STUDY GUIDE

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER ISSUES: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND (SOCIOLOGY)

CODE: 8223 **Unit 1-9**



Department of Sociology
Faculty of Social Sciencs & Humanities
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

STUDY GUIDE

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Unit 1-9 **Course Code: 8223**

Department of Sociology
Allama Iqbal Open University
Islamabad

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FOREWORD

The course "Sociology of Gender Issues: Theoretical Background" is a crucial subject for the students of Sociology and other social sciences, as it helps us view ourselves and our surroundings through the gender lens. Our feelings, beliefs, and behaviors—whether as a girl, boy, man, or woman—are influenced by gender. It offers a deeper understanding of how gender behavior is shaped by social influences.

This study guide on 'Sociology of Gender Issues: Theoretical Background' offers a comprehensive overview, defining gender and sex while exploring the socialization process of being a boy or a girl. It examines the overall impact of gender on various aspects of life, presenting gender as a central organizing principle in our social existence. The guide also addresses emerging social issues related to gender and introduces new approaches to tackle these challenges in society. Additionally, it delves into the gender transformative approach and the power dynamics associated with it.

This study guide begins with the clear definitions and explanations of key gender concepts. It then explores various theoretical approaches to gender and gender learning. The discussion delves deeper into the reasons behind gender differences, inequality, and oppression in society. Real-life examples from different societies have been included to help the students better understand and conceptualize the discussed concepts. Moving forward, the guide presents the feminist approach, analyzing its various paradigms to equip the students with a comprehensive understanding of the current discourse on the subject.

A key component of the course is the exploration of the socialization process, which outlines the role of socialization agents such as family, peer groups, and the media in teaching gender norms during childhood. To enrich the discussion, the guide highlights current trends in social change driven by mass media and explains how globalization and urbanization are reshaping gender roles and relationships in society. It is suggested that, as men and women, we communicate differently within society, with literature and art reinforcing these differences in various ways. This phenomenon further strengthens the study guide by emphasizing its relevance to students within society.

Specific attention has also been paid to the 19th century women movement in the world. The 19th-century women's movement was a pivotal period in the history of gender equality, marking the beginning of organized efforts to address women's rights and social roles. It emerged in response to widespread gender discrimination, with women advocating for equal opportunities in education, employment, and legal rights. This movement also saw the rise of suffragists, who fought for women's right to vote, and the challenge of traditional gender roles that confined women to domestic spaces. Throughout the 19th century, the movement gained momentum, eventually leading to significant legal reforms, including the passage of women's suffrage laws in many countries in the early 20th century.

The Study Guide in hand is a valuable addition for the students and researchers of Allama Iqbal Open University who want to understand, carry out research in, and are working or intending to work on the gender issues.

Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood
Vice Chancellor

INTRODUCTION

In sociology, we make a distinction between sex and gender. Sex are the biological traits that societies use to assign people into the category of either male or female. Gender is a concept that describes how societies determine and manage sex categories; the cultural meanings attached to men and women's roles; and how individuals understand their identities including, but not limited to, being a man, woman, and other gender positions. Gender involves social norms, attitudes and activities that society deems more appropriate for one sex over another. The sociology of gender examines how society influences our understandings and perception of differences between masculinity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a "man") and femininity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a "woman"). We examine how this, in turn, influences identity and social practices.

The **Unit 01** of the study guide focuses and hints on the basics concepts related to gender and sex and how these are constructed in a society. It explains how on the basis of biology, social roles are determined for men and women. The unit also touches upon the basic issues of inequality and discrimination on the basis of gender difference.

Unit 02 provides a detailed discussion on gender and 19th century movement for women's rights. This unit focuses on the initiation of women's rights clubs, movements, and campaign during 19th century. This century saw a sea change in regard to women's rights.

Unit 03 provides a detailed discussion and theoretical analysis of the gender. It explains the point of view given by different theorists on the construction of gender and its impact. This unit also compares different paradigms for a broader understanding of the students.

Unit 04 delves deeper into the theoretical analysis of gender in the contemporary era. It examines Judith Butler's concept of gender and performativity, explores feminist psychoanalysis and its critique of Freud's ideas, and discusses the concept of intersectionality, which has become widely recognized.

Unit 05 explores the approach of feminism as a sociological school of thought. It describes the evolution and developments within the feminist approach. It discusses the background of feminism and the development of the idea in detail.

Unit 06 explores different types of feminist theories are also explained and the differences are clarified by giving examples. The feminist movement and how the feminist approaches developed is also described.

Unit 07 unpacks the process of learning gender from birth till adulthood and afterwards. It highlights the process which from very early years of a child makes him adopt gender specific toys, dress patterns and other characteristics. The content is enriched by giving different gender learning theories and highlighting the role of family, peer group and media in developing gender-oriented behaviors.

Unit 08 explains the phenomenon of social change with reference to gender expression in Pakistan. The unit provides an insight into the determinants of these changes. It discusses that how globalization, urbanization and mass media is changing gender roles at family, community and society levels. The impact of these changes is also included for better understanding.

In **Unit 09**, a very important aspect is covered. Our cultures are learnt and transmitted through the process of communication. This unit unfolds the gender aspect of our daily life communication practices. It highlights the gender difference in the language of men and women and the presentation of women in advertisements, drama and films doing traditional roles only.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you should successfully be able to:

1. Demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of concepts and contents in the discipline of gender
2. Get knowledge about 19th century movement for women's rights
3. Understand different theoretical perspectives of gender
4. Get an in-depth knowledge of postmodern theoretical perspective of gender
5. Get knowledge on feminist movement
6. Explore and think critically about the feminist perspectives of gender
7. Critically analyze the ways of growing ups feminine or masculine
8. Understand gender roles withing families
9. Explore and analyse the role of communication in gender

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to all those who provided me help with the possibility to complete this study guide. A special thank is due to the Unit writers/ reviewers for completion of this study guide on time. Furthermore, I would also like to acknowledge the role of the course committee (Faculty Members and Experts), who guided me throughout the process of development of this course and provided valuable suggestions and recommendations to improve the content of this study guide. I appreciate and pay my gratitude to the staff members for providing the regular secretarial support.

Dr. Syed Imran Haider
Course Development Coordinator

Organization of the Course

1.1 Structure of the course

This course is designed in such a manner that it is easy for you to study at home. This course contains nine (9) units in total. Each unit consists of study material for at least one week because there are many required open accessed journal articles to be read for the given concepts to understand them better.

As you are a distant learner, it is the reason that this course is organized in such a manner that you can acquire the skills while studying at home. This course, you will find a course introduction in the next section of this study guide. For each unit, an introduction, objectives and main topics of the unit is given for that you can know at the beginning of each unit about the topics which you will learn. The concepts are discussed in such a way that you can comprehend, get knowledge and compare concepts with each other and learning continues. This study guideline intends to be a concise preview, but also gives you many references and readings that you can be able to read concepts further in detail.

Self-assessment questions are given at the be able to end of the unit. This self-assessment will help you in assessing your understanding of your learning. Online workshops are arranged for you so that you can learn more from your resource persons (teachers), while communicating with each other.

After completion of four units study, assignment No. 1 is due. Assignment No. 2 is expected from you after the study completion of all units. The final examination will cover all 9 units and self-assessment questions will be given to you to complete your final exam in three hours.

1.2 How to Use Reading Material?

As this is a course offering through distance education, so we have reorganized the required course work in the following manner to help you in evolving a self-learning process in absence of formal classroom teaching.

1. A detailed course description
2. Objectives of the unit
3. The major theme of the unit is divided into sub-themes. They are listed at the beginning of every unit. A brief and simplified introduction of the major topic is given in the study guide so that you can get acquainted with the material.
4. Required readings for each unit are listed
5. At the end of every unit, we have given you a few self-assessment questions for each topic or theme. These questions are not only meant to facilitate you

in understanding the required reading, but also to provide you with an opportunity to assess how far you have learned
Although you choose your way of studying the required reading material, you are advised to follow the steps, which are given in the study chart.

1.3 Study Chart

Step 1. For clear identification of your reading material, thoroughly read the description of the course.

Step 2. Read carefully the way the reading material is to be used.

Step 3. Complete the first quick reading of your required study materials.

Step 4. Carefully make the second reading and note down some of the points you were not able to fully understand.

Step 5. Carry out the self-assessment questions with the help of your study material.

Step 6. Revise your notes. It is quite possible that many of those points which you could not understand previously become clearer to you during the process of carrying out the self-assessment questions.

Step 7. Prepare yourself for the tutorial meeting. i.e. note down the points for discussion with other members of your group and with your appointed course tutor.

Step 8. Make a third and final reading of your study material. At this stage, students are also advised to keep in view the homework assignments. These assignments are compulsory component for the successful completion of the course.

1.4 How to Attend Tutorial

Before attending the tutorial meeting you are required to prepare yourself in the following manner to get maximum benefit. The first online tutorial meeting is an introductory tutorial meeting for which you are required to do the following work:

Step 1. Go through the first part of the study guide which includes:

i. Organization of the course
ii. Structure of the course
iii. How to use the reading material (on AIOU website)

iv. Assessment

Step 2. Read carefully the course introduction 2-3 times to have a better understanding of the course. It will give you an overview of the whole course. Make notes of those points which you could not fully understand or wish to discuss with your course tutor.

Please see the schedule of the semester at your LMS Aaghi portal.

Step 3 Reading summary of the main themes of the concerned units around which the units are constructed.

1.5 Methods of Assessment

For each course, the registered student will be assessed as follows:

Assignments

Assignments are those written exercises that students are required to complete while being at home or places of work after having studied the required material prescribed in the study guide. They are designed in a way to motivate the students in reading the required readings and enable them to relate their reading with their objective. For this course, you will receive "TWO" assignments.

After completion, you will send/ Upload these assignments to your tutor within a schedule period/date for assessment and necessary guidance. The tutor is supposed to evaluate the same and provide necessary academic guidance and supervision.

The successful completion of the assignment will make you eligible to take the final examination to be held at the end of the semester.

To qualify for the assignments component, you have to obtain a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate.

Workshops

Workshops are a compulsory component of the BS programme and these will be arranged by the university during the semester of the course offering. Details of these workshops will be uploaded with the course materials during the study period of your course.

Final Assessments

Final examination (a three-hour written examination will take place at the end of the semester).

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Unit: 1

SEX, GENDER AND BIOLOGY

Written By: Dr. Muhammad Ali Awan
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INTRODUCTION

We describe ourselves in many different ways. One of the most fundamental ways is to say, "I am a man" or "I am a woman". That is to describe oneself in term of biological sex. When a biological given sex (i.e., Maleness or Femaleness) is used as they basis for constructing a social category. We call it gender. "Although many people use the terms 'sex' and "gender" interchangeably, they do not have the exact same meaning. Sex is a biological concept; gender is a social construct". It may be that few of your socially defined characteristics relating to gender describe you accurately, but this perhaps is less important than the fact that people believe their assumptions to be true or appropriate and they act on their beliefs, treating women and men differently even as opposites.

Significantly, this differentiation occurs not only on an interpersonally level between individuals but also on a structural level within a given society. Every society prescribes traits, behaviors and patterns of social interaction for its members on the basis of sex. These prescriptions are embedded in the institutions of the society: in its economy, political system, educational, system, religion, family forms and so on. This institutionalized pattern of gender differentiation is referred to as a society's sex /gender system to examine sex /gender system, as well as its consequences for women and men is the major focus of this unit.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit along with suggested materials you will be able to:

- understand the concept of gender
- explain different dimensions of gender
- explore the sociological perspective on gender
- get knowledge about gender transformative approach

Major Topics

1.1 What is Gender?
1.2 Dimensions of gender
1.3 Sociological Perspective on Gender
1.4 Gender Transformative Approach
1.5 The proxies of GTA
1.6 Glossary

1.1 What is Gender?

People tend to use the terms "sex" and "gender" interchangeably. We assign a newborn's sex as either male or female, based on their biological traits. Once a sex is assigned, we presume the child's gender. Gender is a socially constructed definition of women and men. It is not the same as sex (biological characteristics of women and men) and it is not the same as women. Gender is determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life. The Gender study is distinct in a way that it focuses on women and men and not on women in isolation. It encompasses following points:

- The differences between interests of women's and men's even within the same household and how these interact and are expressed.
- The conventions and hierarchies that determine women's and men's position in the family, community, and society at large, whereby women are usually dominated by men.
- The differences among women and among men, based on age, wealth, ethnic background, and other factors.
- The way gender roles and relations change, often quite rapidly, because of social, economic, and technological trends.

1.2 Dimensions of Gender

While our gender may begin with the assignment of our sex, it does not end there. A person's gender is the complex interrelationship between three dimensions:

1.2.1 Body

Our body, our experience of our own body, how society genders bodies, and how others interact with us based on our body.

1.2.2 Identity

Our deeply held, internal sense of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither; who we internally know ourselves to be.

1.2.3 Expression

How we present our gender in the world and how society, culture, community, and family perceive, interact with, and try to shape our gender. Gender expression is also related to gender roles and how society uses those roles to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms.

1.3 Sociological Perspective on Gender

Sociological theories help sociologists to develop questions and interpret data. For example, a sociologist studying why middle-school girls are more likely than their male counterparts to fall behind grade-level expectations in math and science might use a feminist perspective to frame her research. Another scholar might proceed from the conflict perspective to investigate why women are underrepresented in political office, and an integrationist might examine how the symbols of femininity interact with symbols of political authority to affect how women in Congress are treated by their male counterparts in meetings.

1.3.1 Structural Functionalism

Structural functionalism has provided one of the most important perspectives of sociological research in the twentieth century and has been a major influence on research in the social sciences, including gender studies. Viewing the family as the integral component of society, assumptions about gender roles within marriage assume a prominent place in this perspective.

Functionalists argue that gender roles were established well before the pre-industrial era when men typically took care of responsibilities outside of the home, such as hunting, and women typically took care of the domestic responsibilities in or around the home. These roles were considered functional because women were often limited by the physical restraints of pregnancy and nursing and unable to leave the home for long periods of time. Once established, these roles were passed on to subsequent generations since they served as an effective means of keeping the family system functioning properly.

For example, when changes occurred in the social and economic climate of the United States during World War II, changes in the family structure also occurred. Many women had to assume the role of breadwinner (or modern hunter-gatherer) alongside their domestic role in order to stabilize a rapidly changing society. When the men returned from war and wanted to reclaim their jobs, society fell back into a state of imbalance, as many women did not want to forfeit their wage-earning positions (Hawke 2007).

1.3.2 Conflict Theory

According to conflict theory, society is a struggle for dominance among social groups (like women versus men) that compete for scarce resources. When sociologists examine gender from this perspective, we can view men as the dominant group and women as the subordinate group. According to conflict theory, social problems are created when dominant groups exploit or oppress subordinate groups. Consider the Women's Suffrage Movement or the debate over women's "right to choose" their reproductive futures. It is difficult for women to rise above men, as dominant group members create the rules for success and opportunity in society.

Friedrich Engels, a German sociologist, studied family structure and gender roles. Engels suggested that the same owner-worker relationship seen in the labor force is also seen in the household, with women assuming the role of the proletariat. This is due to women's dependence on men for the attainment of wages, which is even worse for women who are entirely dependent upon their spouses for economic support. Contemporary conflict theorists suggest that when women become wage earners, they can gain power in the family structure and create more democratic arrangements in the home, although they may still carry the majority of the domestic burden, as noted earlier.

1.3.3 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism aims to understand human behavior by analyzing the critical role of symbols in human interaction. This is certainly relevant to the discussion of masculinity and femininity. Imagine that you walk into a bank hoping to get a small loan for school, a home, or a small business venture. If you meet with a male loan officer, you may state your case logically by listing all the hard numbers that make you a qualified applicant as a means of appealing to the analytical characteristics associated with masculinity. If you meet with a female loan officer, you may make an emotional appeal by stating your good intentions as a means of appealing to the caring characteristics associated with femininity.

Because the meanings attached to symbols are socially created and not natural, and fluid, not static, we act and react to symbols based on the current assigned meaning. When people perform tasks or possess characteristics based on the gender role assigned to them, they are said to be doing gender. This notion is based on the work of West and Zimmerman (1987). Whether we are expressing our masculinity or femininity, West and Zimmerman argue, we are always "doing gender." Thus, gender is something we do or perform, not something, we are.

In other words, both gender and sexuality are socially constructed. The social construction of sexuality refers to the way in which socially created definitions about the cultural appropriateness of sex-linked behavior shape the way people see and experience sexuality. This is in marked contrast to theories of sex, gender, and sexuality that link male and female behavior to biological determinism, or the belief that men and women behave differently due to differences in their biology.

1.3.4 Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a type of conflict theory that examines inequalities in gender-related issues. It uses the conflict approach to examine the maintenance of gender roles and inequalities. Radical feminism, in particular, considers the role of the family in perpetuating male dominance. In patriarchal societies, men's contributions are seen as more valuable than those of women are. Patriarchal perspectives and arrangements are widespread and taken for granted. As a result, women's viewpoints tend to be silenced or marginalized to the point of being discredited or considered invalid.

Sanday's study of the Indonesian Minangkabau (2004) revealed that in societies some consider to be matriarchies (where women comprise the dominant group), women and men tend to work cooperatively rather than competitively regardless of whether a job is considered feminine by U.S. standards. The men, however, do not experience the sense of bifurcated consciousness under this social structure that modern U.S. females encounter (Sanday 2004).

1.4 Gender Transformative Approach

Gender transformative approaches (GTA) are strategies for interventions, which create chances for people to dynamically challenge gender norms, encourage social and political participation for women in communities, and tackle power inequities between persons of different genders. GTA produce favorable environment for gender transformation by going further and not only restrict to the participation of women as participants. In this way GTA is a continuum of gender integration, or the integration of gender issues into all aspects of program and policy conceptualization, development, implementation and evaluation.

To illustrate the development of the GTA, I go back to the 2000. When Geeta Rao Gupta, Head of the International Center of Research on Women (ICRW), came with the idea of "continuum of gender programing" developed to facilitate development professionals and practitioners to execute projects and programs in an effective manner and achieve greater impacts with respect to gender

(Caro 2009 cited in Rolleri 2014). Resultant following four approaches discussed to integrate gender in development programs and projects.

