

NOA MOCK EXAMS

Tehreem Javed

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Subject: Gender Studies

Question : 02

Gender Studies as a Discipline

Introduction:

Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary academic field that critically examines the ways in which societies construct gender and how these constructions influence individual identities, roles, and power relations. It emphasizes the social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of gender, focusing on the differences in experiences among men, women, and non-binary groups. The discipline emerged primarily from feminist movements in 1960s and 1970s, which sought to challenge patriarchal norms and advocates for women's rights, education and political participation. Over time, it evolved into a broader field that also encompasses

masculinity studies, queer studies and intersectional approaches, making it relevant to a wider spectrum of social research.

Definition and scope of Gender Studies.

Gender Studies, as Sandra Bem (1993) describes,

— "The systematic examination of how social, cultural, and psychological factors shape the roles, behaviors, and identities associated with gender, emphasizing that gender is a socially constructed and dynamic phenomenon rather than a fixed biological trait."

Unlike women's studies, it examines both men and women as well as marginalized gender identities, recognizing that gender interacts with other social factors such as class, race, religion, and ethnicity.

The theoretical foundations of Gender studies include Feminist Theory, queer theory, postcolonial

perspectives and intersectionality, which together provide a multidimensional understanding of gender-related phenomena.

Global Evolution of Gender Studies.

The origins of Gender studies can be traced to the feminist movements of 1960s and 1970s in Europe and North America, which focused primarily on women's liberation, equal rights, and social justice. During the 1980s, the discipline expanded to include queer theory, masculinity studies, and postcolonial feminist perspectives, reflecting a more global and inclusive approach.

By the 1990s, Gender studies had become institutionalized in universities, with dedicated departments, research centers, and academic journals. In contemporary times, the field encompasses gender and development studies, media analysis, human rights and global policy studies, with an emphasis on intersectionality and transnational perspectives.

The global evolution of Gender Studies has influenced legislation, educational curricula, social activism, and international development programs, highlighting its relevance beyond academia and into the broader social fabric.

Evolution of Gender Studies in Pakistan.

The development of Gender studies in Pakistan began in the 1970s and 1980s, primarily through initiatives led by NGOs and UN agencies which focused on women's education, health, and economic development. During this period gender-related work was largely project-based, targeting rural and Urban populations to improve women's socio-economic conditions.

The 1990s saw the formal introduction of Gender Studies into academia through the establishment of Women's studies centers in universities such as Karachi, Punjab and Lahore. These centers became hubs of for research, advocacy, and curriculum development.

creating a structured (discourse) space for Gender studies.

From the 2000s onwards, Gender studies in Pakistan expanded to encompass a broader interdisciplinary framework, addressing issues such as domestic violence, workplace discrimination, media representations, and LGBTQ+ rights.

Despite significant progress, the field faces persistent challenges, including deeply entrenched patriarchal norms, political resistance, and limited funding.

Nevertheless, achievements such as the enactment of domestic violence legislation, formulation of national gender policies, increased female participation in higher education, and growing public awareness underscore the discipline's impact and potential for societal transformation.

Conclusion:

Gender Studies is a dynamic and transformative discipline that examines

the social, cultural, and political dimension of gender, critiques existing hierarchies, and advocates for equity. Globally, it has evolved from a women-centered advocacy movement to a comprehensive, interdisciplinary field that addresses diverse identities and social issues. Its future growth will depend on sustained institutional support, progressive policy making, and an open societal attitude toward challenging gender inequities.

Question no. 04

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

Introduction:

Gender is a complex social phenomenon that goes beyond mere biological differences between male and female. While sex is a biological category determined by anatomy and physiology, gender refers to the socially assigned roles, behaviors, expectations, and

and identities associated with masculinity and femininity. The idea of gender as socially constructed challenges essentialists perspectives that link behavior or social roles directly to biology. As Judith Lorber (1994) observes, "Gender is ~~socially~~ institution, human production that depends on everyone constantly 'doing gender'." This perspective is central to sociological and feminist analyses, which view gender as fluid, dynamic, and culturally specific.

