

Q No: 3.

Masculinity and Femininity are deeply engrained

realities since distant past in human history.

Discuss various theoretical debates on the

construction of masculinity and femininity to

make it explicit that formation of both is either

natural or social reality. Support with examples.

Introduction:

Masculinity and Femininity are socially constructed phenomenon.

Men and Women are formed so by the reiteration of gender roles and performances, as per theorists. The social construction of gender occurs by parents, peers and cultures adopted by the society at large.

1. Description of Masculinity and Femininity:

Masculinity is the notion that males are aggressive and providers. Femininity highlights the nurturing nature of females and their display of concern. These

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concepts are engraved in the bright
up of nations. For instance, USA,
Japan are masculine countries
while Costa Rica remains a
feminine state. These are based
on provision of overlapping
rights to citizens.

2- Geert Hofstede's View on Masculinity and Femininity:

Geert Hofstede in his
book, "Masculinity and
Femininity: New Dimensions of
Regional Cultures", lays focus
on this concept. The culture
where an individual is raised
greatly shapes the feminine or
masculine traits in the personalities.
Considering Pakistan as a case
study, this very cultural influence
has turned the country into a
masculine state that abides by

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patriarchal mindsets.

3- Gender Role Theory advocates social reality of Masculinity & Femininity:

John Money's Gender Role Theory greatly provides an insight to social construction of gender. Through repetitive gender roles, males and females become masculine or feminine.

For instance, women are expected to cook, clean and be homemakers, while the men's role is to earn and provide for his family. Judith Lorber validates this concept in his book, "Social Construction of Gender."

This theory maintains that such roles are given to stabilize gender division of labour that provides men an upper role.

4- Gender Realities in Talcott Parsons' Functionalist View:

The notion that realities like masculinity and femininity are socially constructed can be found in Talcott Parson's Functionalist View. Men and women are normatively assigned roles each under parameters of masculinity and femininity that the society remains functional.

Feminists object this view and term it an exploitation of feminine realities such as the ability to reproduce. "The Dialectic of Sex", by Shulamith Firestone highlights such criticism.

5- Gender Performativity Theory's Stance:

Judith Butler's work, "Gender Trouble" highlights the basis

add/highlight examples against these arguments.

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of gender performances on basis of social realities. Women are made to take care of the children, fathers can skip school result days, mother takes day off if the child is sick; these are instances where certain performance is expected based on gender. The society also judges such a performance.

relate your headings and arguments to the qs statement.

6- The Concept of "Doing Gender",

West and Zimmerman have provided this concept which is based on the idea that, "Gender is 'doing', instead of 'being'." This signifies that gender realities of masculinity and femininity are not natural but socially constructed.

In everyday lives, females are cooking, cleaning while

males go out for work. They are doing gender without obligations.

7. Gender Schema Theory and Masculine/Feminine Realities:

The idea can also be illustrated by Sandra Bem's "Gender Schema Theory." At an early age, children develop Schema of their genders. The agents are largely parents, peers, teachers etc. The example of a girl buying everything pink or a boy toy be cars explains how these schemas become deeply engraved in social setups.

8. Erikson's Psycho-social Theory:

This theory is of view

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that children psychology develops gender realities. Through various ages of life span they behave a certain way.

Adolescence:	Autonomy vs Shame
Early childhood	Initiative vs Guilt
Teenage:	Interaction vs Isolation
Early Adulthood	Trust vs Mistrust

9- Social Formation of Gender Realities:

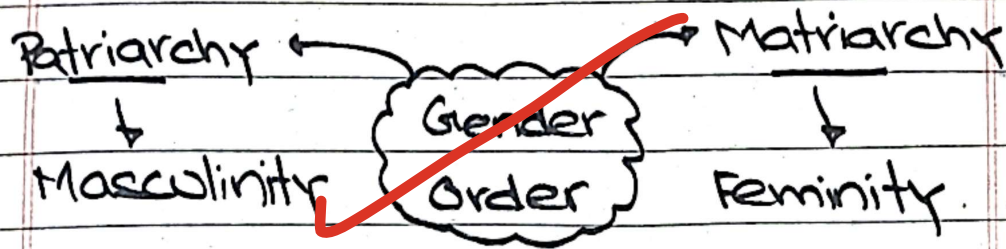
The above theories highlight how society, culture formulate the power dynamics and gendered realities of masculinity and femininity.

Ann Oakley in her book, "Sex, Gender and Society", validates all these

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Concepts. These end up to make Gender Order of a certain Society.



This very concept was quoted:
"One is not born but becomes a woman."

add a few more arguments.

Conclusion:

Gender realities are constructed by abiding to gender roles that are scripted out of convenience.