

# Gender Studies

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## Question no. 1

### Introduction :-

Gender Studies is a social and academic discipline which is multidisciplinary in nature and take various concepts and theories from other disciplines to integrate in Gender studies. It takes subject matter to make Gender studies a holistic subject that examines, observes and analyzes the concept of gender, gender inequality and oppression from the perspectives of different fields. Gender studies evolved from women studies as an academic discipline from the efforts of Pakistan Association of Women studies (PAWS).

### Multidisciplinary Nature of Gender Studies :-

Park and Choi describes that multidisciplinary is a nature of a discipline which integrates the concepts of other disciplines without losing its own essence. Gender studies is a multidisciplinary discipline which integrates the concepts and subject-matter of other disciplines to describe the concept of gender, gender inequality, oppression being done on women and unequal status of man and woman in a society. Following are the subjects from which gender borrows concepts and integrate it :-

## (1) Literature :-

Literature is an academic discipline that reflects the situation of life. Historically, gender has been reflected and depicted in various literary works to express that how gender of woman was socially constructed and historically been oppressed by men. *A Doll's House*, a play written by Henrik Ibsen, is an excellent example to depict the inequalities of gender.

## (2) Anthropology :-

Another discipline that deals with gender is Anthropology that is the holistic study of mankind and focuses on the comparative study of cultures. This comparative study reveal the development and construction chronologically.

## (3) Medical Sciences :-

Medical science also deals with gender because it explains the biological and physiological difference man and woman including their external and internal genitals, hormones and secondary sexual characteristics along with chromosomal make up.

## (4) History :-

History helps to reconstruct the past and evaluate that how old the phenomenon of woman oppression is. It reflects that how society used to be matriarchal with Amazon female warrior and how tragically it became a male tyrant society.

## (5) Psychology :-

Psychology reveals the study of human nature and how man has inherent need of subjugating women. Psychology reveals a different perspective to study gender inequality and reiterates to study oppression from human psyche. Psychology is integrated with gender studies as it has 'Freud's Psychoanalytic theory, Gender Schema Theory' and concepts like oedipus complex and electra complex.

## (6) Religion :-

Religion is the most old discipline of study. However, it is not religion that subjugate women, but it is the misinterpretation of religion that oppress women. For example, Hinduism gives the rank of 'saraswati' to women and no testament of Bible considers or calls women as original sinner. The article named as 'The Hidden Gems of Islam' also explains about that there were various renowned women in Islam who were empower such as Hazrat Rujada who was female warrior who defended Prophet Muhammad in various battles.

## The Development of Gender studies as a Discipline in Pakistan :-

Gender studies looks at the manner in which the norms and patterns of behavior associated with masculinity and femininity come into being. It studies the features of these norms and patterns - which traits are considered masculine and feminine? and why? and Gender studies

also studies the impacts these stereotypes have in the lives of man and woman

## - Status of Gender Studies in Pakistan :-

The Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD) in Pakistan is committed to the overall development of women including their education. The aims of the ministry are to enhance women's literacy rates and reduce gender gap at all levels of life. Following are the steps taken by Pakistan for the development of gender studies :-

### (1) National Plan of Action :-

The national Plan of Action was endorsed by the government of Pakistan in 1998. It recommended the promotion of inter-disciplinary field of women's studies in public and private educational and training institutions.

### (2) Pakistan Association For women Studies :-

Pakistan Association for women studies (PAWS) was founded in 1992 to encourage the development of Women Studies Center at five universities throughout Pakistan. The aims and objectives of these departments are :-

- (a) Creating issues awareness about women
- (b) Development of introductory courses

for the students of universities  
 (1) Reorientation of existing quota to include knowledge on women and contributions made by female writers.

### (3) Women's Studies Department at Allama Iqbal Open University :-

The first women's studies department was opened in Allama Iqbal Open University. It introduced Women Studies as an academic discipline through the distant learning program.

### (4) Women Research and Resource Center at Fatima Jinnah Women University and Sindh University :-

Women Research and Resource center was established in 1992 and 1999 in Sindh University Jamshoro and Fatima Jinnah Women Studies. It aims at creating awareness and enhancing educational and employment opportunities for women.

### (5) Research Publications :-

The Gender studies department has prepared a directory of thesis on gender issues and contributed research articles and two books to get them published in USA and Canada. Moreover, the Centre of Women's Studies and Gender Studies has published plethora of research articles and journals internationally.

