

Sibgha - Batch: 342

Q No. 1:

Define and discuss the discipline of gender studies and also differentiate between Women Studies and gender Studies.

Answer:

What is gender Studies:

"Gender studies is primarily a study of genders, their relationship with each other, their respective status in the society, their roles in the socio-economic and political spheres and the forces that affect them."

What is "Gender"?

Gender is seen as the process by which individuals who are born into biological categories (male or female) become the social categories (men and women) through the acquisition of socially-defined roles."

# Discipline of Gender Studies

Gender studies is a "multi-disciplinary" field that seeks to study different disciplines i.e. Economics, political science, biology, philosophy and others from the perspective of gender.

## Multidisciplinary v/s Interdisciplinary

Multidisciplinary draws on knowledge from different disciplines but stay within their boundaries.

v/s

"Interdisciplinary analyze, synthesizes and harmonizes links between the subjects."

Gender studies is "multi-disciplinary" field.

## MultiDisciplinary Nature of Gender Studies:

Following are the disciplines for the study of gender studies and they are-

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| (i) <u>Literature</u>       | (vii) <u>Political Science</u>             |
| (ii) <u>Philosophy</u>      | (viii) <u>International Relations (IR)</u> |
| (iii) <u>Cinema Studies</u> | (ix) <u>Religion</u>                       |
| (iv) <u>Media Studies</u>   | (x) <u>History</u>                         |
| (v) <u>Psychology</u>       |  |
| (vi) <u>Law</u>             |  |

## (i) Literature:

Literature broadly is any collection of written books, prose, fiction, novel, drama and poetry. It is actually as an art form, it can also include works in various non-fiction genres, such as biography, letters etc.

In literature, gender refers to how author and characters define themselves and how society evaluate them based on their gender. Sex, gender and sexuality shape narrative texts and readers understanding of them in many ways. Literature is a powerful instrument that allows authors to either reinforce or subvert gender roles specific to one time and place.

Hesoid was a greek epic poet and he wrote about women.

"Donot let a woman deceive you with her sexy rump, with her wheedling and coaxing words she is after your barn."

(HESOID).

"Whoever has trusted a woman has trusted deceivers."

**William Shakespeare:** (Hesoid)

William Shakespear was an English playwright, poet and actor, he is regarded as the greatest writer in English writing and language, he thought women as the feminine represented the following virtues which importantly have their meaning in relationship to male; obedience, silence, sexual chastity, piety, humility and patience. He quoted

"Frailty, thy name is woman."

(Shakespeare)

"Though men can cover crimes with bold stern looks, poor women's faces are their own fault books."

(W. Shakespeare-)

# Bapsi Sidhwa: Ice-Candy Man

Bapsi Sidhwa a Pakistani novelist and women's right activist. She wrote the novel "Ice-Candy Man", It is set in pre-partition India in Lahore. The novel is about female suppression and the marginalization, It projects women's plight and exploitation in the patriarchal society. It establishes how men use their masculine power and hence fulfill their desires by brutally assaulting women.

Women on the roof crying,  
beating their breasts.

(Novel: Ice-Candy Man)

## (ii) PHILOSOPHY:

Philosophy means "love of wisdom." It is an activity people undertake when they seek to understand fundamental truths (truths) about themselves.

The philosophical theories of Gender are typically understood as theories of what it is to be a woman, a man, and a non-binary and so on. Different philosophers represent woman a weak character and considers male as the most powerful and dominant character. He is ruler and king and woman is just to obey.

"Thomas Aquinas" an Italian philosopher wrote about women.

"Woman is really an imperfect man."  
(Thomas Aquinas)

"Aristotle" a philosopher and a misogynistic person wrote about women.

"Woman is an incubator of man's seed."  
(Aristotle)

"Male is superior and female is inferior, the one governs and the other is governed."  
(Aristotle)

### (iii) CINEMA STUDIES:

The concept of gender in cinema refers to the portrayal of female roles in cinemas. The importance of understanding the portrayal of gender roles in cinemas manifest in its potential to influence ideas about gender in society.

#### Women as glorified Beauty only:

The film industry represent women as "glorified beauty", objects, symbolizing sex appeal and entertainment. Women only

receive stereotypical representation tied to traditional roles of wives, lovers and mothers only. Additionally women have more value in those roles than in being independent and intelligent.

**"Gangubai Kathiawadi"** an Indian movie is based upon the prostitution and sex workers rights.

"Sex workers are objectified and labelled as properties only." The one of the famous dialogue is آپ کی عزت اس بار بھی تو کسی نے تو روزانہ لوٹتے ہیں سالی تم ہی میں ہوتی

## **Aurat Raj:**

Aurat Raj a Pakistani first movie on feminism directed by Rangela was also based upon social rights of women.