1) Gender exploitative
2) Gender blind
3) Gender accommodating
4) Gender transformative

1.4.1 Gender Exploitative

In the approach of gender exploitative, advantages of traditional gender norms and roles are taken to achieve overall project outcomes. However, such outcome is not supposed to have sustainable because of lacking to address root causes. Lori A. Rolleri (2014) shared an example of social marketing in which an image of masculinity is promoted to sell the condom. Such kind of intervention one side can increase contraceptive prevalence rate, which will be considered as a successful outcome indicator. However, at the same time, it will also enhance traditional role of masculinity that will harm gender equality. Hence, exploitation of gender roles to acquire certain outcome of the project and program would be needed to avoid.

1.4.2 Gender blind

It is also evident from the project and program's interventions that either deliberately or mistakenly the intervention organizations did not acknowledge the role of gender in their respective theory of change. It is stated that usually gender-blind approach does not promote gender binary. However, it has potential to strengthen already existing gender norms, which promote inequality.

1.4.3 Gender Accommodating or Sensitive

The approach of gender accommodating, or gender sensitive is specifically try to target the gender inequality and try to introduce intervention, which may target the cause of gender disparity. However, the scope of the intervention remains limited to reduce or vanish harmful impact of gender binary or gender inequality. A question can be asked how gender accommodating or gender sensitive approach can vanish or reduce impact of gender inequality in the project interventions. To answer this question, we can take an example presented by Rolleri (2014). For example, an intervention target male for reproductive health services and provide friendly environment they may attend the services. However, the program does not focus to address gender inequality in the health seeking behavior. At this point, some can contextualize such intervention as a gender transformative approach. Where only men have been focused for the attainment of health services. While, at the other side engagement of the male for health seeking behavior can improve health of the male. Hence, gender-accommodating approach is an important aspect

however, not sufficient as such approach does not categorically challenge traditional gender norms or power structure in the society.

1.4.4 Gender Transformative

It is stated that Gender Transformative approaches revolve around three aspects:

1. Raise awareness about unhealthy gender norms.
2. Question the costs of adhering to these norms.
3. Replace unhealthy, inequitable gender norms with redefined healthy ones.

In this case, gender transformative approaches are different from the approaches, which mentioned previously. GTA does not go only to the root causes of the gender inequality but also come up with the redefining and potentially influencing gender order in the society. The dynamics of the gender transformative approaches are multiple. So, through utilizing ecological approach, gender transformative approach target to various institution, which come into practice and force gender inequality like family, school, workplace, health centers, media, government, and religious institutions (Rolleri 2014). In addition, this an important aspect to mention that gender transformative approach also use *gender synchronized approach,* that is stated a gender of the male cannot be changed without changing female gender roles or vice versa. In this context, gender is a relational concept (Greene & Levack, 2010).

When it comes to specific gender transformative approach then it should be acknowledgement of difference in the norms governs gender roles and its relationship to access and control upon the resources. Secondly, it also brings into the consideration that gender specific needs i.e., women and men's need. Thirdly, it figures out the pattern and ways for the transformation of gender roles that promote gender inequality and vulnerability for the women (Greaves et al. 2014; Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

In the context of gender transformative approach, I would like to share one of the examples highlighted in the project report of Health Communication Collaborative (2016). In one of the communities, a campaign executed to abandon the practices of genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). For this programme, intervention organization, specifically targeted all the stakeholders of the community i.e., men, women, boy, girls and community leaders. The purpose for the engagement of the people of various gender and age group was to understand gender norms and belief system in the society. Based on acquired data, intervention organization were able to replace the genital mutilation practices, and it had been replaced with coming-of-age ritual for young girls.

1.5 The Proxies of GTA

The proxies of GTAs mainly revolve around the broader domains and can be measured through assessing the followings:

1 Agency
2 Relations
3 Structures

Emily Hillenbrand et al. (2015) refers the concept of *agency* towards development of individual as well as collective capacities - in terms of knowledge and skills – ability and pattern of access to the services, critical reflexivity, actions and practices. As far as the concept of relation is concerned, with reference to GTAs it is being referred towards expectation and cooperation between the people at the family, groups, and community and market levels. Finally, structure is about the pattern and rules which governs three types of domains those are individual, institutional and collective (Hillenbrand, et al. 2015).

The above-mentioned three domain provide space for a broader framework, which can be aligned with transformation and advancement of gender equality. Each of the approach is connected with the other. As mentioned, "Individuals' aspirations and attitudes are largely influenced by the social norms and practices within their societies, as well as the quality of their relationships and support networks. Evidence has also shown that programming focused on one domain risks reversibility and harm if it fails to engage the other domains for gender-transformative change" (Martinez 2006; World Bank 2012 cited in Hillenbrand, et al. 2015).

Hence, through various means to integrate gender relations into theories of change; following target can be achieved:

a) Economic empowerment: household economies and division of labor, labor markets, control over one's life, and access to services and resources.
b) Political empowerment: collective action, mobilization, movements, representation and influence
c) Bodies and sexualities: pleasure, bodily integrity and control over one's body, shifting social norms, and violence.

1.6 Glossary

1.6.1 Feminist Paradigm: explains gender in terms of the political and socio-economic structure in which it is constructed. It emphasizes the importance of taking collective action to eradicate sexism in society as well as in sociology, and to reconstruct gender so that it is neither a harmful nor an oppressive social category.

1.6.2 Gender: Socially generated attitudes and behaviors, usually organized dichotomously as masculinity and femininity.

1.6.3 Patriarchy: A sex/gender system in which men dominates women and that which is considered masculine is more highly valued than that which is considered feminine.

1.6.4 Sex: The biologically determined physical distinctions between males and females.

1.6.5 Sex/Gender System: The institutionalized traits, behaviors, and patterns of social interaction that are prescribed for a society's members based on sex. The system incorporates three interrelated components: (1) the social construction of two dichotomous genders on the basis of biological sex, (2) a sexual division of labor and (3) the social regulation of sexuality.

1.6.6 Sexism: The differential valuing of sex over the other.

1.6.7 Structural Functionalist Paradigm: Explains gender as being derived from the biological differences between the sexes, especially differences in reproductive functions.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question No 1. Narrate the biological description of gender
Question No 2. Discuss briefly the structural functionalism
Question No 3. Define paradigm revolution
Question No 4. Does gender system function as a system of social stratification? elaborate your answer with examples.
Question No 5. Discuss in detail the feminist sociology of gender

Further Readings

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Unit: 2

GENDER AND 19TH CENTURY MOVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Feminism, as a social and political movement, emerged in response to the systemic inequalities faced by women in various spheres of life. The 19th century was a crucial period in the evolution of feminist thought and activism, as it witnessed several movements that significantly influenced the fight for women's rights. These movements provided the ideological and organizational foundation for feminist activism, emphasizing equality, justice, and social change. Key movements such as abolitionism, the labour movement, the suffrage movement, socialism, and the temperance movement played a critical role in shaping feminist discourse and advancing women's rights. The 19th-century independence movement in the Indian subcontinent was a complex interplay of political aspirations and social reforms, with the feminist movement emerging as a significant force within this milieu. This comprehensive unit overviews the background, key leaders, objectives, successes, and failures of the movement, highlighting their intrinsic connection to early feminist endeavours.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, students will be able to:

- understand the background and objectives of several key movements that emerged in the nineteenth century.
- identify the role of women activists who participated in those struggles and fight for rights.
- realise how these movements helped women to come together as an emerging force to stand for the feminist movement.

Major Topics

2.1 The Abolitionist Movement
2.2 Labour Movement
2.3 Suffrage Movement
2.4 Socialist Movements
2.5 Temperance Movement
2.6 Independence Movement of the Subcontinent

2.1 The Abolitionist Movement

The abolitionist movement emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as a moral, social, and political campaign to end the institution of slavery. Early abolitionist thought was influenced by religious groups, intellectuals, and activists who viewed slavery as incompatible with Christian teachings. Rooted in Enlightenment ideals of human rights and dignity, the movement gained momentum in response to the inhumane treatment of enslaved individuals, particularly in the United States, Britain, and other colonial territories (Sinha, 2016).

The objectives of the abolitionist movement were to raise awareness about the inhumane treatment of enslaved individuals, and make efforts to end slavery and promote racial equality. The activists and leaders of the movement strived to advocate for legal and social rights for freed slaves. By the early 19th century, abolitionism had evolved into an organized movement, with activists publishing anti-slavery literature, delivering speeches, and forming societies dedicated to the cause.

The transatlantic slave trade was a major target, leading to significant legislative victories, such as the British Slave Trade Act of 1807, which outlawed the trade of enslaved people, followed by the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, which ended slavery in most of the British Empire.

In the United States, abolitionism was driven by figures such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and William Lloyd Garrison, whose newspaper ‘The Liberator’ called for the immediate emancipation of enslaved individuals. The movement, however, was deeply divisive, as pro-slavery factions in the southern United States resisted any attempt at reform, leading to intense political and social conflict.

The American Civil War (1861–1865) ultimately led to the abolition of slavery in the United States with the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865. Although abolitionism succeeded in legally ending slavery, it did not immediately achieve racial equality, as systemic discrimination and segregation persisted, necessitating further civil rights activism in the 20th century. Abolitionist movement had inspired early feminist leaders to demand gender equality, and had helped women develop political skills that were later used in the suffrage movement.

Women played a crucial role in abolitionist efforts, not only by organizing anti-slavery societies but also by drawing parallels between racial and gender oppression. The abolitionist movement was one of the earliest platforms where women actively participated in political activism. It introduced them to organizing, public speaking, and advocacy. It also provided a platform for discussing women's rights alongside racial justice.

Women abolitionists such as Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and the Grimké sisters highlighted the intersections between racial and gender oppression. Sojourner Truth was a former slave who became a leading abolitionist and women's rights activist; and Harriet Tubman was a key figure in the Underground Railroad who helped enslaved people escape to freedom. This activism laid the groundwork for the later women's rights movement, particularly after many female abolitionists, such as Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, faced gender-based exclusion from leadership roles in abolitionist organizations. Many female abolitionists realized that their own rights were severely restricted, inspiring them to advocate for gender equality. Lucretia Mott & Sarah Grimké later became suffrage leaders.

Many abolitionist organizations resisted women's leadership, and after slavery was abolished, many male abolitionists distanced themselves from women's rights issues. The exclusion of women from leadership roles in the movement led them to organize the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, which marked the beginning of formal feminist activism. The convention produced the Declaration of Sentiments, which demanded equal rights for women, marking a significant step toward organized feminism (Stanton, 1848/2008).

2.2 The Labour Movement

During the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the industrial revolution brought significant economic and social changes, including the rise of factory work. Many women joined the workforce but faced poor wages, long hours, and dangerous conditions. The labor movement emerged as a response to the harsh working conditions, long hours, and low wages that workers faced in rapidly industrializing societies. Industrialization had led to harsh working conditions, particularly for women who worked in textile mills, factories, and domestic service. As factories replaced traditional craft-based production, laborers, including women and children, were subjected to dangerous environments, excessive work hours, and exploitation by industrialists who prioritized profit over worker welfare (Fantasia and Kim, 2004).

The rise of industrial capitalism led to economic disparities, prompting workers to organize in pursuit of fair wages, job security, advocating for labor rights, including child labor laws and improved workplace conditions, and included demands for gender-specific reforms, such as workplace protections for female workers and equal pay. Early labor movements were often influenced by socialist and trade unionist ideologies that emphasized collective bargaining and workers' rights. The formation of labor unions became a key strategy for advocating reforms, with organizations such as the Knights of Labor in the United States (founded in 1869) and the British Trade Union Congress (established in 1868) playing a crucial role.

The movement led to major labor strikes and protests, including the Haymarket Affair of 1886 in Chicago, which highlighted the demand for an eight-hour workday. Many reforms were slow, and the labor movement faced strong opposition from employers and governments, with many strikes met with violent repression. Despite these challenges, it achieved significant victories, including the recognition of trade unions, the establishment of minimum wage laws and an eight-hour workday, and labor protections such as safety regulations and child labor bans. By the end of the 19th century, labor activism had laid the foundation for modern labor rights, influencing future policies on work hours, collective bargaining, and gender equality in employment. Soon, women’s trade unions were formed, allowing female workers to organize.

Women workers, especially those in textile and garment industries, were active participants, forming their own labor organizations and demanding workplace rights. Figures such as Sarah Bagley, a leader in the Lowell Mill Girls movement, and Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, a prominent labor organizer, advocated for both workers' rights and gender equality in the labor force. Emma Goldman was a socialist and anarchist who linked labor rights with women's rights. The Matchgirls' Strike of 1888 in the United Kingdom demonstrated how working-class women organized for their rights. The labor movement's emphasis on economic justice also intersected with early feminist activism, as many feminists argued that financial independence and fair employment opportunities were crucial for women's empowerment, influencing struggles for workplace equality.

Women were often sidelined in male-dominated labor unions, despite their significant contributions to the workforce. In many industries, unions prioritized male workers' rights while overlooking the unique challenges women faced, such as workplace discrimination, lower wages, and lack of maternity protections. However, women actively participated in labor strikes and trade unions, bringing attention to these injustices and pushing for change. Their involvement not only exposed gender-based workplace discrimination but also emphasized the necessity of labor laws that addressed maternity rights and job security. Feminists increasingly saw these issues as central to their movement, advocating for policies that protected working mothers and ensured fair treatment. The demand for equal pay gained momentum as women recognized the systemic wage disparities that undervalued their labor. By fighting for these rights, female workers laid the foundation for 20th-century feminist campaigns focused on workplace equality. Their struggles underscored the connection between economic justice and gender justice, showing that fair wages, job security, and maternity rights were not just labor issues but also fundamental aspects of gender equality. These early efforts paved the way for later feminist movements that successfully pushed for equal pay legislation, anti-discrimination laws, and broader workplace reforms. Ultimately, women's activism in labor unions and strikes was instrumental in shaping policies that continue to impact workplace rights today.

2.3 The Suffrage Movement

Women in the 19th century had limited legal and political rights, including the right to vote. In most Western societies, women were denied basic civil rights,

including the right to own property, access higher education, and participate in governance.

The suffrage movement, which gained momentum in the 19th century, was a pivotal campaign advocating for women's right to vote, legal rights and political participation. Rooted in the broader struggle for gender equality, the movement emerged as a response to the legal and social exclusion of women from political decision-making. The movement was influenced by the democratic ideals of the Enlightenment and the abolitionist movement, as many women who fought against slavery recognized the parallels between racial oppression and gender discrimination. The suffrage movement emerged as part of a broader demand for women's political empowerment.

Susan B. Anthony was a key figure in the American suffrage movement. Emmeline Pankhurst was the founder of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in the UK, and Millicent Fawcett was the leader of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS). While early suffragists struggled to gain political support, the movement gained momentum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly as women's contributions during World War I highlighted their capability and societal value. The first major event in the suffrage movement was the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 in the United States, organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, which produced the Declaration of Sentiments, demanding equal rights, including suffrage. In the UK, Emmeline Pankhurst and the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) adopted militant tactics, such as protests, hunger strikes, and civil disobedience, to pressure the government for voting rights.

The movement faced strong opposition from conservatives, who argued that women's involvement in politics would disrupt traditional family roles. The efforts of suffragists led to significant legal victories, including the passage of the Representation of the People Act (1918) in the UK, which granted voting rights to some women, and the 19th Amendment (1920) in the United States, which enfranchised women nationwide (Spruill, n.d.). However, many marginalized groups, including Black women in the U.S., continued to face barriers to voting due to racial discrimination. The movement often excluded working-class women and women of color, and voting rights were not immediately granted to all women, e.g., Black women in the US faced barriers even after 1920.

The suffrage movement was a foundational moment for feminism, as it established women's right to political agency and laid the groundwork for later feminist waves and struggles for workplace equality, reproductive rights, and broader gender justice by demonstrating the effectiveness of organized activism.

The suffrage movement was perhaps the most direct precursor to modern feminism, as it sought women's right to vote and participate in political life. Early feminists like Susan B. Anthony, Emmeline Pankhurst, and Millicent Fawcett led campaigns for voting rights, arguing that political empowerment was essential for achieving gender equality.

The suffrage movement was a pivotal challenge to traditional gender roles, advocating for women's active participation in governance and public decision-making. By demanding the right to vote, suffragists directly opposed the long-standing belief that women's roles were confined to the private sphere of home and family. This movement not only sought legal and political equality but also redefined societal perceptions of women's capabilities and rights. Through organized activism, suffragists demonstrated the effectiveness of collective action, using protests, petitions, and lobbying to push for legislative change. Their persistent efforts led to landmark victories, such as the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in the United States and similar enfranchisement laws worldwide. As a result, women emerged as influential political actors, securing not only voting rights but also greater representation in leadership and policymaking. The movement laid the foundation for future feminist struggles, proving that organized resistance could challenge systemic inequalities.
A movie "Iron Jawed Angles" can be watched to see suffrage movement in America.

2.4 The Socialist Movement

The socialist movement emerged in the 19th century as a response to the economic and social inequalities created by industrial capitalism. Rapid industrialization had led to the exploitation of workers, poor wages, and harsh working conditions, prompting intellectuals and activists to seek alternatives to the capitalist system.

Socialist thinkers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels argued that capitalism inherently oppressed the working class and that a more just society required collective ownership of resources and equal distribution of wealth (Engels, 2004).

Socialism gained traction across Europe and the United States, with labor unions, political parties, and revolutionary groups advocating for workers' rights, social welfare, and economic justice. The movement played a key role in shaping labor policies, pushing for an eight-hour workday, fair wages, and the right to unionize.

Socialist movements in the 19th century advocated for economic and social equality, including gender justice. Thinkers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels discussed the exploitation of women under capitalism, while socialist feminists like Clara Zetkin and Alexandra Kollontai argued that women's liberation required economic transformation.

Women played a crucial role in socialist movements, as they faced dual oppression—both as workers exploited by industrialists and as women confined by patriarchal structures. Clara Zetkin was a Marxist feminist who advocated for working women, and Alexandra Kollontai was a Russian revolutionary who promoted gender equality. Both Zetkin and Kollontai argued that gender inequality was deeply tied to capitalism, and that women's liberation required not only legal rights but also economic independence.

Socialist movements and socialist organizations championed policies such as paid maternity leave, workplace protections for women, and access to education while also promoting women's labor rights and reproductive rights. The rise of socialist feminism laid the foundation for later feminist critiques of capitalism and gender-based economic disparities (Engels,1884/2004). However, despite these progressive ideas, mainstream socialist movements often prioritized class struggle over gender issues, sidelining women's specific concerns.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, socialist ideas had shaped political ideologies worldwide, leading to the establishment of social democratic policies in many countries and reinforcing the feminist argument that economic and social rights were inseparable. The socialist movement contributed significantly to feminist thought by highlighting economic justice as a core aspect of gender equality. It laid the foundation for later feminist movements that advocated for equal pay, reproductive rights, and state-supported childcare, influencing modern welfare policies and labor laws, and also encouraged women's involvement in politics. The socialist movements also influenced later feminist critiques of capitalism.

