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GENDER SENSITIZATION: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

B.G.D.G.- 172

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By: Prieti Gupta



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MRP ₹ 280/-

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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

GENDER SENSITIZATION: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

B.G.D.G.-172

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: Answer any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. Define masculinities. Discuss various forms of masculinities.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 19, 'Understanding Masculinity' and Page No. 20, 'Forms of Masculinity'.

Q. 2. Evaluate the notion of gender gap in labour force participation. Substantiate your argument with the help of any two examples.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 62, 'Gender Gaps in Labour Force Participation and Economy'.

Q. 3. Describe gender differences in use of language. Give any suitable example to support your argument.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 129, Q. No. 8.

Q. 4. What is meant by sexual harassment? Discuss it with the help of case studies.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 74, 'Sexual Harassment at Workplace'.

Q. 5. Examine the role of gender in Indian media.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 131, 'Effect of Media on Society and Women in the Media'.

Q. 6. Explain gender construction, in relation to culture and society. Give suitable examples.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'Introduction' and 'Social Construction and Gender'.

Q. 7. Discuss categories of sex and gender. Provide two examples from real life experiences.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 5, Q. No. 1 and Page No. 6, Q. No. 2.

Q. 8. Write short notes on the following:

(a) Public and Private Binary

Ans. Of all the public services being hit by the cuts, those dealing with issues considered to be private are suffering the most. But what does "public" and "private" mean, in this context?

Public goods are things that benefit society as a whole – education, healthcare, wellbeing. Public services are the things that facilitate these goods – schools, universities, the NHS, libraries, parks and green spaces, etc. However, there are other less well-known public services that facilitate public goods, such as publicly-funded domestic violence and rape crisis centres, drug and alcohol addiction clinics, Sure Start centres, etc. These less visible services have been some of the first to go in the government's slashing of public services and to muted outcry. Why? These services deal with issues that are considered to be "private".

Two strangers fighting in the street is "violence", but violence in the home is "domestic" violence. It is, therefore, not a "public" issue.

Domestic violence is "domestic" because it happens in the home – the "private sphere". Similarly, drug and alcohol addiction afflicts individuals who have hit hard times; so many people think there doesn't need to be a public service to deal with this. Pregnancy, maternity, and raising infants are considered to be

private, family issues, not something that promotes a public good.

Feminism has exposed the public/private binary (at least in Western cultures) as the core of women's oppression. Women are embodied/emotional/nurturing creatures in the private sphere, as opposed to intellectual/rational/dispassionate men in the public sphere. Hence, "women's issues" are not public issues.

The feminist answer is to dismantle the binary and transcend the public/private dichotomy altogether. In the meantime, however, we must fight to maintain the provision of domestic violence services, drug and alcohol clinics, and centres as public services; they are not luxuries or helping-hands for the private sphere.

(b) Reproductive Rights

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 93, 'What is Reproductive Health and Rights?'

(c) Glass Ceiling

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 76, 'Glass Ceiling'.

(d) Gender Discrimination

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 63, 'Gender Discrimination, Violence and Vulnerability at Work'.

(e) Close Reading

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 143, Q. No. 3.



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Sample Preview of The Chapter

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GENDER SENSITIZATION: SOCIETY AND CULTURE



Understanding Gender Related Concepts

INTRODUCTION

Gender sensitizing “is about changing behaviour and instilling empathy into the views that we hold about our own and the other genders.” It helps people in “examining their personal attitudes and beliefs and questioning the ‘realities’ they thought they know. Gender Sensitization is a basic requirement to understand the sensitive needs of a particular gender. It helps us to examine our personal attitudes and beliefs and question the ‘realities’ that we thought we know. The need for this sensitivity has been felt and realised through times immemorial and in almost all kinds of human existence, across the globe. It is our personal responsibility to provide an environment where men and women can work together with a sense of personal security and dignity. In this chapter, we will discuss about sex and gender, gender roles, masculinity, femininity, patriarchy, gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