## **(iv) MEDIA STUDIES:**

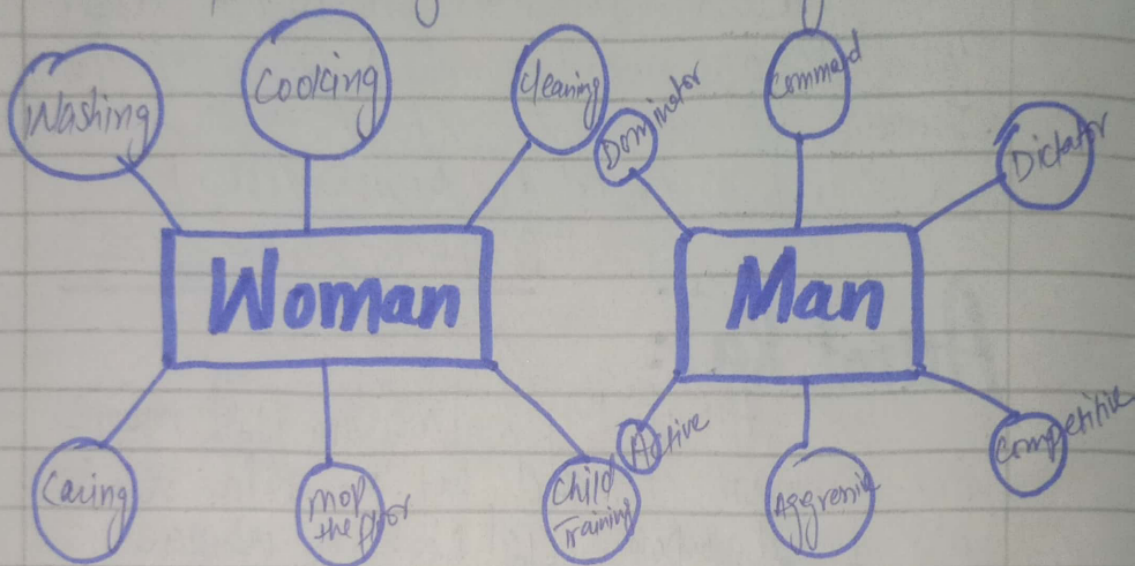
Media studies play an important role in how people form their identities social norms and values in relation to gender. The media tends to portray males and female in stereotypical ways as males as independent and directive and females as unambitious and emotional.

Media only portrays female as a house wife and house maker which

is only limited to cooking, washing and cleaning purposes only and man is the dictator or head of the house.

## Media Ads:

Media commercial Ads like Harpic commercial (Woman is cleaning washroom), cooking ads like Shaan Foods and laundry/Detergent Ads in which female is only cleaning clothes, and man is only dictating and commanding.



## (v) PSYCHOLOGY:

Psychology is the study of mind and behaviour, It is the study of understanding mental processes, brain functions and behaviour.

Psychology directly deals with gender studies as it explores the concepts of masculinity and femininity across the culture and the influence of those.



concepts on behaviour, health, interpersonal relationships and psychological processes.

Sigmund Freud: He was an

Austrian Neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis and one of the most influential doctor of the 19th century.

But his views on women were as follows:

"Women oppose change, receive passively and add nothing of their own."

He wrote in 1925 paper entitled

"The psychological consequences of the Anatomic Distinction between the Sexes."

Sigmund Freud in his theory wrote about "What does women want?" and "How she came into being."

"The Sexual life of Adult women is a 'dark continent' for psychology."

(Sigmund Freud)

**NANCY CHODOROW**: she is a contemporary feminist, psychologist and sociologist. Chodorow argues that each person's gender identity is developed through a combination of both personal and cultural meaning.

She examined the mother-child relationship and applied feminist theories to Traditional Freudian psycho-analysis. She wrote a book called "Reproduction of Mothering."

## (vi) Law:

Legal law and gender deal with how the law constitutes and how it should shape relations between the genders.

Gender equality is very necessary as it prevents violence against women and girls. It is essential for economic prosperity. Societies that value men and women as equal are safe and healthier. Gender equality is a human right. Different laws are proposed for Women Rights.

### (a) GHAG BILL:

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Elimination of Custom of Ghag Bill 2012 to eradicate the social evil.

called "Ghag". The bill was tabled by provincial Minister for Social welfare and Women Development Sitara Ayaz.

## (b) Transgender Right Act 2018

The National Assembly of Pakistan enacted The Transgender person (Protection of Rights) Act 2018 on 8th May 2018. The Act provides legal recognition to transgender persons and prohibit discrimination and harassment.

