

Define masculinity and femininity.
Where do traditional gender roles originate and Theoretical perspective.

Introduction

Masculinity and femininity are two social categories that define how men and women are expected to behave. While, Masculinity linked with assertiveness, provision and strength, likewise Femininity is associated with modesty, nurturing and care. These roles are not naturally occur, but socially constructed over centuries. They shape the functioning of family, how societies are organized, and how economies grow.

As Simone de Beauvoir rightly said,

One is not born, but
rather becomes, a woman

This shows that gender roles are not biologically constructed, but are socially learned.

(1)

Definition of Masculinity

Masculinity refers to the traits and responsibilities which society

assigns to men. These include independence, leadership, toughness and the role of provider.

According to Pakistan's Perspective

Men are seen as guardians of the family honour and expected to be the breadwinners. Those men who are unemployed are labeled as "less manly".

According to Global Perspective

In United States and Europe, masculinity is associated with career success and public power.

As Michael Kimmel, a gender scholar notes;

"Masculinity is the relentless pursuit of proving manhood in the eyes of others."

(2)

Definition of Femininity

Femininity is defined as the traits and behaviours, which are considered appropriate for women such as patience, care, modesty, nurturing and emotional expression.

According to The Pakistan's Perspective

If the woman is fulfilling household responsibilities and rearing children

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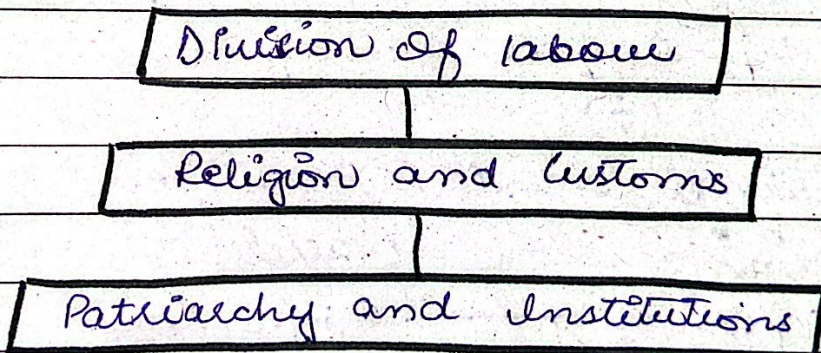
are often more valued for their ability.

According to The Global Perspectives
In some cultures, femininity is tied to beauty standards and emotional labour rather than leadership. Thus femininity is not the natural destiny, but a role learned through culture, family and media.

(3)

Origin of Gender roles

Division between masculinity and femininity has historical roots:



Division of labour

Early societies assigned external labour to men and household duties to women. Later, it became cultural roles.

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Religion and Custom

Religious interpretations reinforced separate roles, for instance, in South Asia women movements was linked to family honour. There is an increasing number of honour killing in Pakistan, as they involve religious practices with culture.

Patriarchy and Institutions

Men's control of land, power and politics institutionalised male dominance. The 'glass-ceiling' in work place reflects the same power imbalance, where women find it difficult to reach top leadership despite qualifications

(4)

Traditional Gender Stereotypes

Feminine		Male
Not Aggressive	————	Aggressive
Passive	————	Active
Kind	————	Cruel
Nurturing	————	Not Nurturing
Home Oriented	————	Worldly
Dependent	————	Independent
Submissive	————	Dominant
Indecisive	————	Decisive

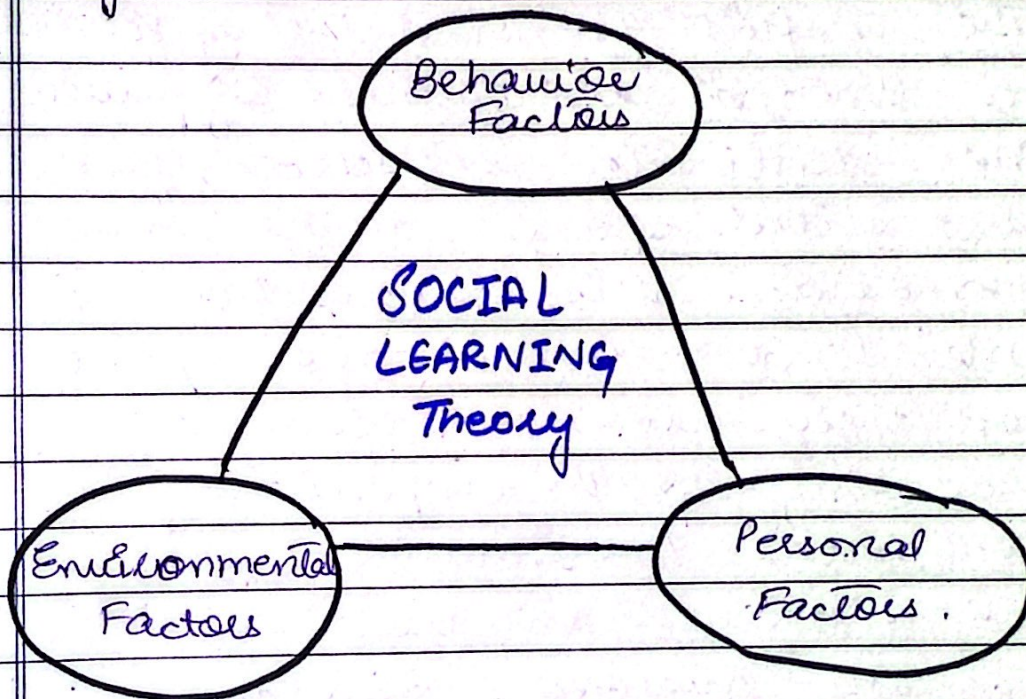
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Theoretical lense

To understand deeply, how gender roles are shaped and maintained, there are following theories:

(a) Social Learning Theory:

This theory argues that gender roles are learned, children learn behaviours by imitating adults and being rewarded or punished by certain behaviours.



for example, a boy praised for showing toughness and a girl is praised for showing care and doing household work.

likewise, when a child born the society shapes the gender roles

by advertising reinforce differences based on colors. The color associated to boys are blue and for girls pink color. Similarly, society differentiate the tasks of boys and girls. The girls are provided by dolls and cars to boys and teaches them what society expect.

This shows gender is not inborn but taught step by step.

(b) Conflict & feminist theory

The conflict feminist theory focuses on unequal distribution of power. Men dominate resources, politics and social spaces more than women do. This shows how men tend to control more power on these areas as female are confined to dependency on males. For instance, even when women and men are equally qualified, still the women faces cultural biases, stereotypes, and even lack of support, making it harder for them to reach leadership roles.

That's another way that the power imbalance plays out in society.

(6) Impacts of Traditional Gender Roles on Masculinity and Femininity

Impact on Masculinity

Men are often pressured to appear dominant since childhood. Making them emotionally controlled and making them powerful leads to suppression of emotions, stress and toxic masculinity. This is how society's gender roles impact on masculinity.

Impact on femininity

Women are confined to focus on beauty standards and learning household work. Society expect women to be nurturing, dependent and caregivers. This may lead to suppress leadership qualities, limit their independence and participation in public life.

(7)

Feminist Movements agenda

Feminism is not about beating men. It is not about women are better than men. It is not about putting men down. It is just about saying stop treating women like second citizens class

citizens. Let, women's have opportunities.

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Conclusion

Masculinity and femininity are social scripts, not biological truths. They emerged from history, and culture and they are maintained through social learning and power structures. Their impact are profound limiting women's rights, burdening men with provider stress. It is important to provide equal chances to both men and women.