2.5 The Temperance Movement

The temperance movement emerged in the early 19th century as a social reform campaign aimed at reducing or eliminating alcohol consumption. It was rooted in concerns over the negative social, moral, and economic effects of excessive drinking, particularly among working-class men. Industrialization had brought rapid urbanization, leading to widespread alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and workplace inefficiency. Religious revivalism, particularly in the United States and Britain, played a significant role in shaping the movement, as many Christian reformers viewed alcohol consumption as a moral failing that led to societal decay (Blocker, 2006).

Early temperance activists advocated for moderation, but by the mid-19th century, many pushed for complete prohibition of alcohol. Organizations such as the American Temperance Society (founded in 1826) and the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU, founded in 1874) became major forces in the movement.

Women played a leading role in the temperance movement, as alcohol abuse was often linked to domestic violence and economic instability, which directly affected families. Frances Willard, a key leader of the WCTU, connected temperance to broader issues of women's rights, arguing that women needed political power, including suffrage, to protect their homes and communities from the dangers of alcohol (Gustafson, 2001).

While the movement succeeded in influencing public opinion and securing alcohol restrictions in several regions, it faced resistance from businesses that profited from alcohol sales and from working-class men who viewed prohibition as an attack on personal freedom. The most significant victory of the temperance movement came in the form of national prohibition laws, such as the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1919), which banned alcohol production and sales. However, prohibition faced widespread opposition and was ultimately repealed in 1933.

Despite this failure, the temperance movement had long-term effects on feminism, as it reinforced the idea that women had the right to influence social policies and strengthened their role in political activism. The movement's organizational strategies and moral arguments influenced later feminist campaigns for social justice, labor rights, and reproductive health. The movement's strong

female leadership and grassroots activism provided women with organizational experience and public speaking opportunities, skills that later proved essential in the fight for women's suffrage.

The temperance movement, which aimed to reduce alcohol consumption, was led primarily by women who saw alcohol abuse as a major cause of domestic violence and social instability. Organizations like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), led by Frances Willard, provided women with leadership opportunities and organizational skills that later contributed to the feminist movement.

Women led the temperance movement to promote sobriety and protect families. The temperance movement strengthened feminist networks, and empowered women politically and socially, allowing them to challenge traditional gender roles and assert their influence in public policy. Many temperance leaders became suffragists, recognizing the connection between women's rights and social reform.

2.6 The Independence Movement of Subcontinent

The 19th-century independence movement in the Indian subcontinent emerged as a response to British colonial rule, which had established political and economic dominance following the decline of the Mughal Empire. The British East India Company and later the British Crown imposed exploitative policies that drained local resources, disrupted indigenous industries, and created widespread socio-economic distress. This period witnessed growing discontent among various sections of society, leading to early nationalist movements and revolts such as the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Intellectuals, social reformers, and political leaders began advocating for self-governance, cultural revival, and social justice, recognizing that true independence required not just political freedom but also societal transformation.

One of the most pressing concerns of social reformers was the condition of women in 19th-century South Asia, which was marked by widespread discrimination, restrictive customs, and lack of educational and economic opportunities. Women were largely confined to domestic roles, with limited rights in marriage, property ownership, and public life. Harmful practices such as sati (the burning of widows on their husband's pyre), child marriage, purdah (seclusion of women), and polygamy were prevalent, severely restricting women's agency.

Widows, particularly among upper-caste Hindus, faced extreme social ostracization, while lower-caste and rural women endured harsh economic exploitation. Education for women was almost non-existent, as patriarchal norms dictated that literacy was unnecessary for their roles as wives and mothers.

The 19th century witnessed the Indian subcontinent under British colonial rule, leading to widespread socio-economic changes. The colonial administration's policies disrupted traditional structures, prompting introspection among Indian intellectuals and reformers. This period saw the rise of social reform movements addressing issues such as sati (widow immolation), child marriage, and women's education. These movements laid the groundwork for both the independence struggle and the feminist movement, as reformers recognized that societal progress was intertwined with women's emancipation.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833), often acknowledged as the "Father of the Indian Renaissance,", was instrumental in the abolition of sati through his advocacy, leading to its prohibition by the British government in 1829. He also championed women's education and widow remarriage, setting the stage for subsequent reforms.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820–1891), a prominent educator and social reformer, campaigned vigorously for widow remarriage, resulting in the enactment of the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. He also emphasized the importance of women's education, establishing numerous schools for girls.

Jyotirao Phule (1827–1890) and Savitribai Phule (1831–1897) was a visionary couple who worked tirelessly against caste and gender discrimination. Savitribai Phule is credited with opening the first school for girls in India in 1848, challenging prevailing societal norms.

Tarabai Shinde (1850–1910) was an early feminist writer who authored "Stri Purush Tulana" ("A Comparison Between Women and Men") in 1882, critiquing the patriarchal structures of society and advocating for gender equality.

Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880–1932) was a pioneering feminist, social reformer, and educationist who championed women’s education, gender equality, and social reform in South Asia. She founded the Sakhawat Memorial Girls' School (1911) to educate Muslim girls and established Anjuman-e-Khawatin-e-Islam to mobilize women for social change. Through her writings, especially

Sultana's Dream and Abarodhbasini, she critiqued purdah, patriarchy, and the misuse of religion to oppress women. Her legacy laid the foundation for feminist movements in South Asia, inspiring future generations.

Annie Besant (1847–1933) was a British socialist and theosophist, who became a staunch supporter of Indian self-rule and women's rights. She was the first female president of the Indian National Congress in 1917 and played a pivotal role in promoting women's education and participation in the independence movement.

This independence movement was driven by multiple objectives, primarily the struggle for self-governance and the end of British colonial rule. Nationalists sought to reclaim political autonomy, resisting economic exploitation and foreign dominance that had weakened indigenous industries and governance structures. However, independence was not only about political freedom; it was also deeply tied to social reform. Reformers aimed to eradicate long-standing social evils such as sati, child marriage, and caste discrimination, recognizing that true progress required the transformation of deeply entrenched societal norms. Additionally, the movement emphasized the need for women's education, rights, and active participation in public life, as leaders acknowledged that genuine independence was unattainable without gender equality. Women's empowerment was seen as essential for nation-building, leading to campaigns for female literacy, property rights, and access to public and political spheres. Thus, the independence movement of the 19th century was not just a fight against colonial rule but also a broader struggle for social justice and human rights.

This movement achieved several significant successes in both political and social spheres. One of its earliest victories was the legal prohibition of sati in 1829, a major reform that marked a turning point in the fight against oppressive traditions. The movement also brought about the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, which legitimized widow remarriage and challenged deeply entrenched societal norms that restricted women's rights. Education reform was another crucial achievement, as social reformers like Jyotirao and Savitribai Phule established schools for girls, promoting women's literacy and empowerment. These efforts not only expanded educational opportunities but also laid the groundwork for women's greater participation in public life. Furthermore, women's involvement in the independence struggle helped solidify their role in political activism, preparing them for future

leadership and advocacy in national movements. These successes collectively contributed to reshaping societal attitudes and advancing gender equality, reinforcing the idea that true independence required both political freedom and social progress.

Despite its significant achievements, the movement faced several failures and limitations, particularly in achieving widespread social transformation. Many of the reforms, such as the abolition of sati and the promotion of women's education, primarily benefited urban and upper-caste women, while marginalized groups, including lower-caste and rural women, remained largely unaffected by these changes. Deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes continued to hinder the full realization of feminist objectives, as resistance from conservative factions often diluted or slowed the implementation of reforms. Moreover, while some progressive laws were introduced under British colonial rule, they were often shaped by colonial interests rather than a genuine commitment to gender equality or social justice. The British administration selectively enacted reforms that aligned with its governance strategies while avoiding deeper structural changes that could disrupt their control. As a result, while the movement laid the foundation for women's rights and social progress, it struggled to bring about holistic and intersectional change, leaving many systemic inequalities intact.

> The 19th century witnessed a convergence of social movements that played a crucial role in shaping feminist thought and activism. Abolitionism exposed the parallels between racial and gender oppression, the labor movement emphasized economic justice for women, the suffrage movement secured political rights, socialism introduced feminist critiques of capitalism, and the temperance movement provided women with leadership experiences. The foundations laid by the independence movement in Subcontinent were crucial for subsequent advancements in both the struggle for independence and the pursuit of gender equality. These movements collectively laid the foundation for the feminist movements of the 20th century, highlighting the interconnectedness of social justice struggles and the enduring fight for gender equality.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question No 1. Discuss the role of women in the abolitionist movement and how it contributed to the early feminist movement.

Question No 2. How did the abolitionist movement influence the fight for women's rights in the 19th century? Provide examples of key leaders and their contributions.

Question No 3. Describe the major objectives of the 19th-century labor movement and explain how women workers contributed to its success.

Question No 4. How did the labor movement address gender inequality in the workplace? Discuss with reference to key reforms and women labor leaders.

Question No 5. Examine the successes and limitations of the labor movement in improving working conditions for women during the 19th century.

Question No 6. Discuss the major goals and strategies of the suffrage movement in the 19th and early 20th centuries. How did feminist ideologies shape this movement?

Question No 7. How did socialist movements advocate for gender equality in economic and social spheres? Discuss with reference to key socialist feminists.

Question No 8. Discuss the impact of socialist movements on labor laws and workplace protections for women.

Question No 9. How did the temperance movement contribute to women's political empowerment in the 19th century?

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Unit: 3

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER (PART I)

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INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be studying different theories about gender socialization. First comes identification theory. According to Sigmund Freud, children pass through a series of stages in their personality development. During the first two stages, referred to respectively as the oral and anal stages, boys and girls are similar in their behavior and experiences. For both boys and girls, mother is the chief object of their emotions since she is primary caretaker and gratifies most of their needs. It is around age four, however that an important divergence occurs in the personality development of boys and girls. It is at this age that children become aware, both of their own genitals and of the fact that genitals of boys and girls are different. This realization signals the start of the third stage of development, the phallic stage. It is during the phallic stage that identification takes place that is children begin to unconsciously model their behavior after that of their same sex parent, thus learning how to behave in gender appropriate ways. Significantly, the identification does not occur for girls the same way it occurs for boys.

According to Bandura, Social learning theory is more straightforward than identification theory as it focuses on observable events and their consequences rather than on unconscious motives and drives. Social learning theory is appealingly as children can be great imitators. However, social learning theory is not without difficulties.

According to psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohl Beg, cognitive development theory holds that children learn gender through their mental efforts to organize their social world, rather than through psychosexual processes or reward and punishments. For the young child who is literally new to the world, life must seem chaotic. Thus, one of the child's first developmental tasks is to try to make sense of all the information, he or she receives through observation and interaction in the environment.

Psychologist Sandra Bam developed theory of gender formation. She concentrates her analysis on the lenses of gender. There are three gender lenses in most cultures: gender polarization, re-centrism, and biological essentialism.

OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit along with suggested readings, you should be able to:

- understand the identification theory
- explain the social learning theory
- get an in-depth knowledge about the cognitive development theory
- analyse gender formation theory

Major Topics

3.1 Identification Theory
3.2 Social Learning Theory
3.3 Cognitive Development Theory
3.4 Theory of Gender Formation
3.5 Relationship Between Gender Transformative Approaches and Theories
3.6 Glossary

3.1 Identification Theory

Freud (1905) proposed that psychological development in childhood takes place in a series of fixed psychosexual stages: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital. These are called psychosexual stages because each stage represents the fixation of libido (roughly translated as sexual drives or instincts) on a different area of the body. As a person grows, physically certain areas of their body become important as sources of potential frustration (erogenous zones), pleasure or both.

Freud believed that life was built round tension and pleasure. Freud also believed that all tension was due to the build-up of libido (sexual energy) and that all pleasure came from its discharge. In describing human personality development as psychosexual Freud meant to convey that what develops is the way in which sexual energy accumulates and is discharged as we mature biologically. (Freud used the term 'sexual' in a very general way to mean all pleasurable actions and thoughts).

Freud stressed that the first five years of life are crucial to the formation of adult personality. The id must be controlled in order to satisfy social demands; this sets up a conflict between frustrated wishes and social norms. The ego and superego develop in order to exercise this control and direct the need for gratification into socially acceptable channels. Gratification centers in different areas of the body at different stages of growth, making the conflict at each stage psychosexual.

3.1.1 The Role of Conflict

Each of the psychosexual stages is associated with a particular conflict that must be resolved before the individual can successfully advance to the next stage. The resolution of each of these conflicts requires the expenditure of sexual energy and the more energy that is expended at a particular stage; the more the important

characteristics of that stage remain with the individual as he/she matures psychologically.

To explain this Freud suggested the analogy of military troops on the march. As the troops advance, opposition or conflict meets them. If they are highly successful in winning the battle (resolving the conflict), then most of the troops (libido) will be able to move on to the next battle (stage). Nevertheless, the greater the difficulty encountered at any particular point, the greater the need for troops to remain behind to fight and thus the fewer that will be able to go on to the next confrontation.

3.1.2 Frustration, Overindulgence and Fixation

Some people do not seem to be able to leave one stage and proceed on to the next. One reason for this may be that the needs of the developing individual at any particular stage may not have been adequately met in which case there is frustration. Or possibly the person's needs may have been so well satisfied that he/she is reluctant to leave the psychological benefits of a particular stage in which there is overindulgence. Both frustration and overindulgence (or any combination of the two) may lead to what psychoanalysts call fixation at a particular psychosexual stage. Fixation refers to the theoretical notion that a portion of the individual's libido has been permanently 'invested' in a particular stage of his development. It is assumed that some libido is permanently invested in each psychosexual stage and thus each person will behave in some ways that are characteristic of infancy, or early childhood.

3.1.3 Psychosexual Stages of Development

According to Freud, the Psycho-sexual stages of development are as follows

- **Oral Stage (0-1 year)**

In the first stage of personality development, the libido is centered in a baby's mouth. It gets much satisfaction from putting all sorts of things in its mouth to satisfy the libido, and thus its id demands. Which at this stage in life are oral, or mouth orientated, such as sucking, biting, and breastfeeding. Freud said oral stimulation could lead to an oral fixation in later life. We see oral personalities all around us such as smokers, nail-biters, finger-chewers, and thumb suckers. Oral personalities engage in such oral behaviors, particularly when under stress.

- **Anal Stage (1-3 years)**

The libido now becomes focused on the anus, and the child derives great pleasure from defecating. The child is now fully aware that they are a person in their own right and that their wishes can bring them into conflict with the demands of the outside world (i.e., their ego has developed). Freud believed that this type of conflict tends to come to a head in potty training, in which adults impose restrictions on when and where the child can defecate. The nature of this first conflict with authority can determine the child's future relationship with all forms of authority. Early or harsh potty training can lead to the child becoming an anal-retentive personality who hates mess, is obsessively tidy, punctual and respectful of authority. They can be stubborn and tight-fisted with their cash and possessions. This is all related to pleasure got from holding on to their faces when toddlers, and their mum's then insisting that they get rid of it by placing them on the potty until they perform. Not as daft as it sounds. The anal expulsive, on the other hand, underwent a liberal toilet-training regime during the anal stage. In adulthood, the anal expulsive is the person who wants to share things with you. They like giving things away. An anal-expulsive personality is also messy, disorganized, and rebellious.

- **Phallic Stage (3 to 5 or 6 years)**

Sensitivity now becomes concentrated in the genitals and masturbation (in both sexes) becomes a new source of pleasure. The child becomes aware of anatomical sex differences, which sets in motion the conflict between erotic attraction, resentment, rivalry, jealousy and fear which Freud called the Oedipus complex (in boys) and the Electra complex (in girls). This is resolved through the process of identification, which involves the child adopting the characteristics of the same sex parent.

- **Oedipus Complex**

The most important aspect of the phallic stage is the Oedipus complex. This is one of Freud's most controversial ideas and one that many people reject outright. The name of the Oedipus complex derives from the Greek myth where Oedipus, a young man, kills his father and marries his mother. Upon discovering this, he pokes his eyes out and becomes blind. This Oedipal is the generic (i.e., general) term for both Oedipus and Electra complexes. In the young boy, the Oedipus complex or more correctly, conflict, arises because the boy develops sexual (pleasurable)

desires for his mother. He wants to possess his mother exclusively and get rid of his father to enable him to do so. Irrationally, the boy thinks that if his father were to find out about all this, his father would take away what he loves the most. During the phallic stage what the boy loves most is his penis. Hence the boy develops castration anxiety. The little boy then sets out to resolve this problem by imitating, copying, and joining in masculine dad-type behaviors. This is called identification and is how the three-to-five-year-old boy resolves his Oedipus complex. Identification means internally adopting the values, attitudes, and behaviors of another person. The consequence of this is that the boy takes on the male gender role and adopts an ego ideal and values that become the superego. Freud (1909) offered the Little Hans case study as evidence of the Oedipus complex.

- **Electra Complex**

For girls, the Oedipus or Electra complex is less than satisfactory. Briefly, the girl desires the father, but realizes that she does not have a penis. This leads to the development of penis envy and the wish to be a boy. The girl resolves this by repressing her desire for her father and substituting the wish for a penis with the wish for a baby. The girl blames her mother for her 'castrated state,' and this creates great tension. The girl then represses her feelings (to remove the tension) and identifies with the mother to take on the female gender role.

- **Latency Stage (5 or 6 to puberty**

No further psychosexual development takes place during this stage (latent means hidden). The libido is dormant. Freud thought that most sexual impulses are repressed during the latent stage, and sexual energy can be sublimated (re: defense mechanisms) towards school work, hobbies, and friendships. Much of the child's energy is channeled into developing new skills and acquiring new knowledge, and play becomes largely confined to other children of the same gender.

- **Genital Stage (puberty to adult)**

This is the last stage of Freud's psychosexual theory of personality development and begins in puberty. It is a time of adolescent sexual experimentation, the successful resolution of which is settling down in a loving one-to-one relationship with another person in our 20's. Sexual instinct is directed to heterosexual pleasure, rather than self-pleasure like during the phallic stage. For Freud, the proper outlet of sexual instinct in adults was through heterosexual

intercourse. Fixation and conflict may prevent this with the consequence that sexual perversions may develop. For example, fixation at the oral stage may result in a person gaining sexual pleasure primarily from kissing and oral sex, rather than sexual intercourse.