## (c) Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010

This Act provide legal protection to women against the harassment at the workplace, and reforms the existing legislation regarding women right to work in Pakistan.

## (d) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

It is an international bill

of rights for women and it is one of the key international agreements that guides the work of UN Women in achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

## (vii) POLITICAL SCIENCE:

Gender studies based on the content of political science shows how people's political participation and experiences interact with their gender identity and how ideas of gender shape political science and institutions.

Women's political participation in the context of gender patriarchal political system is a particular focus of study.

## (9) Plato "Republic":-

"Plato Republic" was based on half communism, Plato radically promoted the idea that in an ideal society all worthy individuals receive training. But Plato believed women to be physically weaker than men.

Plato argued that wife is not a private property it is a public property in Republics.

Plato argued soldiers as the heart of state and both soldier male and female would give birth to the child and the child was given to state.

## (b) Aristotle About Women.

Aristotle believed that women were inferior to men in a state. The male is a ruler and the female is the subject. Relationship between the husband and wife is friendship.

"Women are to the man as the slave, is to the master, the manual to the mental worker, the barbarian to the Greek. A woman is an unfinished man, left standing on the lower step in the scale of development."

(Aristotle)

"Woman is merely an incubator of man's seed."

(Aristotle)

# (viii) INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## (IR)

IR (International relations) is an attempt to explain behaviour that occurs across the boundaries of state, the broader relations of one state and other states.

To study gender in IR as a means to identify how gender dynamics interact with international political structure, following are the examples:

### Kautilya Arthashastra:

Kautilya Arthashastra a book by "Chanakya" (An Indian teacher) is about the male dominance in a society. He also believed that it is the king's duty to seek material gain, spiritual goods and pleasures. He thinks for a king to attain these things must create wealth, have armies and should conquer the kingdoms and enlarge the size of state.

He was a believer of "Patriarchy" (male dominating) system, he considered male as a king and female deprived of the power. His books was based on the seven pillars.

# Fredrich Engle:

Fredrich Engle was a German philosopher, political theorist and socialist. He wrote a book named

"The origin of Family, private property and State."

"This book was based upon a patriarchal system. It introduced a perspective of gender history positing that a human culture and its power dynamics shifted from women to man."

## (ix) RELIGION:

Feminists argue that religion plays a role in gender discrimination as many traditional religions support women's exclusion from the public sector.

In Islam:

وللرجال عليهن درجة

ترجمہ: اور مردوں کو عورتوں پر فضیلت ہے۔

"Men are superior to Women."

(سورۃ البقرہ ۲۲۸)

This ayat is misinterpreted by men and they only show dominance and power over women. Men consider themselves most powerful and rulers and suppress women and restrict her to only house-hold works.

## Hinduism:

Hindu culture has been "patriarchal" meaning that the men hold primary power and predominate in roles. With the laws of Manu in 300CE it states that women do not need to have money as their father will support them and once married his husband support her, which

(X) HISTORY: is totally wrong.

Gender History not only recognize women as historical agents but also reverses the assumption that men are neutral beings whose masculinity and sexuality require no notice.

## Michel Foucault:

Michael Foucault was a French historian and philosopher, he wrote a book "The History of Sexuality" aimed to show how modern sexuality and the knowledge of sex emerged from certain practices of power.



v/s

## Women Studies

1. Women studies focus on specific women related issues.

2. Women studies is a narrower approach.

3. Women studies is single disciplinary.

4. Women studies emerged as second wave of feminism (1960-1996).

5. Based on the principles of autonomy.

6. Their achievement in the society.

7. Women studies will favour women for the most.

## Gender Studies

1. Gender studies focus on both men and women (as gender).

2. Gender studies is a broader approach.

3. Gender studies is multidisciplinary.

4. Gender studies emerged as 3rd wave of feminism (1990-2012).

5. Based on the principles of integration.

6. Issues with women and their oppression in society.

7. Gender studies will discuss men just as equally as women.

# Women Studies vs Gender Studies

8. Different rights for women only

⇒ Women Right Act

⇒ Protection Against Harassment of Women At Work place 2010

8. Rights for both men women and also transgender.

⇒ Transgender Women Right Act 2018

9. Its approach is moderate.

9. Its approach is extremist.

10. It exclusive in nature (mean it exclude other fields and only limited to women studies).

10. Its inclusive in nature.  
(Its socially constructed and include other fields).

## CONCLUSION:

In a nutshell, Gender studies is a broad field and it is multidisciplinary in nature and it links with other fields like literature history, philosophy etc. Its approach is very broad and inclusive and it is different from women studies which only talks about women.