## Conclusion :-

Gender studies looks at the manner in which norms and patterns of behavior associated with masculinity and femininity. Gender studies as a discipline is multidisciplinary in nature and takes various concepts, theories and subject matter from other fields of study such as psychology, literature, history, law and many more. The development of Gender studies in Pakistan was followed by National Plan of Action and Pakistan Association for Women Studies which led to the inauguration of Gender studies in various universities.

## Question no. 4

### Introduction :-

Historically, gender and sex have been used interchangeably. Both sex and gender are different as sex refers to the biological make up of an individual whereas gender is socially constructed. Many theories in the light of various theorists have described and backed up the claim that gender is socially constructed and every theory described gender in different ways including Gender Performativity theory, Gender Role theory, Gender schema theory to name a few.

## Defining Gender :-

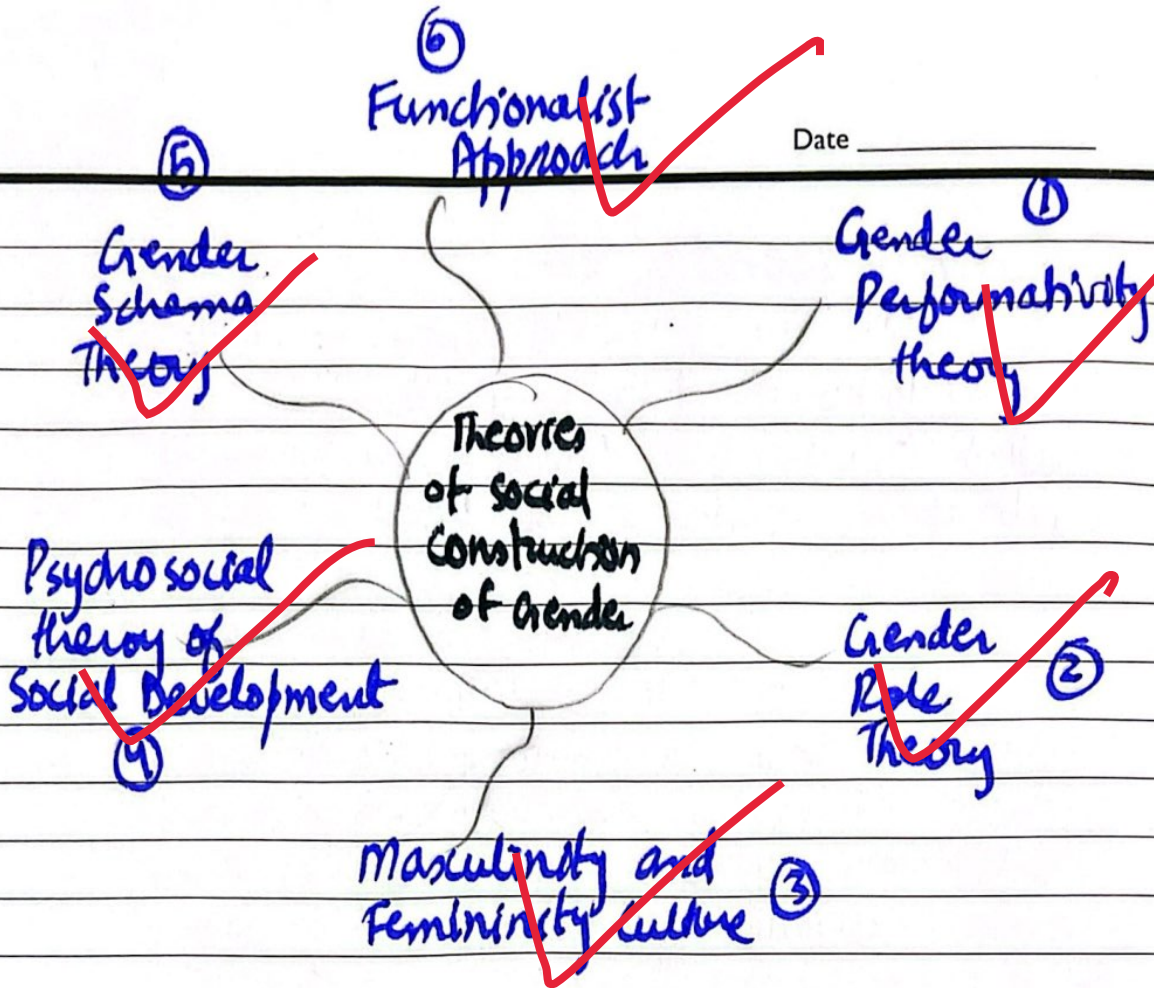
To change the biological category into social category, the process that is used is called 'socialization'. Owing to the process of socialization, gender can be defined as,

"The process by which individuals who are born into the biological categories of male and female become the social categories of man and woman through the acquisition of locally defined attributes of masculinity and femininity"

Thus, gender is the acquisition of socially defined roles. Thus, gender is socially constructed.

