

Define the term masculinity and femininity.

In your opinion where do traditional gender roles come from?

Exordium

Masculinity and femininity are the two leading ideas of gender roles in society. The concept of gender roles come from social, cultural and economic settings of a system. Gender refers to when the biological category of male and female become social category of men and woman by adopting social standards of masculinity and femininity. Many feminist theorists suggest that gender and gender roles is a social construction. However, masculinity and femininity are the ideal standards which one must adopt to become man and woman.

1) Definition of Masculinity

Masculinity is a collection of traits which society associates as a standard to recognize whether a

person is male or not. These traits have no link with one's biological identity. Whereas, their genitalia must decide to give set of traits of masculinity and femininity. There is no doubt that masculinity varies from society to society. The general masculine traits includes, aggressive behavior, domination, rational, rude, brave, wise etc.

2) Description of femininity

Femininity is a set of traits which a female must confirm to become a woman. The deviation from these traits can lead to chaos in her life. There is no standard system of these feminist traits rather society created and imposed on every new born. Feminist traits include, submissiveness, irrational, weak, dependent, conformist and selfless.

3) Clash of femininity and masculinity

The clash between masculinity and

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femininity started with emergence of 'feminism'. Many scholars highlight them as social construction of gender. They presented difference between 'sex' and 'gender'. The former is 'nature' and latter is 'social constructed'. Robert J. Stoller in 'Sex and Gender; The Development of Masculinity and Femininity', discusses the construction of masculinity and femininity.

4) Traditional gender roles

Traditional gender roles mainly come from family, society, community and in general from environment. These gender roles are incorporated in child from birth and then make them rigid with time. These gender roles are not fixed, in one society the traits associated with femininity in negative terms can be a source of appreciation in some

other society. So, these gender roles vary from society to society as explained by Oliver Jean in "Gender history and in transnational perspective."

a- Simone de Beauvoir's views:

Simone de Beauvoir participated for identifying social construction of gender roles. She presented a great work to highlight that males and females is a social construct and the roles given them are also constructed by society. In her work, 'The second sex', she emphasized 'One is not born rather become a woman'.

b- Role of family in gender construction

Family is the first institution which impregnate the minds with specific gender roles. The difference in toys for children and in modern time, the gender revelation event, they use blue for 'boy'.

and pink for 'girl'. The girls are
brought to play with 'kitchen sets'
or 'dolls' to give a nurturing trait.
In contrast, boys are given 'guns',
'cars' or other 'tool toys'. The dis-
tinction started from homes.

c- Role of community

Community is the second institution
which teaches the difference and
gender roles. They welcome a
boy when he play outside but
restricted girls to at homes. Even
in present time, when world is
a global village, little girls
can not play outside freely. The
community incorporate boundaries as
well as appreciation like in western
countries. But Pakistani community is
still lacking behind.

d- Check by society on gender roles

The gender roles are so
rigid and leave no vacuum
for understanding plight. Society

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keeps a check on fulfillment of gender roles. For instance, a girl got killed by her cousin just because she goes outside and earn for living. She was the sole breadwinner of her family. The gender role belongs to females as to ~~be~~ stay at home and if they deviate, they suffer.

e- Concept of 'mother'

Females are linked to natural ability of being mother but society give them the social role that they must conceive either they ~~have~~ like or not. The society constructed the minds of male members to consider female as a sole purpose of ^{giving} birth. Recently, a man in Supreme Court called her wife as she is not 'female' because she can not conceive. The judge fined him and rejected the very notion but it showed how 'mothering'

is connected with females.

6- Role of literature in marginalization

Literature engraved these ideas and gender roles by showing ideal females. Virgil in *Aeneid* showed how a hero chose a girl who is silent and rejected the one who demands her rights.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman in her short story, 'A Yellow Wallpaper' highlighted a female suffering from post-partum depression but her husband pays no attention. Such works are shifting the gender roles like protagonist breed women behind the bars, means she breed herself. These texts depicted the woman can question her role.

9- Role of media as trend setters

Media is also used as a tool to strength societies given gender roles. The use of pretty female in all advertisements

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showed that sole purpose of female is to please man.

Conclusion

Masculinity is a set of traits associate to males and femininity is collection of traits associated to females. These are the best tools to establish gender roles in society. Moreover, there are multiple other ways which are actually tools to insurge gender roles in minds of people.