3.2 Social Learning Theory

In social learning theory, Albert Bandura (1977) agrees with the behaviorist learning theories of classical conditioning and operant conditioning. However, he adds two important ideas, i.e., Mediating processes occur between stimuli & responses. Behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning.

3.2.1 Observational Learning

Children observe the people around them behaving in various ways. This is illustrated during the famous Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, 1961). Individuals that are observed are called models. In society, children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents within the family, characters on children's TV, friends within their peer group and teachers at school. These models provide examples of behavior to observe and imitate, e.g., masculine and feminine, pro and anti-social, etc.

Children pay attention to some of these people (models) and encode their behavior. At a later time they may imitate (i.e., copy) the behavior they have observed. They may do this regardless of whether the behavior is 'gender appropriate' or not, but there are a number of processes that make it more likely that a child will reproduce the behavior that its society deems appropriate for its gender.

First, the child is more likely to attend to and imitate those people it perceives as similar to itself. Consequently, it is more likely to imitate behavior modeled by people of the same gender.

Second, the people around the child will respond to the behavior it imitates with either reinforcement or punishment. If a child imitates a model's behavior and the consequences are rewarding, the child is likely to continue performing the behavior. If a parent sees a little girl consoling her teddy bear and says "what a kind girl you are," this is rewarding for the child and makes it more likely that she will repeat the behavior. Her behavior has been reinforced (i.e., strengthened).

Reinforcement can be external or internal and can be positive or negative. If a child wants approval from parents or peers, this approval is an external reinforcement, but feeling happy about being approved of is an internal reinforcement. A child will behave in a way which it believes will earn approval because it desires approval.

Positive (or negative) reinforcement would have little impact if the reinforcement offered externally does not match with an individual's needs. Reinforcement can be positive or negative, but the important factor is that it will usually lead to a change in a person's behaviour.

Third, the child will also take into account of what happens to other people when deciding whether or not to copy someone's actions. A person learns by observing the consequences of another person's (i.e., models) behaviour, e.g., a younger sister observing an older sister being rewarded for a particular behaviour is more likely to repeat that behaviour herself. This is known as vicarious reinforcement.

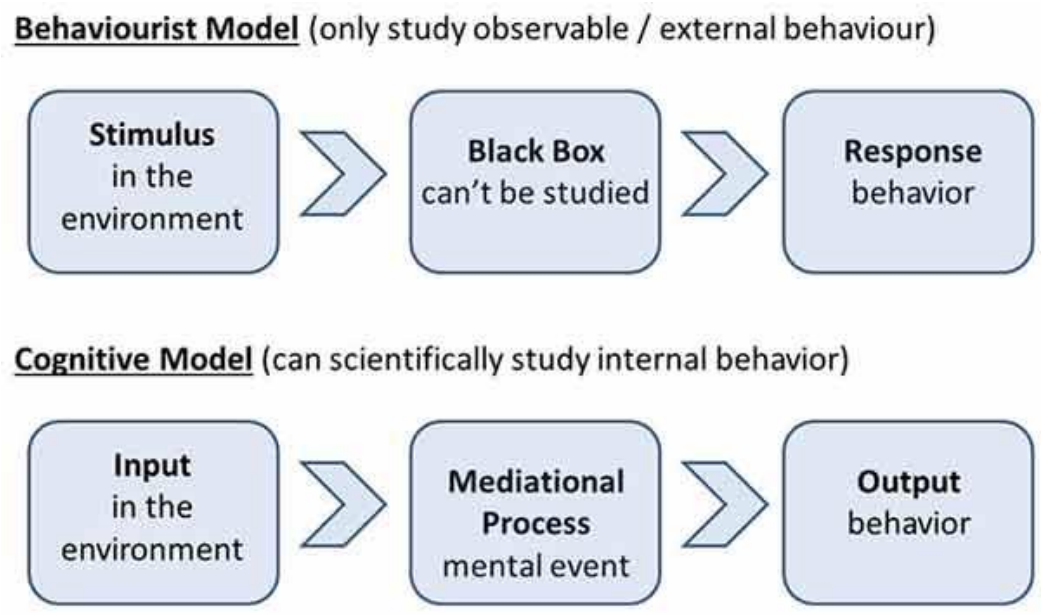
This relates to an attachment to specific models that possess qualities seen as rewarding. Children will have a number of models with whom they identify. These may be people in their immediate world, such as parents or older siblings, or could be fantasy characters or people in the media. The motivation to identify with a particular model is that they have a quality which the individual would like to possess.

Identification occurs with another person (the model) and involves taking on (or adopting) observed behaviours, values, beliefs and attitudes of the person with whom you are identifying. The term identification as used by Social Learning Theory is similar to the Freudian term related to the Oedipus complex. For example, they both involve internalizing or adopting another person's behaviour. However, during the Oedipus complex, the child can only identify with the same sex parent, whereas with Social Learning Theory the person (child or adult) can potentially identify with any other person. Identification is different to imitation as it may involve a number of behaviours being adopted, whereas imitation usually involves copying a single behaviour.

3.2.2 Mediational Processes

Social Learning Theory is often described as the 'bridge' between traditional learning theory (i.e., behaviourism) and the cognitive approach. This is because it focuses on how mental (cognitive) factors are involved in learning. Unlike Skinner, Bandura (1977) believes that humans are active information processors and think about the relationship between their behaviour and its consequences. Observational learning could not occur unless cognitive processes were at work. These mental factors mediate (i.e., intervene) in the learning process to determine whether a new response is acquired.

Therefore, individuals do not automatically observe the behavior of a model and imitate it. There are some thoughts prior to imitation, and this consideration is called mediational processes. This occurs between observing the behavior (stimulus) and imitating it or not (response).



Source: Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html)

There are four mediational processes proposed by Bandura:

- **Attention:**

The extent to which we are exposed/notice the behavior. For a behavior to be imitated, it has to grab our attention. We observe many behaviors on a daily basis, and many of these are not noteworthy. Attention is therefore extremely important in whether a behavior influences others imitating it.

- **Retention:**

How well the behavior is remembered. The behavior may be noticed but is it not always remembered which obviously prevents imitation. It is important therefore that a memory of the behavior is formed to be performed later by the observer. Much of social learning is not immediate, so this process is especially vital in those cases. Even if the behavior is reproduced shortly after seeing it, there needs to be a memory to refer to.

- **Reproduction:**

This is the ability to perform the behaviour that the model has just demonstrated. We see much behaviour on a daily basis that we would like to be able to imitate but that this is not always possible. We are limited by our physical ability and for that reason, even if we wish to reproduce the behaviour, we cannot. This influences our decisions whether to try and imitate it or not. Imagine the scenario of a 90-year-old-lady who struggles to walk watching Dancing on Ice. She may appreciate that the skill is a desirable one, but she will not attempt to imitate it because she physically cannot do it.

- **Motivation:**

The will to perform the behaviour. The rewards and punishment that follow a behaviour will be considered by the observer. If the perceived rewards outweigh the perceived costs (if there are any), then the behaviour will be more likely to be imitated by the observer. If the vicarious reinforcement is not seen to be important enough to the observer, then they will not imitate the behaviour.

3.3 Cognitive Development Theory

Piaget's (1936) theory of cognitive development explains how a child constructs a mental model of the world. He disagreed with the idea that intelligence was a fixed trait, and regarded cognitive development as a process, which occurs due to biological maturation and interaction with the environment. Piaget was employed at the Binet Institute in the 1920s, where his job was to develop French

versions of questions on English intelligence tests. He became intrigued with the reasons children gave for their wrong answers to the questions that required logical thinking. He believed that these incorrect answers revealed important differences between the thinking of adults and children.

Piaget (1936) was the first psychologist to make a systematic study of cognitive development. His contributions include a stage theory of child cognitive development, detailed observational studies of cognition in children, and a series of simple but ingenious tests to reveal different cognitive abilities. What Piaget wanted to do was not to measure how well children could count, spell or solve problems as a way of grading their I.Q. What he was more interested in was the way in which fundamental concepts like the very idea of number, time, quantity, causality, and justice and so on emerged.

Before Piaget's work, the common assumption in psychology was that children are merely less competent thinkers than adults. Piaget showed that young children think in strikingly different ways compared to adults. According to Piaget, children are born with a very basic mental structure (genetically inherited and evolved) on which all subsequent learning and knowledge are based.

Piaget's Theory Differs from Others in Several Ways:

- It is concerned with children, rather than all learners.
- It focuses on development, rather than learning per se, so it does not address learning of information or specific behaviors.
- It proposes discrete stages of development, marked by qualitative differences, rather than a gradual increase in number and complexity of behaviors, concepts, ideas, etc.

The goal of the theory is to explain the mechanisms and processes by which the infant, and then the child, develops into an individual who can reason and think using hypotheses. To Piaget, cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes because of biological maturation and environmental experience. Children construct an understanding of the world around them, and then experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment.

There are three basic components to Piaget's Cognitive Theory:

3.3.1 Schemas (building blocks of knowledge).

3.3.2 Adaptation processes that enable the transition from one stage to another (equilibrium, assimilation, and accommodation).

3.3.3 Stages of Cognitive Development:

3.3.1 Schemas

Imagine what it would be like if you did not have a mental model of your world. It would mean that you would not be able to make so much use of information from your past experience or to plan future actions. Schemas are the basic building blocks of such cognitive models and enable us to form a mental representation of the world. Piaget (1952) defined a schema as:

"A cohesive, repeatable action sequence possessing component actions that are tightly interconnected and governed by a core meaning."

In more simple terms, Piaget called the schema the basic building block of intelligent behavior, “a way of organizing knowledge”. Indeed, it is useful to think of schemas as “units” of knowledge, each relating to one aspect of the world, including objects, actions, and abstract (i.e., theoretical) concepts. Wadsworth (2004) suggests that schemata (the plural of schema) be thought of as 'index cards' filed in the brain, each one telling an individual how to react to incoming stimuli or information. When Piaget talked about the development of a person's mental processes, he was referring to increases in the number and complexity of the schemata that a person had learned. When a child's existing schemas are capable of explaining what it can perceive around it, it is said to be in a state of equilibrium, i.e., a state of cognitive (i.e., mental) balance.

Piaget emphasized the importance of schemas in cognitive development and described how they were developed or acquired. A schema can be defined as a set of linked mental representations of the world, which we use both to understand and to respond to situations. The assumption is that we store these mental representations and apply them when needed. For example, a person might have a schema about buying a meal in a restaurant. The schema is a stored form of the pattern of behavior, which includes looking at a menu, ordering food, eating it and paying the bill. This is an example of a type of schema called a 'script.' Whenever they are in a restaurant, they retrieve this schema from memory and apply it to the situation.

The schemas Piaget described tend to be simpler than this - especially those used by infants. He described how, as a child gets older, his or her schemas become more numerous and elaborate. Piaget believed that newborn babies have a small number of innate schemas, even before they have had many opportunities to experience the world. These neonatal schemas are the cognitive structures underlying innate reflexes. These reflexes are genetically programmed into us. For example, babies have a sucking reflex, which is triggered by something touching the baby's lips. A baby will suck a nipple, a comforter (dummy), or a person's finger. Piaget, therefore, assumed that the baby has a 'sucking schema.' Similarly, the grasping reflex which is elicited when something touches the palm of a baby's hand, or the rooting reflex, in which a baby will turn its head towards something which touches its cheek, are innate schemas. Shaking a rattle would be the combination of two schemas, grasping and shaking.

3.3.2 Adaptation Processes

Jean Piaget (1952; and see Wadsworth, 2004) viewed intellectual growth as a process of adaptation (adjustment) to the world. This happens through:

- **Assimilation:**

Which is using an existing schema to deal with a new object or situation.

- **Accommodation:**

This happens when the existing schema (knowledge) does not work and needs to be changed to deal with a new object or situation.

- **Equilibration:**

This force moves development along. Piaget believed that cognitive development did not progress at a steady rate, but rather in leaps and bounds.

Equilibrium occurs when a child's schemas can deal with most new information through assimilation. However, an unpleasant state of disequilibrium occurs when new information cannot be fitted into existing schemas (assimilation).

Equilibration is the force which drives the learning process as we do not like to be frustrated and will seek to restore balance by mastering the new challenge (accommodation). Once the new information is acquired, the process of assimilation with the new schema will continue until the next time we need to adjust it.

Example of Assimilation is a two-year-old child sees a man who is bald on top of his head and has long frizzy hair on the sides. To his father's horror, the toddler shouts "Clown, clown" (Siegler et al., 2003).

Example of Accommodation, in the "clown" incident, the boy's father explained to his son that the man was not a clown and that even though his hair was like a clown's, he wasn't wearing a funny costume and wasn't doing silly things to make people laugh.

With this new knowledge, the boy was able to change his schema of "clown" and make this idea fit better to a standard concept of "clown".

3.3.3 Stages of Development

Piaget proposed four stages of cognitive development which reflect the increasing sophistication of children's thought i.e.,

- **Sensorimotor stage (birth to age 2)**
- **Pre-operational stage (from age 2 to age 7)**
- **Concrete operational stage (from age 7 to age 11)**
- **Formal operational stage (age 11+ - adolescence and adulthood).**

Each child goes through the stages in the same order, and child development is determined by biological maturation and interaction with the environment. Although no stage can be missed out, there are individual differences in the rate at which children progress through stages, and some individuals may never attain the later stages. Piaget did not claim that a particular stage was reached at a certain age, although descriptions of the stages often include an indication of the age at which the average child would reach each stage.

- **Sensorimotor Stage (Birth-2 years):**

The main achievement during this stage is object permanence, knowing that an object still exists, even if it is hidden.
It requires the ability to form a mental representation (i.e., a schema) of the object.

- **Preoperational Stage (2-7 years):**

During this stage, young children can think about things symbolically. This is the ability to make one thing, a word or an object, stand for something other than itself. Thinking is still egocentric, and the infant has difficulty taking the viewpoint of others.

Concrete Operational Stage (7-11 years):

Piaget considered the concrete stage a major turning point in the child's cognitive development because it marks the beginning of logical or operational thought. This means the child can work things out internally in their head (rather than physically try things out in the real world). Children can conserve number (age 6), mass (age 7), and weight (age 9). Conservation is the understanding that something stays the same in quantity even though its appearance changes.

- **Formal Operational Stage (11 years and over):**

The formal operational stage begins at approximately age eleven and lasts into adulthood. During this time, people develop the ability to think about abstract concepts, and logically test hypotheses.

3.4 Theory of Gender Formation

Bem's Gender Formation Theory consolidated contemporary theories of sex typing by identifying the values and inherent flaws of psychoanalytic, social learning, and cognitive developmental theories. Sandra Bem (1944) has revised the cognitive developmental perspective. Bem's publication, The Lenses of Gender, sought to "render those lenses [of stereotypical and socially accepted masculine and feminine traits, visible rather than invisible, to enable us to look at the culture's gender lenses rather than through them" (Bem, 1993). She developed the lens theory of gender formation, which incorporates social learning theory. According to Bem, every society has various lenses. Lenses are the assumptions about how people should look and behave that are ingrained in social institutions and individual psyches and passed on from generation to generation. Bem asserts that three gender lenses can be found in the human societies across the world:

3.4.1 Gender Polarization

Gender polarization means that males and females are considered to be fundamentally different, and these differences, including biological and social differences, constitute an organizing principle for social life. For example, because women are able to bear and nurse children and men are not, women should remain in the home with the children.

Gender polarization may begin even before a child is born. For example, when parents know the sex of their child before the birth, they may purchase gender-appropriate clothes (pink for girls, blue for boys) and gender-appropriate

toys (dolls or stuffed animals for girls, trucks for boys). Boys and girls are treated differently even before they are born.

Sandra Bem is against gender polarization. To eliminate it, however, she suggests much more than simply encouraging males and females to develop their own gender identity, irrespective of whether it is appropriate for their sex. Bem recommends uprooting the concept of gender from all cultural institutions. Parents must equip their children with ways to organize the world around them other than through a gender lens (Renzetti & Curran, 2003).

3.4.2 Androcentrism

Androcentrism is the notion that males are superior to females and that women should be judged against the male norm. In other words, men set the standard against which women should be judged or evaluated.

3.4.3 Biological Essentialism

Biological essentialism legitimates gender polarization and androcentrism by portraying the differences between men and women as being natural and based on biology (Renzetti & Curran, 2003).

Bem suggests changing the gender lenses that are passed on from generation to generation. She recommends that parents teach children that the only difference between boys and girls is anatomical and reproductive (Renzetti & Curran, 2003). Parents must use their ability to transform the way children organize the world around them.

3.5 Relationship Between Gender Transformative Approaches and Theories

In this section of the guide, I would like to create link between sociological theories with gender transformative approaches. As previously mentioned all of the theories in detail and highlighted various approaches and component of the gender transformative approaches; from all of the given literature it is evident that GTA revolve around the praxis of socio-cultural, economic and political lives. These forces shape human behavior and determine gender roles, regulation, obligations, rights, and entitlements in the society.

3.5.1 Theory of Social Learning

Theory of social learning claims that social world provide provision for the learning of new behaviors. This leaning of new social behaviors revolves around the practices of imitation and observing others. What we learn in social setting is connected with the conative process and these cognitive processes take place with reference to social context. However, based on instruction or observations. In the process of learning reward and punishment, also play an important role and work as a catalyst to speed up the learning process.

Now if we move to the possible themes/ contents of the social learning theory that combine with cognitive theories/process. We can have following main area of debate and discussions:

1 Attention
2 Retention
3 Reproduction
4 Motivation

Now we would like to discuss these main area/theme and principles of the social learning theory upon gender normative approaches. As at the first stage of social learning theory, an individual within any given culture pay attention to the things happening in the social surroundings. The purpose behind paying this attention is to learn. As discussed in the previous section of theories, there is a strong relationship between awareness and learning. For example if a person are aware about something, then there would be quick learning. However, this learning process is also depend on the various other variables/factors likes perceptual abilities, cognitive abilities and past performance. In addition to this, behavioral factors or variable also influence learning process like relevance contents, affective, and its novelty.

Once an individual during the socialization process or through any other means get awareness and wants to reproduce observed behavior. Then, he/she would be needed to possess contents of the observed behavior. This recalling of observed behavior is called retention and based on cognitive process.