SEX AND GENDER

Sex is the biological differences between female and male. Human beings are either born as male or female while some as transgender or mixed anatomical characters. The sex can be changed through medical interventions, but one must be prepared for complications that might occur. The occurrence of intersex should make us aware of the dangers of biological essentialism. Unlike sex, gender is socially constructed under the influence of social structures such as family, culture and society that determine differences based on the sex of the child. The difference between sex is created on the basis of clothing, behaviour, social role, position, identity and responsibility. The concept of gender is constructed and practiced. For example, now-a-days new-born baby girl is welcomed with a pink colour and male baby boy with blue colour. The little

girl is called pretty, while boys are praised using brave and strong. Under the influence of socialization, female and male are expected to play different roles. The productive and reproductive roles, paid and unpaid work, power relation, etc. are also responsible for the differences between two genders. However, the example of Late. Kalpana Chawla, who became an astronaut and Ms. Pavithra, who chose the pilot profession, both were assumed as male dominant professions, demonstrates how gender is constructed and how women can reverse their productive roles. The expectations that adhere to gender related behaviour, roles, identity and professions are called gender stereotyping. Some common stereotypes roles related to gender is shown in the following table:

Female	Male
Dependent	Independent
Weak	Powerful
Incompetent	Competent
Less Important	More Important
Emotional	Logical
Implementers	Decision-Makers
Housekeepers	Breadwinners
Supporters	Leaders
Fearful	Brave
Peace Makers	Aggressive
Cautions	Adventurous
Soft Spoken	Outspoken

GENDER ROLES

As we know that without medical intervention, the sexes do not normally change. Similarly, on the basis of their own characteristics, women and men are

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assigned their roles and responsibilities in a particular way. The system of society and cultural system is responsible for gender roles. Gender roles are socially constructed and demand that activities including selecting occupations assigned to men and women are based on differential perceptions i.e. patriarchy not their skills. Thus, men roles are related to economic activities and are accounted in System of National Accounts (SNA) while women's roles are related to care and nurturing. In social sciences, the term "Division of Labour" is used to indicate roles and responsibilities of men and women.

According to Caroline Moser, in developing countries, women are triply burdened by performing three types of roles i.e Reproductive, Productive and Community Managing and Community Politics. Reproductive Roles is related with child bearing, child rearing, taking care of elders in the family and household work. Also they perform productive roles as secondary income earners but they are not considered as economic activities and are not included in the System of National Accounts (SNA). The productive roles of women generally fall under the category of part time economic activities, agriculture wage earners, taking care of milch animals and doing jobs in informal sectors in urban areas. Community managing and community politics are considered as an extension of productive work such as health care and education of entire community. Women are not paid for their community roles while men get paid either as cash or kind while performing community politics and activities. Gender roles and responsibilities vary among cultures and can change over time. For example, in India, women's work are included in unskilled labour while in Africa, men's work falls in this category. In Europe and USA, the contributions of men in domestic activities are increasing.

MASCULINITY

Masculinity (also called manhood or manliness) is a set of attributes, behaviours, and roles associated with boys and men. The word Masculinity is taken from Latin word 'masculus' and 'masculus' meaning male. In the 14th century, this word was first used to denote 'male sex'. The masculine characters are powerfulness, strength, force, manhood and manliness. Masculine characteristics like aggression, ambition, analytical ability and assertiveness are shaped by socio-cultural processes.

FEMININITY

Femininity represents the culturally constructed collection of characteristics such as qualities, behaviours, appearance, attributes, features, postures associated with women. Femininity is socially

constructed and socially produced. According to Judith Butler in the performativity theory, the repeated acts of performance create the illusion of femininity that becomes naturalised and constructs gender and feminine qualities/identities. The study on femininity throws light on neo liberalism, culture, caste and other social structures and how these structures inhibit women's freedom, opportunities, oppression and are responsible for the occurrence of gender inequalities.