## Theories of Social Construction of Nature :-

Theories that support that gender is learned and established by the society and falls into the domain of nurture debate are called theories of social construction of gender.



## 1: Gender Performativity Theory :-

Gender Performativity theory was presented by Judith Butler in her book 'Gender Trouble' in which she described gender to be an act of performance. She rejects that sex, gender and sexuality constitute any web and say that there is no relationship of sex and gender. Gender is constructed through the performance of an individual. She further says that gender is not permanent but is subjected to change as long as one is adhering to the performance of gender.

## 2: Gender Role Theory by Money :-

Gender Role Theory was proposed by John Money and he described gender as the roles assigned to an individual. For example, the role of domestic life, child-bearing and



nearly are the few role assigned to women which construct their gender. These roles are given by society which in turn shape their gender.

### 3: Masculinity and femininity Culture by Geert Hofstede :-

According to Geert Hofstede, society established the concepts of masculinity and femininity and attached some traits and attribute to them. These attributes defines the gender of an individual. For example, the traits of fragility, shrill voice, bowing head, showing emotions are pinned on the concept of femininity whereas the traits like anger, aggressive nature and being stern are associated with masculinity. Individuals are supposed to follow these concepts of masculinity and femininity to identify in a particular gender.

### 4: Psychosocial theory of Social Development By Erikson :-

Like Sigmund Freud, Erikson also developed the stages of personality development. However, according to Erikson, human psyche is influenced through six social stages :-

- (a) Trust and Mistrust stage : Trusting boys and not young girls
- (b) Autonomy vs shame stage : Boys are given autonomy for social interaction whereas girls have to go through shame stage
- (c) Initiative vs guilt stage

(d) Superiority vs inferiority stage : Boys because of good exposure of society develops superiority complex whereas girls go through inferiority stage.

(e) Creativity vs stagnation

(f) Integrity vs Despair

## 5: Gender Schema Theory By Sandra Bem

Another important theory of the social construction of gender is Gender Schema theory. Gender schema theory says that not only social impacts but psychological aspects are also responsible for the construction of gender. She emphasized on the role of memories for gender construction and gave validation for concepts like Oedipus complex, Electra complex, Womb envy and Penis envy.

## 6: Functionalist Approach By Talcott Parsons :-

Talcott Parsons, the proponent of Functionalist approach, says that for the proper functioning of society, gender equality is necessary in which males have to perform upper role and females a submissive role to maintain peace in society. Functionalist approach was later criticized for supporting the notion of gender equality.

## Conclusion :-

Sex and gender are different from each other despite being used interchangeably. Gender refers to the social construction of gender and sex refers to the biological categories of male and female. There are many theories which supported the nurture debate and presented by various theorists. These theories include masculinity and femininity, Gender Role theory and Gender Performativity theory.

## Question no. 3

### Introduction :-

Feminist movement was a movement that wreaked havoc in the west in which millions of women emerged to ask for their fair share of society and to revolt against those practices of patriarchy that suppressed the rights of one half of the population. The Suffrage movement, similarly, was an essential movement that was a hallmark success for the prevalence of feminism in society. The movement that started from mere sheet protests led to the historic 19th amendment of USA that gave women the right of vote.

# Background Of the Suffrage Movement

The idea of equal rights for women is not a new one. The feminist movement of the 1970s and 1980s is actually a reemergence of a massive social reform movement, begun in 1848 at Seneca Falls Convention led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. This suffrage movement was finally hailed as a success when 19th amendment was passed which gave women a right to vote in USA.

## Important Steps taken for the Success Of Suffrage Movement :-

Following are the important steps taken for making the suffrage movement a great success for all women around the world.

### (1) Public Speaking :-

Women in 1830s started talking about slavery and actively participated in 'Abolitionist movement'. This gave an idea to women like Sarah and Angela Grimké to speak about the equality of women. They both shared aims and joined Lucretia Mott in their pursuit.

### (2) Petitions :-

During a petition campaign against slavery, women were not allowed to participate and sign the petitions for anti-slavery movements.

However, Former USA president John Quincy Adams spoke for the rights of women to sign the petitions.

### (3) Seneca Falls Convention, 1848 :-

The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 passed by the joint efforts of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott and it is hailed as a big step for the success of Suffrage Movement. Stanton read the 'Declaration of Sentiments' and there were 12 articles of the convention with article 9 specifically talking about women's right to vote. Out of 300 people who attended this historic convention, only one woman Charlotte Woodward was able to cast the vote in 1920.