Next stage in the social learning theory comes reproduction. In the process of reproduction, an individual tries to practice the observed behavior. However, it is a complex process. For example, if a person observes something and wants to

reproduce; then he/ she would be someone else to rectify and give feedback upon his/her behavior. It is said that feedback can improve the learning.

Finally, motivation is one of the important components in social learning theory, which state that reproduction bases upon the level of motivation and an expectation - which one can have from the people. The perform behavior with reference to expectation also widen the scope of social learning theory into social identity theory. However, at the place or focus of attention will remain at the social learning theory and we will move further its application with reference to GTAs.

In the case of application of attention upon gender transformative approach, I would like to take component of awareness. In the gender transformative approaches, awareness is a tool; give an option to the people what is right and what is wrong. For example, in most of the male dominant societies if a women is not giving birth, then it is considered that such woman is infertile, without going into the medical checkup. Therefore, male neither goes for the medical check nor give their consent. Because medical check for infertility is associated with masculinity and being infertile male can challenge his masculinity. So, to break such gender typical stereotype, a gender transformative approach can be adopted to create awareness and give information that anybody can be infertile either man or women. Hence, medical consultation to get treatment of infertility should not be a question of masculinity. Once, society get awareness then they try to imitate. However, for this imitation, he/she would be needed retention. Therefore, in the given example, a male who get awareness that infertility can be in male; then he would try to acquire certain example. The retention of the observed behavior will base on such examples. Finally, I will combine two of the remaining aspects of social learning theory that are reproduction and motivation. For the reproduction of assumed behavior or informed behavior would be based on level of motivation and expectation what society will think about him. Once all the component of change work in order, then a person will go with the alternative behavior. In the case of given example he will have medical consultation for the infertility check. It means component of identity which challenge masculinity in reference to medical consultation would not be factor of hindrance for him.

As it was mentioned in one of the reports:
The principles of Social Learning can be applied to almost any SBCC program that aims to influence social behaviors, particularly behaviors that are complex or

involve interactions with other people. It may be especially useful when a particular behavior is difficult to describe, but can be explained through demonstration or modeling. Also, when adopting or practicing a particular behavior requires overcoming barriers or challenges, social learning principles can be used to demonstrate how a person can overcome those challenges and succeed. In a gender-focused program, it may be useful to identify the types of role models women find compelling and if, at all, this differs from men. (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

3.6 Glossary

- Androcentrism: Male centered notion that males are superior to females and that males and the females' experiences are the normative standard against which women should be judged.
- Biological Essentialism: A cultural lens that rationalizes and legitimizes both androcentrism and gender polarization by portraying them as the natural and inevitable products of the inherent biological difference between the sexes.
- Gender Polarization: The assumption that males and females are fundamentally different from one another, and the practice of using these differences as a central organizing principle for the social life of the society.
- Identification: A central concept of the Freudian based theory of gender socialization, the process by which boys and girls begin to unconsciously model their behavior after that of their same sex parent in their efforts to resolve their respective gender identity complexes.
- Modeling: The process by which children imitate the behavior of their same sex parent, especially if the parent rewards their imitations or is perceived by them to be warm, friendly, or powerful, a central concept of the social learning theory of gender socialization.
- Reinforcement: A cultural principle of the social learning theory of gender socialization which states that a behavior consistently followed by a reward will likely occur again, whereas a behavior followed by a punishment will rarely occur.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1. Describe the stages in child development in the light of Freud's theory of identification.

Question 2. Discuss the Social Learning Theory with Reference to Gender Analysis

Question 3. Describe the Cognitive Development Theory with examples from Pakistani culture.

Question 4. Define the Bem's Theory of Gender Formation.

Question 5. Write comprehensive note on the following:

a) Gender lenses
b) Learning gender

Further Readings

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Unit: 4

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER (PART II)

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INTRODUCTION

Gender is a complex and socially constructed concept that extends beyond biological differences to encompass cultural, political, and economic dimensions, as we have discussed in the previous unit. Theoretical approaches to gender analysis have evolved over time, shaped by various intellectual traditions, including feminism, sociology, psychology, and queer theory. Early theories emphasized biological determinism, framing gender as a natural extension of sex, whereas contemporary perspectives highlight the fluidity of gender identities and the role of social institutions in reinforcing gender norms, as discussed on unit 3.

This unit will focus on postmodern theories of gender which challenge traditional, fixed understandings of identity by emphasizing fluidity, social construction, and the instability of meaning. Unlike earlier structuralist and essentialist perspectives that viewed gender as a stable binary rooted in biological differences, postmodernist approaches, influenced by thinkers such as Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Donna Haraway, argue that gender is a performative and discursively produced category. These theories critique grand narratives that claim universal truths about gender and instead highlight how power, language, and cultural norms shape gender identities.

This unit explores the postmodern analysis of gender, focusing on key concepts such as performativity, deconstruction, and the rejection of fixed identities. By engaging with the works of leading postmodern theorists, this study seeks to illustrate how gender is constructed, destabilized, and reconfigured in contemporary society. Through this lens, gender is understood not as a biological or inherent trait but as an ongoing process shaped by discourse, media, and institutional power structures.

OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit along with suggested readings, you should be able to:

- understand the theory of gender performativity
- explain Nancy Chodorow's feminist psychoanalysis
- get an in-depth knowledge about the intersectionality concept
- analyse the concept of inclusivity

Major Topics

4.1 Judith Butler's Theory of Gender Performativity
4.2 Nancy Chodorow's Feminist Psychoanalysis
4.3 Kimberlé Crenshaw's Theory of Intersectionality

4.1 Theory of Gender Performativity

Judith Butler, a prominent philosopher and gender theorist, introduced the concept of gender performativity in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990). This theory challenges traditional understandings of gender as something innate or fixed and argues that gender is performed through repeated actions, behaviours, and societal norms. She argues that gender is not innate, but it is constructed. (Bulter, 1990). It means that gender is not something we are born with but rather something we do through social interactions and cultural expectations. It also means that from childhood, individuals learn to behave in ways that align with societal norms for "masculinity" and "femininity."

Example: Gendered Clothing and Appearance

- In many societies, baby boys are dressed in blue and baby girls in pink, reinforcing the idea that colour preferences are tied to gender. However, historically, pink was once considered a "boy's colour." (It will be discussed in coming units of this book)
- Women are often expected to wear makeup, dresses, and high heels, while men are expected to wear short hair and suits, even though these norms vary across cultures and time periods.

Example: Body Language and Social Interactions

- Women are often taught to sit with their legs crossed, take up less space, and speak softly, reinforcing femininity as submissive.
- Men are encouraged to spread out, use assertive body language, and speak confidently, reinforcing masculinity as dominant.
- These behaviours are not biologically determined but learned and reinforced through everyday interactions.

This theory further explores that gender is a performance, which we do every day. It means that:

- Just like actors perform roles on stage, people perform gender daily through their speech, clothing, gestures, and behaviours.

- These performances reinforce gender norms, making them seem natural when they are actually socially constructed.

Example: Language and Speech Patterns

- Women are more likely to use "hedging" phrases (e.g., "I think," "Maybe we could…") or high-pitched intonation at the end of sentences, making their speech sound less assertive.
- Men are encouraged to use direct, commanding language in leadership roles.
- These speech patterns are not innate but socially reinforced performances of gender.

Example: Gendered Expectations in the Workplace

- Women in leadership positions often feel pressure to act more masculine (e.g., being assertive, wearing pantsuits, avoiding emotional expressions) to be taken seriously.
- Men in caregiving roles (e.g., nursing, teaching) might feel pressure to perform masculinity by emphasizing strength or authority rather than nurture.
- These expectations show that gender performance is reinforced by social and institutional norms rather than being an inherent trait.

Judith Butler further argues that gender is not an innate or fixed identity but a performance that is continuously reinforced through repeated actions. This repetition creates the illusion of stability, making gender seem natural and unchanging when it is socially constructed and maintained through ongoing performance. It can be explained as that gender identity is maintained through repetition of behaviors over time. Because these actions are repeated so often, society comes to see them as "natural," even though they are socially imposed expectations.

Example: Butler often compares gender to a theatrical performance where individuals follow a script. She explains that: society provides the script (rules for masculinity and femininity). People perform these roles repeatedly until they seem "real." And the more the script is followed, the more natural it appears. Example is of a man who frequently performs masculinity (deep voice, assertive speech, confident posture) reinforces the belief that these traits are essential to being male. And if someone deviates from the script (e.g., a man wearing a dress), they challenge the illusion of stability, exposing gender as a construct.

Example: When a child is told “girls should be quiet” or “boys don’t cry,” they internalize these messages and repeat behaviours that align with societal expectations, reinforcing the illusion that gender is “natural.”

This theory strongly believes that since gender is a performance, it can also be disrupted or challenged. It challenges the rigid binary (means two) system of male and female and highlights how societal norms shape identity.

Criticism of Butler’s Theory

As we know that any theory cannot be without criticism, Butler’s theory has been debated:

- Some feminists argue that focusing on performativity ignores material realities, like wage gaps or violence against women.
- Others claim Butler’s writing is too abstract and difficult to apply in real-world activism.

It can be concluded that Judith Butler’s theory of gender performativity reveals that gender is not a fixed identity, but a repeated social practice shaped by norms, language, and power structures. By recognizing gender as a performance that can be challenged, Butler’s work opens the door for greater gender fluidity and inclusivity in society.

4.2 Nancy Chodorow’s Feminist Psychoanalysis

Nancy Chodorow is a feminist sociologist and psychoanalyst best known for her work on gender and the formation of identity. In her book *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), she applies psychoanalytic theory to explain how gender roles are passed down through parenting, particularly focusing on the role of mothers in shaping children's psychological development.

To understand Nancy’s point of view, you should know the concepts of Freud, which have been discussed in the previous unit. Freud argued that gender identity is shaped through the Oedipus complex (for boys) and Electra complex (for girls), which occur during the phallic stage (ages 3-6). It was argued that boys develop a strong attachment to their mother but fear castration by their father (castration anxiety). To resolve this, they identify with their father, adopting masculine traits. And girls experience "penis envy" and resentment toward their mother, eventually identifying with their mother and accepting a subordinate role.

Chodorow (1978), challenges Freud's view and argues that gender identity is not biologically fixed but socially constructed through mother-child relationships. In a nutshell, she explains that penis envy is based on Freud's masculinity norms, and she focuses on the mother-child bond as the key to gender development. She further argues that girls remain closer to their mothers because they are both female, leading them to develop stronger relational and emotional skills. Moreover, boys must separate from their mothers to develop masculinity, which leads to a more detached and independent self-concept.
Chodorow's theory is explained further as follows:

1. **The Mother-Child Relationship Shapes Gender Identity**

- Chodorow argues that gender identity is formed primarily through early childhood relationships, especially between mothers and their children.
- Because women are traditionally the primary caregivers, boys and girls experience different emotional attachments to their mothers.

Example: Girls Develop Stronger Emotional Bonds and Caregiving Traits

- A young girl spends most of her time with her mother, observing how she expresses care (e.g., cooking, comforting others, handling emotions).
- As she grows up, she naturally internalizes caregiving as part of her identity, reinforcing traditional feminine traits such as empathy and emotional connection.
- As an adult, she may feel social pressure to take on caregiving roles (e.g., becoming a teacher, nurse, or stay-at-home parent)

2. **Different Development Paths for Boys and Girls**

- **Girls**: Since girls identify with their mothers, they develop a strong emotional connection and learn to value relationships, care, and nurturing. This leads them to later take on mothering roles themselves.
- **Boys**: In order to develop a separate male identity, boys must psychologically detach from their mothers, leading them to emphasize independence, rationality, and emotional distance.

Example: **Boys Develop Independence by Separating from the Mother**

- A boy is encouraged to play with his father or other male role models, engaging in activities that emphasize strength and autonomy (e.g., sports, problem-solving).

- He is discouraged from expressing vulnerability (e.g., being told "boys don't cry" when seeking comfort from his mother).
- As a result, he learns that masculinity is associated with detachment, independence, and emotional restraint.

3. Gender Roles Are Reproduced Across Generations

- Because girls grow up identifying with their mothers and valuing emotional connections, they often become mothers themselves, repeating the cycle.
- This is how gender roles—where women are expected to be nurturing and men are expected to be independent—are passed down unconsciously from one generation to the next.

Example: Mothering Perpetuates Traditional Gender Roles

- A mother teaches her daughter how to **care for younger siblings**, reinforcing that nurturing is part of being a woman.
- She may encourage her son to be **independent and assertive**, reinforcing that masculinity is about strength and autonomy.
- This cycle continues when daughters become mothers themselves, raising their children with the same expectations.

4.3 Mothering Is Not Biological but Socially Constructed

- Chodorow challenges the idea that women are naturally better at caregiving. Instead, she argues that society conditions women to take on nurturing roles through childhood socialization.
- If fathers were equally involved in parenting, gender roles could be more balanced.

Example: Cross-Cultural Variations in Mothering

- In Western societies, mothers are often seen as the primary caregivers, while fathers are expected to be providers.
- In many indigenous cultures, caregiving is shared among extended family members, grandmothers, and community members, showing that mothering is not exclusive to biological mothers.

Example: Fathers, Men, and Non-Mothers Can Be Caregivers

- Stay-at-home fathers challenge the traditional idea that only women can be primary caregivers.
- Adoptive parents (who do not give birth) successfully form deep emotional bonds with their children, proving that caregiving is learned, not instinctive.

Example: Historical Shifts in Motherhood Expectations

- In the 19th century, upper-class women in Europe and the U.S. often had wet nurses and governesses care for their children, while today, "intensive mothering" (constant hands-on involvement) is the norm.
- During World War II, women were encouraged to work in factories, and childcare was seen as a community responsibility. After the war, traditional gender roles were reinforced, pressuring women to return home as primary caregivers.
- In modern societies, working mothers and single fathers challenge the idea that women are naturally better suited for child-rearing.

In summary, Nancy Chodorow's feminist psychoanalysis explains how gender roles are unconsciously reproduced through parenting, particularly through the mother-child bond. Her work highlights how societal expectations—not biology—shape women's caregiving roles, offering insights into how gender inequality is maintained and how it can be changed through shared parenting responsibilities.

Aspect	**Freud**	**Chodorow**
Key Process	Oedipus/Electra Complex	Mother-child relational dynamics
Cause of Gender Identity	Biological drives (castration anxiety, penis envy)	Socialization and early caregiving
Role of Mother	Secondary to the father's authority	Primary influence on gender identity
How Boys Develop Masculinity	Fear of father, repression of maternal attachment	Forced separation from mother
How Girls Develop Femininity	"Penis envy" and passive identification with mother	Continuous identification with mother
View on Gender Roles	Fixed and biologically driven	Flexible and socially constructed

Table 4.1 Key Difference between Freud and Chodorow (Source: Google image)

There is a critique on Chodorow's Theory. The critics argue that Nancy Chodorow places too much emphasis on the mother-child relationship and does not fully address broader social and economic structures that shape gender roles.

4.4 Kimberlé Crenshaw's Theory of Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a legal scholar and civil rights activist, introduced the concept of intersectionality in 1989 to explain how different forms of oppression—such as racism, sexism, classism, and ableism—intersect and create unique experiences of discrimination for marginalized individuals. Here is an explanation of intersectionality:



Figure 4.1: concept of intersectionality (source: Google images)

Multiple Social Identities Intersect

Intersectionality recognizes that individuals hold multiple overlapping identities, which shape their lived experiences. For example, a Black woman may experience discrimination differently than a white woman (due to race) or a Black man (due to gender).

Why it is important: Traditional feminist and civil rights movements often cantered the experiences of white women or Black men, ignoring how race and gender combine to create unique forms of oppression for Black women**.**

Systems of Oppression Are Interconnected

Discrimination does not happen in isolation. Racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and other forms of oppression reinforce each other. For example, a poor disabled woman of colour faces barriers in healthcare, employment, and social mobility due to the interplay of sexism, racism, classism, and ableism. Furthermore, transgender women of colour (a person who is not white) experience disproportionate violence and economic insecurity due to both transphobia and racism.

Why it matters: Social justice movements need to address oppression holistically rather than tackling issues separately.

Privilege and Oppression Coexist

A person can experience both privilege and oppression based on their intersecting identities. For instance, a wealthy white woman may face sexism in the workplace but benefits from racial and class privilege.

Why it matters: Intersectionality highlights that not all women, people of colour, and other gender orientations experience oppression in the same way.

Context Matters

Intersectional experiences change depending on location, history, and cultural context. Examples can be given as a Muslim woman wearing a hijab in France (where hijabs are banned in schools) faces different discrimination than in the U.S., where religious expression is protected. In the same manner, a Black woman in Brazil may experience racism differently than a Black woman in the U.S. due to different histories of colonization and racial mixing.

Why it matters: Social justice policies should consider specific cultural and historical contexts rather than applying one-size-fits-all solutions.

Voices from the Margins Must Be Cantered

Intersectionality emphasizes listening to and amplifying the voices of the most marginalized groups, rather than focusing on dominant perspectives. For

example, early feminism often cantered white middle-class women, ignoring the struggles of women of colour, working-class women, and individuals who have different gender orientation.

Why it matters: Effective activism requires cantering those most affected by oppression, rather than assuming all members of a group have the same experiences.

Intersectionality is a powerful framework that helps us understand how multiple social identities shape oppression and privilege. It calls for inclusive activism and policies that recognize how race, gender, class, sexuality, and other factors intersect.

Kimberlé Crenshaw took inspiration from **Black Women's Unique Struggles**. Crenshaw developed intersectionality while studying Black women's legal cases. She found that courts often failed to recognize that Black women face both racism and sexism simultaneously, treating their experiences as either just a "race" issue or a "gender" issue. This led to the exclusion of Black women's experiences in both feminist and anti-racist movements.

Real-World Examples of Intersectionality

- **Employment Discrimination:** A company hires Black men for physical labour and white women for secretarial work, but Black women are excluded from both.

- **Healthcare Inequality:** In rural areas of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), women struggle to access maternal healthcare due to cultural restrictions, lack of female doctors, and poor infrastructure. It has an impact which observes that Pakistan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates, especially among poor, rural women who cannot afford private care.

Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality theory is a groundbreaking framework that explains how different forms of discrimination interact to shape people's lived experiences. It is a crucial concept in feminist theory, anti-racism, and social justice movements worldwide.

The following case studies further explain the concept of intersectionality.