The gender inequalities persist in India at all levels such as: sex ratio, literacy, higher education, life expectancy, etc.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DISTINCTION

The public and private distinction is responsible for assigning those roles to women, that are confined to home like domestic roles of care givers and nurtures. By restricting the movement of women, the Public and Private dichotomy determine women's material independence and access to education. Central to the feminist perspective is that men dominate the public sphere whereas women are essentially relegated to the private sphere. The women comes under private sphere because of her reproductive roles and while men remain in public sphere by acquiring the domains for economy, business, politics and law, etc. This distinction is responsible of women's struggle for suffrage and equal participation in other spheres of life. Feminists consider this distinction hierarchical and patriarchal that undermine the status of women when compared to men.

PATRIARCHY

Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property. It is considered as an institution that supports the domination of male and subordinates the position of female. The dominant power relations causes discrimination against female and girls at different levels in the society. Besides undermining the women's power, it may also responsible for the violence against women. Patriarchy in context to public-private dichotomy forces women to be confined at home and restricts their movements in politics also. Patriarchy does not allow women to make decisions thus creates hindrance in their independence and education related matters. The inheritance of wealth in the patriarchal society, passes to the son and it is called patrilineage. According to the patriarchal tradition, after marriage, women live in her husband's house.

STEREOTYPING

Gender stereotypes are beliefs which prescribe what men and women should and what they can do. These can be changed over a period of time but these changes occur in slow manner. The few examples of

gender stereotypes include the caring, nurturing, kind and emotional of women, as perceived in most of the societies. In the South Asian Societies, women should be presentable and dress properly and the women are encouraged to pursue their professions like teaching or medicine predominantly. The mass media especially print and visual media (Television) and cinema contribute to gender stereotyping by portraying men with masculine qualities and women dependency on men. The following case study will clear the perception on gender stereotypes:

Case Study 1

Saloni Malhotra is founder of a company called “DesiCrew”, which is a business process outsourcing (BPO) company that provides Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) to the rural area. The service delivery centres provide training to youth of the village in computer operations and then appointed them in the company. She perceived that the rural youth migrate to cities for a job. She wants to address the rural urban migration. Saloni is an engineer daughter of a doctor couple from Delhi, who never forced her to get married or asked her to start a family life. Infact, they encouraged her to start a business to provide jobs in rural areas. According to Saloni, she got inspiration from the struggle of Pallavi, one of her colleagues at the college, who belongs to rural Maharashtra. In rural areas, the exposure for computer science is less and young graduates from arts, engineering and commerce flock to cities to find jobs. Saloni said that Pallavi made her realize that she and I had one thing in common; we lack exposure in each other’s worlds. Most jobs in rural areas are related to agriculture or handicrafts, thus by establishing DesiCrew, the opportunities regarding computer jobs can be increased. Also, most employees in DesiCrew are females. This play an important role in encouraging more parents to invest in girl’s education in rural area and increasing the self esteem of girls.

FEMINISM

Feminism is a movement that challenges the causes and argues for the inferior status of women. The movement demands equal status for men and women. It is also an ideology that focuses on empowering women. Any individual or collective can strive for gender equality, gender equity and fight against oppression, injustice, exploitation and violence against women.

The term ‘feminist’ is first used in French medical text in 1871 and the first wave of feminism occurred in late 19th and early 20th century, when they fought for women’s suffrage. The second wave were in 1960s and 1970s in which they focused on women’s equal rights in family, at the workplace and on sexuality. In the

beginning of 1990s, the third wave feminism started and is still in process. Feminisms and feminists are categorized into liberal, Marxist, radical, socialist, psycho analytical, post modern, eco-feminism, etc.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is defined as the differential expressions of violence according to own sex, race, class, religion, sexuality, ability and other situating factors. During the second wave feminism, Gender Based Violence was taken as the main issue through the ‘battered women’ movement of the 1970s. The four international women’s conferences recognized violence in the private and public sphere and forced the national governments to take necessary steps regarding the problem of GBV.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual behaviour that’s offensive, humiliating or intimidating. It can be written, verbal or physical, and can happen in person or online. Sexual harassment at a workplace is considered violation of women’s right to equality, life and liberty. It creates an insecure and hostile work environment, which discourages women’s participation in work. Unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) namely, physical contact and advances, a demand or request for sexual favours, making sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography, any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature, all are included in sexual harassment. It affects the victim badly.

