

Q.no. 04

Answer:

1. Introduction:

The concept of the social construction of gender argue that what is understood as "masculine" and "feminine" is not an inevitable outcome of biological difference, but rather a product of societal expectations, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements. Gender is thus learned identity, a set of roles and behaviors that society continually assigns, teaches and reinforce. This ~~gender difference is not~~

2. Key Theories of Social Construction:

The construction of gender is theorized through several influential sociological and philosophical frameworks:

A • Gender Socialization:

The process, starting from birth, through which individuals are trained into culturally appropriate gender roles.

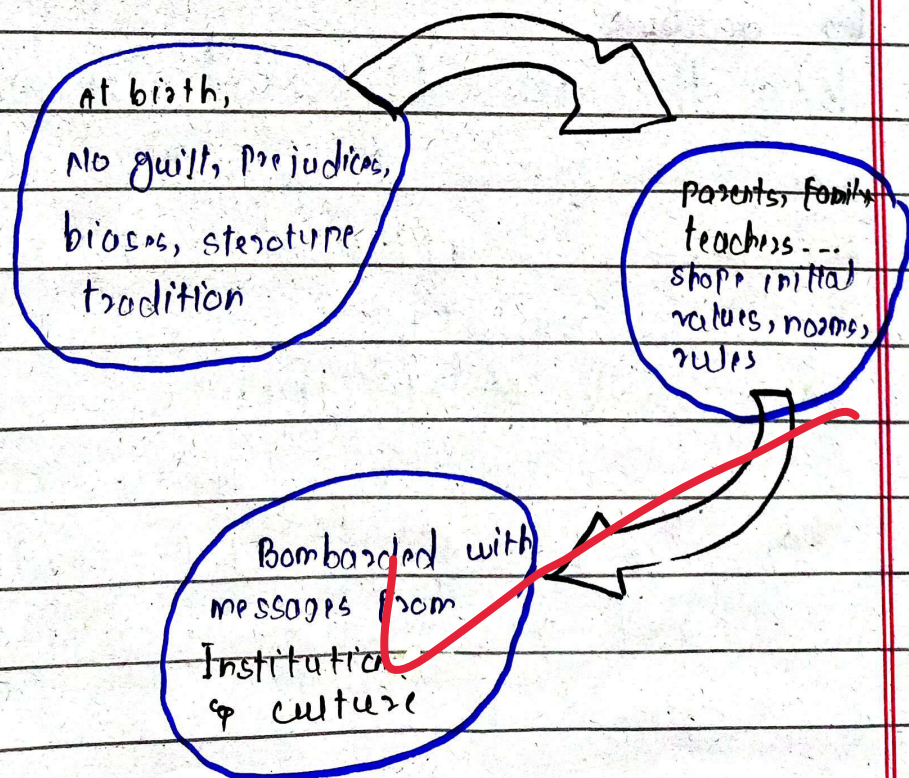
i) - Mechanism:

Positive and negative sanctions. (e.g., Praising a boy for being "strong" or shaming a girl for being "too aggressive").

ii) Structural Functionalism: (critique)

Though often critiqued for justifying the status quo, early functionalist models (like Parsons) viewed the traditional nuclear family's division of labour (instrumental male role and expressive female role) as a mechanism necessary for social stability.

- Diagram: cycle of socialization



3. Judith Butler's Theory of Gender Performativity:

This postmodern theory critiques the idea that there is only "natural" or "true" gender identity underlying social performance.

a. Performativity vs. Performance:

Gender is a Performativity - a stylized, repetitive series of acts, gestures, and discourse that are constrained by and cite regulatory social norms. It is not an actor choosing a costume, but the ritualistic repetition that creates the illusion of a pre-existing essence.

b. The Heterosexual Matrix:

Butler argues these acts are compelled by the dominant culture framework that insist on a binary, heteronormative link between sex, gender, and desire.

c. Subversion:

The possibility of failing to parodizing these acts is what exposes the

constructed, imitative natural of all genders, revealing its contingency.

4. Intersectionality and Conflict perspectives

This lens connects the social construction of gender to systems of power and inequality.

a. Conflict theory / Patriarchy:

Gender is constructed to establish and maintain patriarchy - a system where men hold power and privilege. Gender roles are not complementary but hierarchical, systematically devaluing traits and work associated with women. (e.g., domestic labour, emotional roles).

Do not elaborate one theory to that extent

b. Intersectionality (Kimberle' Crenshaw)

This critical framework asserts that gender is not constructed in isolation but interlocks with other categories of difference, such as race, class, religion, and sexuality. The experience of "womanhood" is not universal; it is uniquely constructed and experienced at the

intersection of these identities.