Case Study 1: COVID-19 & Health Inequalities – Women of Colour & Essential Workers

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected low-income communities, especially women of colour, due to their overrepresentation in essential jobs with fewer protections.

- Many Black and Latina women worked as nurses, grocery store clerks, and caregivers, increasing their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Undocumented immigrant women in domestic and agricultural work had no access to unemployment benefits or healthcare.
- In the U.S., Black and Indigenous people had the highest COVID-19 death rates, revealing systemic healthcare inequalities.

Case Study 2: Dalit Women & Caste-Based Violence – India

In India, Dalit (formerly "untouchable") women face discrimination based on caste, gender, and class, making them more vulnerable to violence and economic marginalization (IDSN 2025; Kumar 2021).

- Dalit women are more likely to be victims of sexual violence due to their lower caste status, as perpetrators often go unpunished.
- Upper-caste women may face gender discrimination, but they are less likely to experience police neglect when reporting sexual assault.
- Many Dalit women work as manual scavengers (cleaning human waste) due to caste-based labor discrimination, limiting their economic mobility.

Case Study 3: Transgender Rights & Class Struggles – The Khawaja Sira Community

Pakistan officially recognizes transgender people (Khawaja Siras) as a third gender, but they still face violence, economic marginalization, and social exclusion (Azhar et al., 2024).

- **Gender Identity:** Many Khawaja Siras are ostracized by their families and forced into begging or sex work.
- **Class:** Most transgender individuals come from low-income backgrounds, limiting their ability to access education and employment.
- **Religious & Cultural Stigma:** Conservative beliefs and practices often lead to rejection, harassment, and police brutality.
- **Legal Barriers:** Despite a 2018 law granting transgender rights, enforcement is weak, and discrimination remains rampant.

Case Study 4: Women in Informal Labor – Gender, Class & Economic Exploitation

Millions of women in Pakistan work in informal sectors (domestic work, agriculture, garment industry), where they lack labour rights, healthcare, and social protection (Zulfiqar 2021; Ijaz 2019).

- **Gender:** Women are paid significantly lower wages than men for the same work.
- **Class:** Poor rural women are more vulnerable to exploitative labour conditions.
- **Ethnicity & Religion:** Christian and Hindu women in domestic work often face double discrimination based on religion and class.
- **Lack of Legal Protection:** Most informal workers are not covered by labour laws, leaving them with no job security or benefits.

Intersectionality theory is not also without criticism. Here is the criticism:

- Some argue that intersectionality is too broad and difficult to apply in legal and policy frameworks.
- Others believe it focuses too much on identity politics, rather than addressing broader economic or structural changes.

However, many scholars and activists see intersectionality as a necessary tool for creating more inclusive social justice movements.

Self-Assessment Questions

Q. 1 What does Judith Butler mean by "gender performativity"? How does it differ from traditional understandings of gender? Can you provide an example of how gender is "performed" in everyday life?

Q. 2 How does Butler critique the idea that gender is a fixed, natural category?

Q. 3 What role do repeat social actions play in the construction of gender identity, according to Butler?

Q. 4 In what ways does gender performativity relate to power structures and social norms? Give clear examples to make your answer argumentative.

Q. 5 Have you ever noticed moments in your life where you "performed" gender in a way that aligned with or challenged societal expectations?

Q. 6 How would Chodorow’s theory explain contemporary debates on parenting and gender-neutral child-rearing? Give examples.

Q. 7 Apply Chodorow’s feminist psychoanalysis to the phenomenon of single-parent households in Pakistan. Take some case studies and explain in detail.

Q. 8 How does Chodorow's theory intersect with intersectional feminism, particularly in considering race and class?

Q. 9 Do you think Chodorow's theory remains relevant today? Why or why not?

Q. 10 What is intersectionality? Can you give an example of how two people of the same gender may experience discrimination differently due to other aspects of their identity?

Q. 11 Why is it important to consider multiple aspects of identity (e.g., race, gender, class) when analyzing oppression? How does intersectionality relate to your own identity and experiences?

Q. 12 How can intersectionality be applied to policymaking to create more inclusive solutions for marginalized communities? Take some case studies and explain in detail.

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Unit: 5

FEMINIST MOVEMENT/FEMINISM

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INTRODUCTION

Feminism has a history as long as women's subordination. Sociological theory traditionally holds the view that gender differentiation is inevitable and that there is no such thing as gender inequality. Social theories of gender arise largely from the practical concerns of the women's movement rather than from attempts to complete theoretical projects in sociology. These units review contemporary contributions to feminism.

OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the evolution and different waves of feminism.
- differentiate between theories of gender difference, inequality, and oppression.
- understand the impact of historical and contemporary feminist movements.
- discuss the contributions of key feminist scholars and their theories.

Major Topics

5.1 Feminism
5.2 Waves of Feminism
5.3 Theories of Feminism

5.1 Feminism

Feminism is a multifaceted social and political movement dedicated to advocating for the rights and equality of women in relation to men while challenging entrenched historical and systemic inequalities that have long marginalized women. At its core, feminism seeks to confront and dismantle patriarchy, an overarching system that perpetuates gender-based discrimination and restricts women's opportunities across various domains, including education, employment, politics, and personal autonomy. This struggle involves not only advocating for equal rights but also addressing the underlying power structures that sustain gender inequality.

Historically, feminism has evolved through several distinct waves, each focusing on different dimensions of women's liberation and equality. The first wave, emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was primarily concerned with securing basic legal rights for women, including the right to vote and property rights. The second wave, which gained momentum in the 1960s and 1970s, broadened the scope to address issues of workplace inequality, reproductive rights, and societal norms regarding gender roles. This wave highlighted the need for comprehensive changes in laws and attitudes that affect women's lives.

The third wave of feminism, emerging in the 1990s, introduced concepts of diversity and intersectionality, emphasizing that women's experiences are shaped not only by gender but also by race, class, sexual orientation, and other factors. This wave sought to address the disparities and inequalities faced by women from various backgrounds, recognizing that the struggle for gender equality must be inclusive and considerate of intersecting forms of oppression.

The fourth wave of feminism, driven by digital activism and social media platforms, has brought contemporary issues to the forefront, such as combating sexual harassment, promoting body positivity, and advocating for gender identity

rights. This wave leverages technology to amplify voices, mobilize support, and challenge injustices in real-time, highlighting how feminism adapts to new contexts and technologies.

Through its evolving forms and diverse approaches, feminism aims to create a more just and equitable society where individuals, regardless of gender, can achieve their full potential and live free from discrimination and prejudice. The movement continues to push for systemic change and societal transformation, striving to ensure that gender equality is not just a theoretical ideal but a lived reality for all.

We are going t explore different waves of feminism in detail.

5.2 Waves of Feminism

Feminism has evolved over time, marked by distinct waves that reflect changing priorities, strategies, and social contexts. Here are the main waves of feminism:

5.2.1 First Wave

The first wave of feminism took root in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK), starting in the mid-19th century. At this time, the main objective for women was to attain legal rights. The Seneca Falls convention of 1848 marks the beginning of the American first wave. This was the first women's rights convention taking place in the US, whose attendants were comprised of many abolitionists as well. In the beginning, equal property rights and the abolishment of a husband's ownership of his wife stood at the forefront. Towards the end of the 19th century, the focus shifted to demanding women's suffrage, with the hope that the right to vote would preface access to further rights. Many advocates in the US, especially women of colour (a person who is not white) such as Sojourner Truth or Maria Stewart, fought for this to be paralleled with universal suffrage. However, the established feminist movement, members of which include Susan B. Anthony, ignored these voices and instrumentalized racist argumentation for its own cause, for example after the 15th Amendment of 1870, which (theoretically) gave voting rights to African American men, causing outrage among many white suffragettes.

The first wave came to a close in around 1920 when some white women (of a certain age and economic background) had been granted the right to vote in the US and the UK.

5.2.2 Second Wave

The second wave is said to have begun in 1963, catalysed by the publishing of Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique, a work that gained remarkable reach in the US. It argues, contrary to the 1950s female stereotype, that women are not fulfilled by caretaking, marriage or housework duties, and ties into the statement that "the personal is political", which has become a representative slogan of the second wave.

Over the next two decades, Western feminist movements achieved legislative milestones in terms of reproductive rights, the right to equal pay and equal education. It fought for women to possess their own bank accounts without a husband's approval, and denounced domestic violence and sexual harassment. Sexual violence was a central theme to the movement, and in the US there were also campaigns to eliminate forced sterilizations of people of color and people with disabilities.

The second wave managed to mobiliser large groups for protest and activism, which fueled the trope of the "angry feminist", brought about the myth of bra-burning, and portrayed feminists as hysterical women who were falling out of line.

The end of the second wave is marked by the feminist sex wars, which refer to the divisions that appeared in the movement with regard to polarising positions on sexuality, including pornography, erotica, and prostitution between anti-porn feminists and sex-positive feminist groups.

5.2.3 Third Wave

The third wave begins in the 1990s, with the Anita Hill case of 1991 as a distinctive element of its upsurge. Anita Hill, an African-American law professor, testified about facing sexual harassment by Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, marking one of the earliest public debates on workplace harassment.

New currents of feminist thought have emerged during this wave, such as intersectionality, sex positivity, vegetarian ecofeminism, transfeminism, and postmodern feminism. Philosopher Judith Butler is considered a central figure of the third wave, as she defends the differentiation between sex and gender, strengthening the support of trans-rights. It was during the third wave that Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality flourished, giving way to a new understanding of the intersections of different systems of oppression.

Lastly, riot girl music groups emerged, giving rise to a subculture of punk feminism and contrasting the previous wave with reclamation of femininity. While there are many claims that only these first three waves of feminism exist, meaning that the 3rd wave is still ongoing, others argue the third gave way to a fourth wave in the 2010s.

5.2.4 Fourth Wave

The fourth wave of feminism is distinguished by its deep engagement with media and its strategic use of online platforms to advocate for social change. Central to this wave is the promotion of feminist causes through digital channels, particularly social media, which has become a powerful tool for raising awareness and mobilizing action. This wave leverages the internet to address and challenge issues such as rape culture, body shaming, and other forms of gender-based discrimination. Campaigns and hashtags like #MeToo and #YesAllWomen have become emblematic of this era, catalyzing global conversations and fostering solidarity among women and marginalized groups.

One of the most significant impacts of the fourth wave is its transformation of pop culture, which resonates strongly with young girls, women, and non-binary individuals around the world. The widespread use of social media has given rise to vibrant online activist spaces where issues related to feminism are discussed, debated, and addressed in real-time. This digital activism has not only amplified feminist voices but also facilitated the formation of supportive communities and networks that transcend geographical boundaries.

While the fourth wave continues to build on the achievements of the third wave, such as advocating for gender equality and challenging systemic sexism, it distinguishes itself through its emphasis on sex-positivity and body-positivity. This wave promotes a more inclusive understanding of sexual autonomy and diverse body types, advocating for the acceptance and celebration of different forms of sexual expression and physical appearance. By reinforcing women's empowerment and agency, the fourth wave seeks to create a more nuanced and supportive environment for all individuals, particularly those who have been historically marginalized or misrepresented.

Additionally, the fourth wave is often perceived as a response to post-feminism, a perspective that argues gender equality has already been achieved and therefore views feminist activism as outdated or unnecessary. In contrast, fourth-wave feminism challenges this notion by highlighting ongoing issues and disparities that persist despite formal advances in gender equality. It underscores the need for continued activism and reform, acknowledging that the struggles for justice and equality are far from complete. Through its innovative use of technology and its commitment to addressing contemporary issues, the fourth wave represents a dynamic and evolving force in the ongoing quest for gender justice.

5.2.5 Fifth Wave

The fifth wave of feminism remains one of the most contentious and debated phases in feminist theory, with ongoing discussions about its existence and defining characteristics. Emerging around 2015, this wave is associated with a surge in digital challenges, including the proliferation of fake news, online harassment, and the activities of internet trolls. Proponents argue that these developments have served as a catalyst for a more organized and action-oriented form of feminism, prompting a strategic response from feminist groups to counteract these negative online phenomena.

The fifth wave is often depicted as a departure from the individualistic and personal focus of the previous wave, instead emphasizing collective action and large-scale social change. This shift is seen in the movement's increased focus on

systemic issues and its broader ambitions for societal transformation. Unlike earlier waves, which may have centered more on personal empowerment and individual rights, the fifth wave seeks to address structural injustices and enact significant reforms across various institutions and societal structures.

Additionally, some advocates of fifth-wave feminism align it with anti-capitalist and radical positions. This includes calls for defunding the police, abolishing prisons, and challenging the broader capitalist system that is seen as perpetuating inequality and injustice. These positions reflect a commitment to addressing systemic issues that intersect with gender, such as economic exploitation and state violence, and represent an effort to reframe feminist activism within a broader context of social and economic justice.

While the fifth wave's precise contours remain debated, its proponents emphasize the importance of adapting feminist strategies to contemporary challenges. This includes leveraging digital tools for organizing, advocating for systemic change, and confronting new forms of oppression. The ongoing debate about the fifth wave underscores the dynamic nature of feminist theory and its ability to evolve in response to emerging social and political contexts.

5.3 Theories of Feminism

5.3.1 Theories of Gender Difference

Although we come into this world with the biological equipment of a male or female, these physical organs do not determine what we shall be like as a male or female. Whether or not we defer to members of the opposite sex is not an automatic result of our particular sexual equipment but is due to what we learn is proper for us because of the particular biological differences we possess. This learning process is called sex role socialization. Our gender extends into almost every area of our lives, even into situations for which it may be quite irrelevant. Social theories of gender arise largely from the practical concerns of the women's movement rather than from attempts to complete theoretical projects in sociology-gender theory is largely feminist theory. Unlike other ideologies, feminism docs not drive its theoretical or conceptual base from any single theoretical formulation. However, functionalists maintain that gender differentiation has contributed to

overall social stability. Sociologists Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales (1955) argue that in order to function more efficiently the family requires two adults who will specialize in particular roles.

The “instrumental role" is usually taken by the father and the “expressive role is usually taken by the mother. For Parsons, the fat of instrumental-expressive differentiation is not problematic. However, there remains the difficulty of why, on his assumption, men should universally be the instrumental leader and women the expressive leaders. His explanation is biological. However, Parson is not content to let the matter rest at the level of biology. He moves on to analyze the socialization processes, which produce gender differences. Socialization theories of gender often seem to suggest that a fairly permanent gendered way of life may be put in place. These theories say nothing about the strains placed on modern women who want to play an instrumental role or on men who would prefer to play an expressive one. However, a functionalist analysis does offer a plausible explanation of how traditional gender roles and sexual inequalities arose in the first place. Theories of biological explanation and cultural feminism arc best examples of gender differences.

5.3.2 Theories of Gender Inequality

The most extreme display of social inequality is power systematically used to destroy other people. Four themes characterize the theories of gender inequality. First, men and women are situated in a society unequally, men possess more power and resources than women. Man has relatively greater access to wealth, power and prestige. He can earn more money, control more of his environment, and experience a range of careers and other opportunities that are beyond the reach of most women. Many other aspects of daily life reveal and reinforce the inequality of the sexes. The most obvious is the names by which people are known and the titles by which they address each other. A married woman replaces her last name with that of her husband, rather than the other way around. Married or not a man is known only as Mr., but until recently a woman had to be known as either Miss or Mrs-a public indication of whether or not she was already a man's property.

Second, this inequality is based on the structure of the society, which places males in controlling positions not from any biological or personality differences

between women and men. Modern theorists argue that men can enjoy superior status only if women have inferior status, and the existing gender role patterns allow them to maintain their political, social and economic privileges. It means that the dominant group benefits from the existing arrangement and has little motivation to change it. Since the cultural arrangements of any society always reflect the interests of the dominant group, gender roles continue to reinforce the pattern of male dominance.

Third, it is claimed that women are situationally less empowered than men to realize the need they share with men for self-actualization. Studies show that up to 96 percent of all interruptions in cross-sex conversations are initiated by men. Men are more likely than women to change topics chosen by members of the opposite sex, and to validate their own contributions.

Fourth, all inequality theories assume that both women and men will respond fairly easily to more democratic social structures and situations. In other words, they assert that it is possible to change the situation. In this re theories of gender inequality contrast with the theory of gender differences. For the explanation of gender inequality please study Liberal feminism and Marxian feminism.

5.3.3 Theories of Oppression

Sociologists concerned with gender oppression often focus on the dynamics of power, particularly how dominant groups use their power to oppress those with less power. Globally, gender serves as a universal basis for categorizing individuals into hierarchical groups, with men historically occupying the dominant position. This power imbalance has led to the development of practices and social structures designed to maintain women's subordination and control. Theories of gender oppression generally portray women’s predicament as the result of a direct power relationship in which men have a vested interest in perpetuating women's oppression.

Despite substantial evidence of systemic gender-based oppression, such as the historical practices of foot binding in China, sati in India, and female genital mutilation in various parts of Africa, some people still struggle to acknowledge the

reality of women's subordination. These practices highlight the widespread acceptance and normalization of women's oppression across different cultures and historical periods. For theories of gender oppression, women's experiences are characterized by being used, controlled, subjugated, and oppressed by men, a pattern of domination that is deeply embedded in patriarchal systems.

The concept of patriarchy, which describes this system of male dominance, was first articulated in a significant way by sociologist Patrick Colquhoun Maine in his 1861 work, *Ancient Law*. Maine introduced the term "patriarchy" to describe a societal structure in which family units were governed by male authority, with women subjected to the control and discipline of their husbands without legal or state protections. Maine's analysis posited that prior to the development of modern legal systems, societies were universally patriarchal, reinforcing male authority and the subjugation of women.

In contemporary feminist theory, gender differences and inequalities are often seen as by-products of this entrenched patriarchal system. Theories of gender oppression encompass several major variants, each offering a distinct perspective on the nature and mechanisms of female subordination. These include:

1. **Psychoanalytic Feminism**: This variant explores how gender identity and gender roles are shaped by early psychological development and family dynamics. It examines how internalized beliefs about gender contribute to the maintenance of patriarchal structures.

2. **Radical Feminism**: Radical feminists argue that patriarchy is the root cause of all forms of gender-based oppression. They advocate for a radical overhaul of societal structures and norms to eradicate patriarchal control and create a more equitable society.

3. **Socialist Feminism**: This approach combines insights from feminist theory and Marxist analysis, focusing on the intersection of capitalism and patriarchy. Socialist feminists emphasize how economic exploitation and gender oppression are intertwined, advocating for both economic and gender justice.