Theoretical Foundation of Gender as a Social construct.

(a) Symbolic Interactionism:

Rooted in the work of George Herbert Mead and later developed by Herbert Blumer, symbolic interactionism emphasizes that social identity is formed through interaction with others.

Gender roles are learned, reinforced, and

modified through day-to-day socialization.

- As West and Zimmerman (1987) argue in their seminal work, doing gender is a continuous process of performance and social negotiation rather than an innate quality.

b) Feminist Theory:

- Feminist perspectives provide critical insights into the social construction of gender, emphasizing that inequality and power relation shapes gender roles.
- Simone de Beauvoir (1949) famously stated, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman", highlighting that femininity is socially imposed, not biologically determined.

c) Social Role Theory:

- Social Role Theory, developed by Alice Eagly, posits that observed differences between men and women arise from the distribution of societal roles rather than inherent biological factors.

- For example, caregiving and domestic responsibilities are coded as feminine, while leadership and decision-making roles are coded as masculine, reflecting socially sanctioned hierarchies rather than natural predispositions.

d) Post-structuralist and Queer Perspectives:

- Post-structuralist theorists argue that gender is not fixed but socially and linguistically produced.
- Queer theory challenges binary classification of male/ female and question the normative frameworks that govern sexual and gender identities.
- These perspectives highlight how laws, language, and institutional practices enforce gender norms, while social movements, media representation, and activism contest these constructions.

Conclusion:

Gender is fundamentally a socially constructed phenomenon, produced and reproduced through family, education, media, law, and everyday

interactions. Theories ranging from symbolic interactionism to feminist and post-structuralist perspectives illuminate how society actively shapes expectations and behaviors linked to genders. Recognizing the socially constructed nature of gender is essential for promoting equality, challenging stereotypes, and fostering an inclusive society that respects diverse identities.

Question : 08

(a)

Gender and Globalization.

Definition:

Gender and globalization study how global economic, political, and cultural processes affect men's and women's roles, opportunities and experienced world wide.

Economic dimension:

- Globalization has increased women's participation in labor markets especially in exports sports-oriented industries like garments, electronics and service sectors.

- For example, women in Bangladesh's textile factories.

02 Migration and Labor Mobility:

- Women migrate for domestic work, care giving, and service jobs across borders.
- Filipina domestic workers in the middle East or nurses in Europe.
- Globalization opens opportunities but also exposes women to vulnerability and abuse.

03. Cultural Influence and Media:

- Global media spreads western ideals of beauty, independence and femininity.
- Local cultural norms may clash or adapt to these influences, reshaping identity.

Conclusion:

Hence, Globalization is double-edged — it can empower women economically and socially but also reinforce inequalities and exploitative practices.

(b)

Psychoanalytical Feminism.

Definition:

Psychoanalytical feminism applies psychoanalytical theory to understand the formation of gender identities and the psychological roots of women's oppression.

(1) The Unconscious and Gender:

- Gendered identities are shaped by the unconscious desires and family dynamics.
 - Freud's oedipus and Electra complexes explain early family influence on gender roles.

(02) Patriarchy and Desire:

- Society shapes women's desires, often creating conflict between personal aspirations and patriarchal expectations.
- Women may internalize oppression unconsciously, limiting self-expression.

(03) Language, Symbolism and culture:

- Lacan's The Symbolic Order shows how language structures gender relation.
- Cultural narratives often marginalize women's voices, reinforcing gender hierarchies.

(04) Critiques and Adaption:

- Early psychoanalysis was male-centered, but feminists reinterpret it to study female subjectivity, sexuality, and empowerment.
- Juliet Mitchell's Psychoanalysis and Feminism links Freud's theory with women's social position.

Conclusion:

Psychoanalytical Feminism provides deep insight into the psychological roots of gender inequality. By examining unconscious processes, cultural narratives, and social norms, it reveals how oppression is internalized as well as externalized, making it a powerful tool for understanding and challenging gendered power dynamics.