjab University, Department of Women Studies University of Peshawar, Government Fatima Jinnah College, Chunnani Mandi, Lahore and The Gender and Development Studies Department at LCWU.

2023.09.20 10:47

Courses and Degrees offered

All these institutes are offering variety of courses and degrees including BS, MSc, M.Phil and PhD in Gender studies and various certificate courses.

Research Publication:

The Gender Studies department has prepared a directory of thesis on gender issues. It has also contributed research articles & two books were published in USA and Canada.

Conclusion.

Gender Studies has developed in Pakistan as a discipline with powerful implications on society and culture as a whole. A lot more needs to be done to truly inculcate the ideas of gender equality among the public as suggested by Nazia Hussain in her edited version of "Rethinking New Womanhood: Practices of Gender, Class and Religion in South Asia." The administration of universities and institutions offering various under-graduates, graduates and post-graduates degrees must revolve the gender difference in the academic environment to have a more powerful impact on the future alma mater.

Autonomy versus Integration Debate in Women Studies

Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study that mainly discusses gender and gender based issues in society. Curriculum of the field shed lights on

on those topics that are belonging to other disciplines such as women studies, Gender studies, LGBT. The interdisciplinary nature of women studies gave rise to a debate on autonomy versus integrated nature of field.

Autonomy versus integration debate initiated in 1980's. In 'Women Studies' Feminist often take into consideration the nature of the field and debated whether it should be kept an independent and autonomous department at universities or be incorporated as a subfield.

Integration of the Gender studies as a subfield of any other discipline will be a good choice because of the following reasons.

(i) Only Way to Bring Big changes

According to the proponents of integration of Gender studies, there is the need of bringing big change in society related gender and gender based issues. According to them this changes can only be brought by major integration of women studies with other discipline.

(ii) Best way to compel policy Makers.

Integrationists also argued that incorporation of women studies in any other major discipline is the only way to compel policy makers to keep in mind gender while formulating a policy. According to them only this way we will be able to achieve our goals.

Contributions of the Debate.

The autonomy versus integration debate has stimulated critical discussions and

reflections within gender studies, leading to the development of the more nuanced and sophisticated approaches to understanding gender and sexuality. It has encouraged scholars to engage with other disciplines, fostering interdisciplinary research that has exposed the scope of gender studies. This debate has pushed gender studies to address issues of inclusivity, recognizing the importance of intersectionality and the experiences of marginal groups.

2023.09.20 10:47