Each of these theoretical frameworks contributes to a comprehensive understanding of gender oppression, highlighting the complex ways in which power, social structures, and economic systems intersect to perpetuate inequality.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question .1 What are the key differences between the waves of feminism?

Question .2 Why is theory of oppression important in understanding feminism. Discuss in detail with examples.

Question .3 How do feminist movements influence societal change?

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Unit: 6

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE OF GENDER (THEORIES)

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INTRODUCTION

This unit begin with some definitions of feminism. Feminism has a history as long as women's subordination. Traditionally, sociological theory holds the view that gender differentiation is inevitable and that there is no such thing as gender inequality. Social theories of gender arise largely from the practical concerns of women's movement rather from attempts to complete theoretical projects in sociology. This unit reviews the four feminist approaches.

Cultural feminism is unique among theories analyzed here in that it is less focused on explaining the origins of difference and more on exploring and even celebrating the social value of women's distinctive ways of being, that is, of the ways in which women are different from men.

Other perspective known as liberal feminism, views gender inequality as simply a form of discrimination. Liberal feminists maintain that gender inequality is produced by unequal access to civil rights and certain social resources, such as education and employment, on the basis of sex. Missing from the discussion is any clear cut analysis of why such opportunities became blocked in the first place, but this perspective nevertheless has important policy implications. The concern of liberal feminist is to provide all individuals with a chance to succeed, regardless of their sex. This may be accomplished through protection of the rights of individuals. If each person is given the same chance to achieve his or her goals, the failure will be the product of personal inadequacies, not socially imposed one. The liberal feminist perspective underlies many mainstream programmes and policies aimed at ending sex based discrimination, including laws prohibiting sex discrimination in the workplace.

In contrast, socialist feminists take issue with the notion of the primacy of social class inequality and point out that some forms of gender operation curt across class boundaries. Socialist feminists maintain that capitalism and patriarchy are interdependent systems, consequently both must be overthrown if gender inequality is to be eliminated (Harmann 1984) "The essence of socialist feminism is seen in two major points. First, the mode and relation of production and reproduction are interconnected, indeed, inseparable. And, second, gender class and race intersect in ways that result in important differences in life experiences in both the productive and reproductive realms for persons" (Danner 1989).

Finally, radical feminism sees women operation as primary relative to all other operations and maintains that gender inequality is rooted well as in the structure of social institutions. Sexism, must be addressed not only in the public sphere but also in the private sphere. Both are seen as arenas of political struggle (Crowley and Himmelwelt 1992, Jagger and Rothernberg 1984). Some radical feminists go so far as to advocate separatism recommending the establishment of female only communities free of male dominance, Radical feminism has been criticized for ignoring the significant differences in power and privilege among various groups of women, such as those between white women and women of color (Crowley and Himmelweit 1992, Danner 1989, King 1988).

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit along with study material, you should be able to:

- what is cultural feminism
- explain the liberal feminism
- discuss the socialist feminism
- describe radical feminism

Major Topics

6.1 Cultural Feminism
6.2 Liberal Feminism
6.3 Socialist Feminism
6.4 Radical Feminism
6.5 Feminism and Gender Transformative Approaches
6.6 Glossary

6.1 Cultural Feminism

Cultural feminism is unique among theories analyzed here in that it is less focused on explaining the origins of difference and more on exploring and even celebrating the social value of women's distinctive ways of being, that is, of the ways in which women are different from men. This approach has allowed cultural feminism to side step rather than resolve problems posed by the essentialist thesis. The essentialist argument of immutable gender difference first was used against women in male patriarchal discourse to claim that women were inferior to men and that this natural inferiority explained their social subordination. However, that argument was reversed by some First Wave feminists who created a theory of cultural feminism, which extols the positive aspects of what is seen as "the female character" or "feminine personality." Theorists such as Margaret Fuller, Frances Willard, Jane Addams, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman were proponents of a cultural feminism that argued that in the governing of the state, society needed such women's virtues as cooperation, caring, pacifism, and nonviolence in the settlement of conflicts (Deegan and Hill, 1998; Donovan, 1985; Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley, 1998).

This tradition has continued to the present day in arguments about women's distinctive standards for ethical judgment (Day, 2000; Gilligan, 1982; Held, 1993), about a mode of "caring attention" in women's consciousness (Fisher, 1995; Reiger, 1999; Ruddick, 1980), about a female style of communication (M. Crawford, 1995; Tannen, 1990, 1993, 1994), about women's capacity for openness to emotional experience (Beutel and Marini, 1995; Mirowsky and Ross, 1995), and about women's lower levels of aggressive behavior and greater capacity for creating peaceful coexistence (Forcey, 2001; Ruddick, 1994; Wilson and Musick, 1997).

The theme from cultural feminism most current in contemporary literature is that developed from Carol Gilligan's argument that women operate out of a different method of moral reasoning than men. Gilligan contrasts these two ethical styles as "the ethic of care," which is seen as female and focuses on achieving outcomes where all parties feel that their needs are noticed and responded to, and the "ethic of justice," which is seen as male and focuses on protecting the equal rights of all parties (Gilligan and Attanucci, 1988). Although much research is concerned with whether there are gender differences in people's appeal to these two ethics, the more lasting influence of this research lies in the idea that an ethic of care is a moral position in the world (Orme, 2002; Reitz-Pustejovsky, 2002; F. Robinson, 2001). Despite criticism (Alcoff, 1988; Alolo, 2006) cultural feminism has wide popular appeal because it suggests that women's ways of being and knowing may be a healthier template for producing a just society than those of an androcentric culture.

6.2 Liberal Feminism

The major expression of gender inequality theory is liberal feminism, which argues that women may claim equality with men on the basis of an essential human capacity for reasoned moral agency, that gender inequality is the result of a sexist patterning of the division of labor, and that gender equality can be produced by transforming the division of labor through the repatterning of key institutions—law, work, family, education, and media (Bem, 1993; Friedan, 1963; Lorber, 1994; Pateman, 1999; A. Rossi, 1964; Schaeffer, 2001).

Historically the first element in the liberal feminist argument is the claim for gender equality. This claim was first politically articulated in the Declaration of Sentiments drafted at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 with the express purpose of paralleling and expanding the Declaration of Independence to include women. It opens with the revisionist line "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all man *and women* are created equal" [italics added], changes the list of grievances to focus on women's state, and concludes with a call for women to do whatever is required to gain equal rights with men. In its arguments, the Declaration of Sentiments let the women's movement lay claim to the intellectual discourses of the Enlightenment, the American and French revolutions, and the abolitionist movement. It claimed for women the rights accorded to all human beings under natural law, on the basis of the human capacity for reason and moral agency;

asserted that laws which denied women their right to happiness were "contrary to the great precept of nature and of no . . . authority"; and called for change in law and custom to allow women to assume their equal place in society.

The denial of those rights by governments *instituted by men* violates natural law and is the tyrannical working out of multiple practices of sexism. The radical nature of this foundational document is that it conceptualizes the woman not in the context of home and family but as an autonomous individual with rights in her own person (DuBois, 1973/1995). Liberal feminism, thus, rests on the beliefs that (1) all human beings have certain essential features—capacities for reason, moral agency, and self-actualization—(2) the exercise of these capacities can be secured through legal recognition of universal rights, (3) the inequalities between men and women assigned by sex are social constructions having no basis in "nature," and (4) social change for equality can be produced by an organized appeal to a reasonable public and the use of the state.

Contemporary liberal feminism has expanded to include a global feminism that confronts racism in North Atlantic societies and works for "the human rights of women" everywhere. And this discourse has continued to express many of its foundational statements in organizational documents such as the National Organization for Women's Statement of Purpose and the Beijing Declaration. These organizational statements of purpose rely on an informing theory of human equality as a right that the state—local, national, international—must respect. These arguments are being freshly invoked in debates with the political right over reproductive freedom (Bordo, 1993; Solinger, 1998), in debates with postmodernists over the possibility and utility of formulating principles of rights (K. Green, 1995; A. Phillips, 1993; P. Williams, 1991), and in feminist considerations of the gendered character of liberal democratic theory and practice (Haney, 1996; Hirschmann and Di Stefano, 1996; A. Phillips, 1993; Thistle, 2002).

In sociology, contemporary liberal feminism is in part focused on the intellectual project of defining gender as a structure (Ferree, Lorber, and Hess, 1999; Lorber, 1994; Martin, 2004; Risman, 2004). Risman (2004:432) contrasts this approach with past analyses that have explained gender in terms of social structure (such as those of institutional placement discussed above under "Gender Difference"):

While structural perspectives have been applied to gender in the past . . ., there has been a fundamental flaw in these applications. Generic structural theories applied to gender presume that if women and men were to experience identical structural conditions and role expectations, empirically observable gender differences would disappear. Nevertheless, [. . .] a structural perspective on gender is accurate only if we realize that gender itself is a structure deeply embedded in society.

Risman describes gender as a highly complex structure that patterns human behavior at three levels individual, cultural/interactional, and institutional (2004:437). From this perspective, the defining social effect of gender is that it is "a socially constructed stratification system" (2004:430). Liberal feminism sees that gender as a system of stratification produces a gendered division of labor, an organization of society into public and private spheres, and a cultural dimension of sexist ideology. The sexual division of labor in modern societies divides production in terms of both gender and spheres denoted as "public" and "private." Women are given primary responsibility for the private sphere. Men are given privileged access to the public sphere (which liberal feminists see as the locus of the true rewards of social life— money, power, status, freedom, opportunities for growth and self-worth). The fact that women have what access they do to the public sphere is, of course, one triumph of the women's movement—and of liberal feminism—as is the fact that women feel they can make some demands on men to assist in the work of the private sphere. The two spheres constantly interact in the lives of women (more than they do for men), and both spheres are still shaped by patriarchal ideology and sexism, which also are pervasive in contemporary mass media (Blakely, 2008; Press, 2009).

On the one hand, women find their experience within the public sphere of education, work, politics, and public space still limited by practices of discrimination, marginalization, and harassment (Benokraitis, 1997; Gardner, 1995; Hagan and Kay, 1995; Reskin and Padovic, 1994; Ridgeway, 1997). On the other hand, in the private sphere, they find themselves in a "time bind" as they return home from paid employment to "a second shift" of home and childcare infused by an ideology of intensive mothering (Hochschild, 1989, 1997; McDowell, 2008; Shelton, 2000). These pressures on women work interactively in complex ways—and one feature of contemporary feminist theory is its attempts to

understand these interactions. Women's ability to compete in career and profession is hindered by the demands of the private sphere (Waldfogel, 1997).

The public sphere "ideal worker norm" (Williams, 2000), which assumes the life schedule available to the typical male intensifies the stress of home commitments by shrinking women's resources of time and energy which in turn increase the demands on them for crisis management at home (Hochschild, 1997). Sexism's link of women to the private sphere activities of caregiving, emotion management, and the maintenance of routine means that women are expected to do this additional work in the public sphere, being frequently tracked into underremunerated jobs in which these "womanly" skills are commodified and marketed (Adkins, 1995; Pierce, 1995). This sexist patterning of work and home puts the single mother at tremendous economic risk and is one factor in the increasing "feminization of poverty" (Edin and Lein, 1997; K. Harris, 1996; Hays, 2003).

A recurring theme in liberal feminist analysis is the problem of achieving equality in marriage. This theme is given its classic formulation in Jessie Bernard's study *The Future of Marriage* (1972/1982). Bernard analyzes marriage as being at one and the same time a cultural system of beliefs and ideals, an institutional arrangement of roles and norms, and a complex of interactional experiences for individual women and men. Culturally, marriage is idealized as the destiny and source of fulfillment for women; a mixed blessing of domesticity, responsibility, and constraint for men; and for American society as a whole an essentially egalitarian association between husband and wife. Institutionally, marriage empowers the role of husband with authority and with the freedom—indeed, the obligation—to move beyond the domestic setting; it meshes the idea of male authority with sexual prowess and male power; and it mandates that wives be compliant, dependent, self-emptying, and essentially centered on the activities and demands of the isolated domestic household. Experientially, then, there are two marriages in any institutional marriage: the man's marriage, in which the husband holds to the belief of being constrained and burdened, while experiencing what the norms dictate—authority, independence, and a right to domestic, emotional, and sexual service by the wife; and the woman's marriage, in which the wife affirms the cultural belief of fulfillment, while experiencing normatively mandated powerlessness and dependence, an obligation to provide domestic, emotional, and

sexual services, and a gradual "dwindling away" of the independent young person she was before marriage.

The results of all this are to be found in the data that measure human stress. *Married* women, whatever their claims to fulfillment, and *unmarried* men, whatever their claims to freedom, rank high on all stress indicators, including heart palpitations, dizziness, headaches, fainting, nightmares, insomnia, and fear of nervous breakdown. *Unmarried* women, whatever their sense of social stigma and *married* men rank low on all the stress indicators. Marriage, then, is good for men and bad for women and will cease to be so unequal in its impact only when couples feel free enough from the prevailing institutional constraints to negotiate the kind of marriage that best suits their individual needs and personalities. Recent studies have suggested that Bernard's analysis still holds for most marriages (Dempsey, 2002; Steil, 1997) but that some couples are achieving, through dedicated effort, the liberal feminist ideal of egalitarian marriage (P. Schwartz, 1994).

Liberal feminists' agenda for change is consistent with their analyses of the basis for claiming equality and the causes of inequality: they wish to eliminate gender as an organizing principle in the distribution of social "goods," and they are willing to invoke universal principles in their pursuit of equality (Sallee, 2008). Some recent writings even argue for the elimination of gender categories themselves (Lorber, 2000, 2001). Liberal feminists pursue change through law—legislation, litigation, and regulation—and through appeal to the human capacity for reasoned moral judgments, that is, the capacity of the public to be moved by arguments for fairness. They argue for equal educational and economic opportunities; equal responsibility for the activities of family life; the elimination of sexist messages in family, education, and mass media; and individual challenges to sexism in daily life. Liberal feminists have worked through legislative change to ensure equality in education and to bar job discrimination; they have monitored regulatory agencies charged with enforcing this legislation; they have mobilized to have sexual harassment in the workplace legally defined as "job discrimination"; and they have demanded both "pay equity" (equal pay for equal work) and "comparable worth" (equal pay for work of comparable value) (Acker, 1989; England, 1992; R. Rosenberg, 1992).

For liberal feminists, the ideal gender arrangement would be one in which each individual acting as a free and responsible moral agent chooses the lifestyle most suitable to her or him and has that choice accepted and respected, be it for housewife or househusband, unmarried careerist or part of a dual-income family, childless or with children, heterosexual or homosexual. Liberal feminists see this ideal as one that would enhance the practice of freedom and equality, central cultural ideals in America. Liberal feminism, then, is consistent with the dominant American ethos in its basic acceptance of democracy and capitalism, its reformist orientation, and its appeal to the values of individualism, choice, responsibility, and equality of opportunity.

6.3 Socialist Feminism

The theoretical project of socialist feminism develops around three goals: (1) to achieve a critique of the distinctive yet interrelated oppressions of patriarchy and capitalism from a standpoint in women's experience, (2) to develop explicit and adequate methods for social analysis out of an expanded understanding of historical materialism, and (3) to incorporate an understanding of the significance of ideas into a materialist analysis of the determination of human affairs. Socialist feminists have set themselves the formal project of achieving both a synthesis of and theoretical.

Radical feminism, as discussed above, is a critique of patriarchy. Marxian feminism, described here, has traditionally brought together Marxian class analysis and feminist social protest. But this amalgam—portrayed as an uneasy marriage (Hartmann, 1981; Shelton and Agger, 1993)—often produced not an intensified theory of gender.

Oppression but a more muted statement of gender inequality as women's concerns were grafted onto, rather than made equal partners in, the critique of class oppression. While pure Marxian feminism is a relatively dormant theory in contemporary American feminism, it remains important as an influence on socialist feminism. Its foundation was laid by Marx and Engels (see Chapter 2). Their major concern was social class oppression, but they occasionally turned their attention to gender oppression, most famously in *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (written by Engels in 1884 from extensive notes made by Marx in the year immediately preceding his death in 1883). We briefly summarize this book

because it gives a good introduction to the classic Marxian theory of gender oppression and to the method of historical materialism.

The major argument of *The Origins* is that woman's subordination results not from her biology, which is presumably immutable, but from social relations that have a clear and traceable history and that presumably can be changed. In the context of nineteenth century thinking about gender, this was a radical, indeed a feminist, argument.

The relational basis for women's subordination lies in the family, an institution aptly named from the Latin word for *servant,* because the family as it exists in complex societies is overwhelmingly a system in which men command women's services. Although the ideology of contemporary societies treats family as a fundamental and universal feature of social life, Engels and Marx use archaeological and anthropological evidence to show that the family is a fairly recent relational invention, that for much of prehistory men and women lived in kin structures in which women enjoyed relative autonomy primarily because they had an independent economic base as gatherers, crafters, storers, and distributors of essential materials. The factor that destroyed this type of social system, producing what Engels calls "the world historic defeat of the female sex" (Engels, 1884/1970:87), was an economic one, specifically the replacement of hunting and gathering by herding and farming economies in which men's resources of strength, mobility, and a technology derived from their earlier hunting roles gave them a systematic advantage over women. This period saw the invention of the concept of *property,* the idea and reality of a male class claiming as its own the communal resources for economic production. In these new economies, men as property owners needed both a compliant labor force—be it of slaves, captives, women wives, children—and heirs who would serve as a means of preserving and passing on property. Thus emerged the first *familia,* a master and his slave-servants, wife-servants, children-servants. Since then, the exploitation of labor has developed into increasingly.

Complex structures of domination, most particularly class relations, and the family has evolved along with historical transformations of economic and property systems into an embedded and dependent institution, reflecting all the injustices of the economy and consistently enforcing the subordination of women. Engels and Marx conclude that

only with the destruction of property rights through class revolution will women attain freedom of social, political, economic, and personal action.

Locating the origin of patriarchy in the emergence of property relations subsumes women's oppression under the general framework of Marxian class analysis. "Property"—understood not as personal possessions but as ownership of the resources necessary for social production (the means of production)—is the basis of class division because it creates a situation in which some groups are able to claim that they own the means of production while other groups work to do the producing. Marxian analysis focuses particularly on how this class division works out under capitalism, the economic system of modern societies. The distinctive feature of capitalism is that the class that owns the means of production—the capitalists—operates on a logic of continuous capital accumulation; *capital* is wealth (money and other assets), which can be used to generate the material infrastructure of economic production. Unlike other forms of economic organization in which people may seek to exchange either goods or money for more goods, capitalists seek to exchange goods in order to amass wealth. The mechanism by which capitalists turn goods into wealth is surplus value; surplus value is the difference between the compensation given to workers for their production and the value of the goods they produce; this surplus value is appropriated by the capitalist, who uses it to enhance his own lifestyle and power and, above all, to reinvest in the ongoing process of capital accumulation and expansion.