Conclusion:

The acceptance of gender as a social construct is the basis for much of Gender studies. It moves the focus from immutable biology to malleable society, demonstrating that gender inequalities are not natural destiny but are upheld by changeable human institution. Masculinity and femininity can be redefined to be more equitable, inclusive, and less restrictive for all members of society.

The question has 2 parts

Elaborate theories and add first part

Q. no. 8

Part - (i)

Answer:

1. Introduction:

Globalization, defined as the integration of economies, cultures, and populations driven by cross border trade, technology and investment. Its impact on gender is complex, acting as a "double edge sword". While it offers new avenues for women's economic and political empowerment it simultaneously reinforces and creates new forms of gendered exploitation by leveraging existing patriarchal structures for capitalist gain.

2. Positive Impacts and Opportunities

a. Feminization of labor:

The shift of manufacturing and service industries to developing countries has created mass employment for women in Export Processing

Zone (EPZs). This grants women independent cash income, increasing their economic agency and potentially shifting intra-household power dynamics.

b. Access to information and Technology (ICTs):

Global media and internet increase awareness of women's rights and foster transnational feminist network, enabling women to mobilize for political change and social justice across borders.

c. Legal and Political Pressure:

International norms, driven by global bodies like the UN and international NGOs pressure governments to adopt gender-sensitive legislation.

3. Negative Impacts and challenges:

a. Precarious Labour:

Women are concentrated in low wage, unstable, and

non-unionized jobs, driven by the perception of their labour as cheaper and more pliable, which sustains the gender wage gap.

b. Double Burden:

women to shoulder both paid labor and nearly all unpaid domestic

c. Global Care chain:

Migration of women from Global South to Global North to fill a care void and face highly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Conclusion:

Globalization is inherently a contradictory force for gender equality. It has undeniably created new spaces for women's agency through economic participation and technology, yet it simultaneously reinforces a capitalist, patriarchal world system that structurally depends on the exploitation of cheap female labour and unpaid burden of care.

Q. no. 08

Part - ii

Answer:

1. Introduction:

Psychoanalytical feminism explains women's oppression through the unconscious process formed in early childhood, using ideas from Freud and Lacan. It argues that gender identities are shaped by family dynamics, especially the child's relationship with the mother and father. These early psychological patterns reproduce patriarchal power across generations.

2. Core Argument:

Psychoanalytical feminism claims:

- Gender inequality originates in early childhood psychological development.
- The formation of masculine and feminine identities reflects internalized power structure.
- Patriarchy is reproduced because

children unconsciously learn male dominance and female submission.

3. Major Psychoanalytic Feminists and their contribution:

a. Nancy Chodorow:

- Mothering roles make girls identify closely with mothers, reinforcing relational and caring traits.

- Boys differentiate from mothers, becoming emotionally distant and dominant.

- Solution - Shared parenting to rebalance gender psychology.

b. Julia Kristeva:

- Women are linked to the "semiotic realm".

- Men dominate the "symbolic" (Language structure).

- A challenge to patriarchy requires breaking rigid language structures.

4. Why Psychoanalytical Feminism Matters:

a. Explain gender oppression beyond economic or law

- It focuses on emotional development, unconscious desire, and cultural symbol.

b. show how patriarchy is reproduced in the family

- mother-child and father-child relationships creates long term gender pattern.

c. Highlights the importance of childhood upbringing

- It argues that gender inequality can be reduced by transforming parenting role and socialization.

5. strengths:

- Offers deep psychological insight into gender identity.

- Reveals hidden structures of power in everyday relationships.

Important Note to get Good marks in Gender Studies:

Add lacanian approach as well

Marks would be given on the following parameters

a- Content 60% References

15% Subject specific language

15% Graphs and charts 10%

Add 12-13 headings in each question

the questions carry 3-4 parts... each part has equal weightage so discuss all equally

use subject specific jargons e.g.

Patriarchy, entrenched traditional values etc. Also, do not add blunt statements

use types, waves and theories of feminism as references

attempt all parts in the question, do not neglect one

add facts and figures to support your argument

add pictorial description as well

Connect personal experience with wider social context

Influences the social development

Graphs and charts

and feminist literature.

Criticisms:

Over reliance on outdated and controversial Freudian concept.

Accused of being too abstract, not addressing material realities.

Psychoanalysis has been critiqued as

Patriarchal itself.

Patriarchy is sustained not

not by social or economic structures but by deep psychological patterns formed in early childhood. By revealing how

unconscious desires, family roles, and symbolic language systems shape gender identity, it argues that genuine gender

equality requires transforming both social institutions and the psychological foundations that reproduce male dominance.

add pictorial description as well