### (4) Other Conventions :-

Many conventions about women's rights were held throughout the country and people were actively participating until the start of civil war.

### (5) Organizations for Women's Rights :-

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) in 1869. Moreover, the American Woman Suffrage Association was founded in 1869 by Lucy Stone. After 30 years, both organizations combined to establish National American Woman Suffrage Association with Stanton as President and woman's suffrage as the main focus.

## (6) Activities and Participation :-

- (a) Convention and campaigns
- (b) Lobbying
- (c) Protests
- (d) Research publishing
- (e) Picketing
- (f) Petitioning
- (g) Rallies and Parades
- (h) Arrests, bullying and attacks

## (7) Major Advocates :-

- (a) Lucretia Mott
- (b) Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- (c) Susan B. Anthony
- (d) Lucy Stone
- (e) Victoria Woodhull

## (8) The Nineteenth Amendment - the Hailing success :-

On August 1920, the secretary of state of USA signed the 19th amendment into law. Twenty-six million American women had won the right to vote in all public elections. The victory of 19th amendment came after decades of hardwork and struggle including writings, rallies and imprisonment.

## (A) International Women's Suffrage Timeline :-

New Zealand = 1893

Australia = 1902

Finland = 1906

Norway = 1913

USA = 1920

UK = 1928

## Conclusion :-

The idea of feminism that became renowned in 1960s was not new, but was a second phase of upheaval brought by Seneca Conventions in 1848 to pave the way for women equality and women right to vote. The suffrage movement was an important movement that gave women a basic right of vote that were historically deprived off. The suffrage movement followed a tough time from rallies to imprisonment and eventually led to 19th amendment of 1920 that American women won for themselves - a right to vote.

## Question no. 2

### Introduction :-

The debate of autonomy vs integration is an old one in the discipline of gender studies that delves into the notion that whether the discipline of Gender studies should be merged with other disciplines or stay autonomous from the concepts, theories and subject matter of other fields of studies. However, there is a claim that Autonomous debate in gender studies control this debate and presents comparatively stronger views than integrationist's school of thought. Autonomous debate contains more radical views about the debate instead of a stronger views than debate of integration.

### Background of the Debate of Autonomy vs Integration :-

The debate of autonomy vs integration started in 1892 at the Annual National Women's Suffrage Association. The debate was about whether or not gender studies be offered separately or merged with other subjects as political science as chapter of behaviour of women in politics.

### (1) Autonomy of Gender studies :-

Autonomy means independency or freedom. Those who supported autonomy debate believed that feminism should work in isolation and try to focus on problems of women particularly instead of focusing on their issues such



as a part of a 'bigger picture' Proponents of autonomy presents following points for keeping gender studies an autonomous field of study :-

### (1) Only way of Progress :-

Proponents of autonomy debate radically presents a sharp view that gender studies can only progress if it is autonomous and free of other disciplines. It would not be able to work freely if it is integrated with other subjects.

### (2) Appeal of Separatism :-

Another sharp and radical view of autonomy debate is that it has the appeal of separatism which gives the impression of Radical Feminism.

### (3) Focus On one goal :-

They believed that integration within the academic fields would lead to feminists being steered away from their main goal.

### (4) Revolutionary Concept of Change :-

Another important and radical view of autonomous debate is that it follows the revolutionary concept of change because it follows the ideology of Radical Feminism. They believe that gender studies should directly challenge the patriarchy for the emergence of revolution.

## Comparison with Integration Debate :-

It is apparently considered that the views of autonomy are comparatively more strong than the debate of integration. However, in reality, the views of the autonomy debate are not strong but radical and sharp in nature. Despite their views about the justification of autonomy of Gender studies, it has some negative aspects :-

(1) The autonomy debate of Gender studies cannot reach the mainstream because they follow the ideology of separatism and are considered separatists.

(2) For the supporters of autonomy debate are separatists, and want to work in isolation, they cannot bring change in academia.

In contrast, Integration debate focuses that there is need to bring big changes in society related to gender studies and gender based issues. This change be only brought by integrating gender studies with other major disciplines. In comparison with autonomy debate, Integrationist strives to bring an actual change in academia. They say that there can be no revolutionary change but change is brought through evolution. They reach the mainstream by integration and it can bring change in academia.

## Conclusion :-

The debate of autonomy vs integration is an old one that focuses that whether the discipline of Gender studies should be merged with other subjects or not. There are radical points of autonomy that gender should focus on only one goal and the appeal of separatism is the only way of progress, but in reality the integration debate is more strong which can reach mainstream and bring out an actual change.