EMPOWERMENT

According to Naila Kabeer, “Empowerment is defined as the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them”. She suggests three dimensions of empowerment: resources (conditions); agency (process); and achievement. The process of empowerment can be a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. The people become able to develop self-confidence and solve their problems independently. The following case study further elaborates the concept of empowerment.

Case Study 2

The Organization ‘Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)’ was founded in 1990 by three social activists in one of the most backward areas in the state of Rajasthan, India.

The members of the organisation are small and marginal farmers and landless labourers. The basic aim of the organisation is to ensure the payment of government-approved wages for workers and to bring transparency and accountability in the local

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administration. The meetings are conducted at community and village levels through demonstrations and 'jansunvai'. A *jansunvai* is a participatory social audit in which government officials are brought face to face with citizens in a public gathering. This is a platform through which the village people, especially daily wagers in government projects and applicants of antipoverty plan ask questions from the officials and verify official government's records. Such *jansunvai* often result in public exposure of the corrupt practices of officials. Also, people raise their voice on locally relevant issues and demand transparency in administration that leads to their empowerment. The organisation contributed significantly in the implementation of the Right to Information Act in Rajasthan. The organisation has inspired people in other Indian states also.

ACTIVITIES

Q. 1. To understand the categories of Sex and Gender in more clear way, choose to visit few expectant mothers. Please ask them whether they want to have a girl child or boy child. If they give preference for a girl child, please ask them to list the reasons. If they want a male child, please request them to give reasons for the same.

Ans. Reason for the preference for girl child:

1. She is Goddess of wealth and the light of the family.
2. She is involved in reproductive works like caring and nurturing of elders.
3. She takes care of household work and other siblings.
4. She is more attached to her parents in comparison to a boy child.

Reason for the preference for boy child:

1. The thought process that girls are a financial burden to the family while boy support the family economically.
2. Sons carry forward the family lineage i.e. once he matures he becomes head of the family in patriarchal traditions.
3. Boys are less expensive for marriage while girls are considered as "Paraya Dhan" and parents of girl child have to give dowry during marriage.
4. Girls are more vulnerable to sexual assault, rape, hence boys are preferred over girl child.
5. The religious reasons that only boy can perform last rites for parents. Most of the customs related to putting the dead soul's body to rest are performed by the male members of

the family and some societies do not even allow the female members to perform any rites and rituals.

Q. 2. Answer the following statements that describe attributes related to sex/gender in Yes/No.

(i) Women are soft and men are tough.

Ans. Yes.

(ii) Women can conceive and men cannot.

Ans. Yes.

(iii) Women breastfeed their babies; Men feed milk in bottles.

Ans. Yes.

(iv) Childbearing is responsibility of mothers.

Ans. Yes.

(v) Men take decisions.

Ans. Yes.

(vi) Men have moustaches and beards and women do not.

Ans. Yes.

(vii) Women can earn only 70% of what men earn.

Ans. Yes.

(viii) Women give birth and men don't.

Ans. Yes.

(ix) Women cry easily and men don't cry easily.

Ans. Yes.

(x) Women menstruate every month.

Ans. Yes.

(xi) Boy's voice breaks in adolescence.

Ans. Yes.

(xii) Men are breadwinners/ head of the household.

Ans. Yes.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Explain the concepts sex and gender.

Ans. Sex refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorized as female or male but there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed. Sometimes, a person's genetically assigned sex does not line up with their gender identity. These individuals might refer to themselves as transgender, non-binary, or gender-non-conforming.

"Gender" is more difficult to define, but it can refer to the role of a male or female in society, known as a gender role, or an individual's concept of themselves, or gender identity. Gender tends to denote the social and cultural role of each sex within a given society.