Socialist feminists accept the Marxian analysis of capitalism's class relations as an explication of one major structure of oppression. However, they reject the Marxian analysis of patriarchy as a by-product of the same economic production. Instead, they endorse the radical feminist argument that patriarchy, while interacting with economic conditions, is an independent structure of oppression.

Socialist feminism sets out to bring together these dual knowledge—knowledge of oppression under capitalism and of oppression under patriarchy—into a unified explanation of all forms of social oppression. One term used to try to unify these two oppressions is *capitalist patriarchy* (Eisenstein, 1979; Hartmann, 1979; A. Kuhn and Wolpe, 1978). But the term perhaps more widely used is *domination,* defined above (under "Gender Oppression") as a relationship in which one party, *the dominant,* succeeds in making the other party, *the subordinate,* an

instrument of the dominant's will, refusing to recognize the subordinate's independent subjectivity. Socialist feminism's explanations of oppression present domination as a large-scale structural arrangement, a power relation between categories of social actors that is reproduced by the willful and intentional actions of individual actors. Women are central to socialist feminism as the primary topic for analysis, and as the essential vantage point on domination in all its forms. But these theorists are concerned with all experiences of oppression, both by women and by men. They also explore how some women, themselves oppressed, actively participate in the oppression of other women, for example, privileged-class women in American society who oppress poor women (Eisenstein, 1994; Hochschild, 2000).

Socialist feminists use historical materialism as their analytical method (Hennessey and Ingraham, 1997). *Historical materialism,* a basic principle in Marxian social theory, is the claim that the material conditions of human life, including the activities and relationships that produce those conditions, are the key factors that pattern human experience, personality, ideas, and social arrangements; that those conditions change over time because of dynamics immanent within them; and that history is a record of the changes in the material conditions of a group's life and of the correlative changes in experiences, personality, ideas, and social arrangements. Historical materialists hold that any effort at social analysis must trace in historically concrete detail the specifics of a group's material conditions and the links between those conditions and the experiences, personalities, events, ideas, and social arrangements characteristic of the group. In linking historical materialism to their focus on domination, socialist feminists attempt to realize their goal of a theory that probes the broadest of human social arrangements, domination, yet remains firmly committed to precise, historically concrete analyses of the material and social arrangements that frame particular situations of domination.

The use of historical materialism by socialist feminism shows the school's indebtedness to Marxian thought. But in their use of this method, socialist feminists move beyond the Marxians in three crucial ways: their redefinition of *material conditions,* their reevaluation of the significance of ideology, and their focus on domination. First, they broaden the concept of the *material conditions* to include not only the Marxian concept of economic production for the market but other conditions that create and sustain human life: sexuality, involvement in procreation,

and child rearing; the unpaid, invisible round of domestic tasks; emotional care; and the production of knowledge. In *all* these life-sustaining activities, exploitative arrangements profit some and impoverish others. An analysis of the historical transformation of all production and exploitation is essential to a theory of domination (McDowell, 2008).

The second point of difference between Marxian historical materialism and the historical materialism of socialist feminism is the latter perspective's emphasis on what some Marxians might dismiss as consciousness, motivation, ideas, social definitions of the situation, knowledge, texts, ideology, the will to act in one's interests or acquiesce to the interests of others. 5 To socialist feminists all these factors deeply affect human personality, human action, and the structures of domination that are realized through that action. Moreover, these aspects of human subjectivity are produced by social structures that are inextricably intertwined with, and are as elaborate and powerful as, those are that produce economic goods. Within all these structures, too, exploitative arrangements enrich and empower some while impoverishing and immobilizing others. Historical materialist analysis of the processes that pattern human subjectivity is vital to a theory of domination.

Third is Marxian unlike the object of analysis theorists for whom class inequality, socialist feminists focus on the complex intertwining of a wide range of social inequalities. They develop a portrait of social organization in which the public structures of economy, polity, and ideology interact with the intimate, private processes of human reproduction, domesticity, sexuality, and subjectivity to sustain a multifaceted system of domination, the workings of which are discernible both as impersonal social patterns and as the more varied subtleties of interpersonal relationships. To analyze this system, socialist feminists shuttle between mapping large-scale systems of domination and situational specific, detailed exploration of the mundane daily experiences of oppressed people. Their strategy for change rests in this process of discovery, in which they attempt to involve the oppressed groups that they study and through which they hope that both individuals and groups, in large and small ways, will learn to act in pursuit of their collective emancipation.

Within this general theoretical framing, socialist feminist analyses has distinct emphases. First, *materialist feminism* two situates gender relations within the structure of the contemporary capitalist system, particularly as that system is now operating globally. The interest of materialist feminists is in the implications

of global capitalism for women's lives and in the ways in which women's labor contributes to the expanding wealth of capitalism. Within global capitalism, women as wage earners are more poorly paid than men because patriarchal ideology assigns them a lower social status. Because patriarchy assigns them the responsibility for the home, they are structurally more precariously positioned in wage-sector employment than men are and thus are more difficult to organize. These two factors make them an easy source of profit for the capitalist class. Further, capitalism depends on the unpaid production of women whose work as housewives, wives, and mothers subsidizes and disguises the real costs of reproducing and maintaining the workforce. Moreover, women's work as consumers of goods and services for the household becomes a major source of capitalist profit making (J. L. Collins, 2002; Hennessey and Ingraham, 1997; Ingraham, 2008; N. Rose, 1995; Vogel, 1995).

A second emphasis given most form by Dorothy Smith and her students is on the *relations of ruling,* the processes by which capitalist patriarchal domination is enacted through an interdependent system of control that includes not only the economy but also the state and the privileged professions (including social science). The dynamics of this arrangement of control are explored through a focus on women's daily activities and experiences in the routine maintenance of daily life. The relations of ruling are revealed as pervading and controlling women's daily production via "texts," extra local, generalized requirements that seek to pattern and appropriate their labor—texts like health insurance forms, the school calendar, advertisements about the ideal home and the ideal female body (M. Campbell and Manicom, 1995; Currie, 1997, 1999; Widerberg, 2008).

Socialist feminists' program for change calls for global solidarity among women to combat the abuses capitalism works in their lives, in the lives of their communities, and in the environment. Indeed, eco-feminism is a major current trend in socialist feminism (Dordoy and Mellor, 2000; Goldman and Schurman, 2000; Kirk, 1997).

They call on the feminist community to be ever vigilant about the dangers of their own co-optation into a privileged intelligentsia that serves capitalist interests. Their project is to mobilize people to use the state as a means for the effective redistribution of societal resources through the provision of an extensive safety net of public services such as publicly supported education, health care,

transportation, child care, and housing; a progressive tax structure that reduces the wide disparities of income between rich and poor; and the guarantee of a living wage to all members of the community. They believe that this mobilization will be effective only if people become aware of and caring about the life conditions of others as well as their own. The feminist social scientist's duty is to make visible the material inequalities that shape people's lives.

6.4 Radical Feminism

Radical feminism is based on two emotionally charged central beliefs: (1) that women are of absolute positive value as women, a belief asserted against what they claim to be the universal devaluing of women, and (2) that women are everywhere oppressed— violently oppressed—by the system of patriarchy (Bunch, 1987; Chesler, 1994; Daly, 1973; C. Douglas, 1990; Dworkin, 1989; Echols, 1989; French, 1992; Frye, 1983; Hunnicutt, 2009; MacKinnon, 1989, 1993; Monrow, 2007; Rhodes, 2005; Rich, 1976, 1980). With passion and militancy similar to the "black power" cry of African American mobilization and the "witnessing" by Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, radical feminists elaborate a theory of social organization, gender oppression, and strategies for change.

Radical feminists see in every institution and in society's most basic stratification arrangements—heterosexuality, class, caste, race, ethnicity, age, and gender— systems of domination and subordination, the most fundamental structure of which is the system of patriarchy. Not only is patriarchy historically the first structure of domination and submission, but it also continues as the most pervasive and enduring system of inequality, the basic societal model of domination (Lerner, 1986). Through participation in patriarchy, men learn how to hold other human beings in contempt, to see them as nonhuman, and to control them. Within patriarchy, men see, and women learn what subordination looks like. Patriarchy creates guilt and repression, sadism and masochism, manipulation and deception, all of which drive men and women to other forms of tyranny. Patriarchy, to radical feminists, is the least noticed yet the most significant structure of social inequality.

Central to this analysis is the image of patriarchy as violence practiced by men and by male-dominated organizations against women. Violence may not always take the form of overt physical cruelty. It can be hidden in more complex practices of exploitation and control: in standards of fashion and beauty; in tyrannical ideals of motherhood, monogamy, chastity, and heterosexuality; in

sexual harassment in the workplace; in the practices of gynecology, obstetrics, and psychotherapy; and in unpaid household drudgery and underpaid wage work (MacKinnon, 1979; Rich, 1976, 1980; L. Roth, 1999; B. Thompson, 1994; N. Wolf, 1991). Violence exists whenever one group controls in its own interests the life chances, environments, actions, and perceptions of another group, as men do to women.

But the theme of violence as overt physical cruelty lies at the heart of radical feminism's linking of patriarchy to violence: rape, sexual abuse, enforced prostitution, spouse abuse, incest, sexual molestation of children, hysterectomies and other excessive surgery, the sadism in pornography, the historical and cross-cultural practices of witch burning, the stoning to death of adulteresses, the persecution of lesbians, female infanticide, Chinese foot-binding, the abuse of widows, and the practice of clitorectomy (Barry, 1979, 1993; Bart and Moran, 1993; Bergen, 1996; Buchwald, Fletcher, and Roth, 1993; Caputi, 1989; Faludi, 1991; Hammer, 2002; Mardorossian, 2002; Martin, Vieratis, and Britto, 2006; Russell, 1998; Sanday, 1996; Scully, 1990; Stiglmayer, 1994).

Patriarchy exists as a near-universal social form because men can muster the most basic power resource, physical force, to establish control. Once patriarchy is in place, the other power resources—economic, ideological, legal, and emotional—also can be marshaled to sustain it. However, physical violence always remains its base, and in both interpersonal and intergroup relations, that violence is used to protect patriarchy from women's individual and collective resistance.

Men create and maintain patriarchy because not only they have the resources to do so but also because they have real interests in making women serve as compliant tools. Women are a uniquely effective means of satisfying male sexual desire. Their bodies are essential to the production of children, who satisfy both practical and psychological needs for men. Women are a useful labor force. They can be ornamental signs of male status and power. As carefully controlled companions to both the child and the adult male, they are pleasant partners, sources of emotional support, and useful foils who reinforce the male's sense of central social significance. These useful functions mean that men everywhere seek to keep women compliant. Nevertheless, differing social circumstances give different rank orders to these functions and therefore lead to cross-cultural variations in the patterning of patriarchy.

How is patriarchy to be defeated? Radicals hold that this defeat must begin with a basic reworking of women's consciousness so that each woman recognizes her own value and strength; rejects patriarchal pressures to see herself as weak, dependent, and second-class; and works in unity with other women, regardless of differences among them, to establish a broad-based sisterhood of trust, support, appreciation, and mutual defense (Chasteen, 2001; McCaughey, 1997; Whitehead, 2007). With this sisterhood in place, two strategies suggest themselves: a critical confrontation with any facet of patriarchal domination whenever it is encountered and a degree of separatism as women withdraw into women-run businesses, households, communities, centers of artistic creativity, and lesbian love relationships. Lesbian feminism, as a major strand in radical feminism, is the practice and belief that "erotic and/or emotional commitment to women is part of resistance to patriarchal domination" (Phelan, 1994; Rudy, 2001; Taylor and Rupp, 1993).

A theoretical evaluation of radical feminism should note that it incorporates arguments made by both socialist and psychoanalytical feminists about the reasons for women's subordination yet moves beyond those theories. Radical feminists, moreover, have done significant research to support their thesis that patriarchy ultimately rests on the practice of violence against women. They have a reasonable though perhaps incomplete program for change. They may, however, be faulted for their exclusive focus on patriarchy, a focus that simplifies the realities of social organization and social inequality.

6.5 Eco-Feminism

Eco-feminism presents a distinctive perspective within feminist theory by framing patriarchy not only as a source of women's oppression but also as a harmful force detrimental to humanity and the natural world. This approach emphasizes that patriarchal structures, with their emphasis on control, domination, and exploitation, extend their destructive influence beyond human societies to impact all living creatures and the environment. Eco-feminists argue that the same systems of power that perpetuate gender inequality also drive ecological degradation, exploiting both women and nature in the pursuit of profit and power.

By integrating a broader and more holistic analysis of power dynamics, eco-feminism combines traditional feminist concerns with an expanded spiritual and ethical vision. It links the struggle for women's rights and empowerment to a wider array of political, economic, social, and cultural factors, advocating for changes

that benefit not only women but also the environment and all forms of life. Eco-feminists assert that achieving gender equality is inherently connected to creating a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with the Earth, suggesting that the liberation of women is inextricably tied to the well-being of the planet.

This perspective critiques the patriarchal tendency to separate human concerns from environmental ones, proposing instead that a comprehensive understanding of power must encompass both human and ecological dimensions. Eco-feminism advocates for a paradigm shift towards a more integrative and empathetic approach, one that recognizes the interconnectedness of all life forms and the importance of nurturing a balanced relationship with nature.

In practice, eco-feminism calls for transformative changes across various domains, including policy-making, economic systems, and cultural norms. It encourages the development of practices and policies that promote environmental sustainability, social justice, and gender equality simultaneously. By addressing the root causes of ecological and social crises, eco-feminism aims to foster a more equitable and sustainable future for all living beings.

The eco-feminist vision often involves a spiritual dimension, where reverence for nature and a recognition of the sacredness of life are central to the philosophy. This spiritual aspect underscores a deep commitment to reimagining humanity's relationship with the Earth, advocating for a shift from domination and exploitation to stewardship and care. In this way, eco-feminism offers a compelling critique of patriarchal values and proposes an alternative framework that seeks to harmonize human activities with the rhythms and needs of the natural world.

6.6 Black Feminism

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that argues that sexism, class oppression, gender identity, and racism are intricately interconnected and cannot be understood in isolation from one another. This concept, which explores how these various forms of oppression intersect and reinforce each other, was first articulated by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Crenshaw's work on intersectionality emerged from her analysis of Black feminism, which asserts that the experiences of Black women are shaped by a confluence of racial and gendered dynamics that cannot be adequately addressed by examining race or gender separately.

Crenshaw introduced the term "intersectionality" to describe how different aspects of identity—such as race, gender, class, and sexuality—interact and overlap, creating complex matrices of disadvantage and privilege. Her analysis highlighted that traditional approaches to discrimination often fail to capture the

unique experiences of individuals who are marginalized along multiple axes, such as Black women who face both racial and gender-based discrimination. The intersectionality framework provides a more nuanced understanding of how systemic inequalities are experienced and reinforces the need for a holistic approach to addressing injustice.

In 1974, the Combahee River Collective articulated a similar understanding within the context of Black feminism, arguing that the liberation of Black women is intrinsically linked to the liberation of all people. They posited that achieving freedom for Black women requires dismantling the interconnected systems of racism, sexism, and class oppression. Their perspective underscores the idea that true liberation cannot be attained without addressing these overlapping forms of oppression.

Intersectionality has become a crucial tool in feminist theory and activism, offering a framework for analyzing and addressing the multifaceted nature of discrimination. It emphasizes the importance of considering how various forms of identity and oppression intersect, rather than treating them as discrete or unrelated issues. This approach has informed a range of social justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and policy discussions, highlighting the need for inclusive and comprehensive strategies to achieve equity and justice across different dimensions of identity and experience.

6.7 Feminism and Gender Transformative Approaches

Apart from the social learning theory, from the same report I would like to give direct quotes that illustrate usage of various theories in GTAs through different intervention across the globe.

As it was said about Feminist political ecology:

Similar to the Theory of Gender and Power, consider using the Feminist Political Ecology theory for interventions that aim to address structural barriers or facilitators at the lower levels of the socio-ecological framework. Feminist political ecology examines the place of gender in the political ecological landscape, exploring gender as a factor in ecological and political relations. Specific areas in which feminist political ecology is focused are development, landscape, resource use and rural-urban transformation. This theory can also inform health outcomes,

particularly in light of global warming and climate change. (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

Moreover, it added about Theory of Gender and Power:
Consider using the Theory of Gender and Power for interventions that aim to address structural barriers or facilitators at the lower levels of the socio-ecological framework. Three social structures that make up the theory of gender and power: sexual division of labor, sexual division of power, and the structure of social norms and affective attachment. These constructs identify exposure and risk factors as well as biological factors in relation to issues that adversely affect women's health such as HIV and STD risk in relation to condom usage as well as violence against women. (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

Further, it went to the Theory of Planned Behavior:
Consider using the Theory of Planned Behavior to design interventions that target health-enhancing individual behavior that may be socially unacceptable, such as condom use, self check-ups, voluntary testing, medication adherence, delivery by a male health worker and other behaviors that warrant individual decisions but have varying levels of social acceptability. When applying a gender lens to the Theory of Planned Behavior it is important to consider if the barriers to and enabling factors that support individual behavior change differ for men and women. (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1. What is Liberal Feminism?

Question 2. Discuss Cultural Feminism.

Question 3. Socialist Feminists maintain that capitalism and patriarchy are interdependent", Elaborate the statement.

Question 4. Discuss in detail the Radical Feminsim.

Question 5. Which one school of thought you will support regarding feminism and why?

Further Readings

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Unit: 7

LEARNING GENDER (GROWING UP FEMININE OR MASCULINE)

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INTRODUCTION

If you ask parents whether they treat their children differently simply on the basis of sex, most would probably say “no”. However, there is considerable evidence that what parents say they do and what they actually do are often not the same.

It has been argued by some that gender socialization actually may begin in utro by those parents who know the sex of their child before it is borne. As kolker and Burke (1992: 12-13) explain, the knowledge of sex implies more than chromosomal or anatomical differences. It implies gender, and with-it images of personality and social role expectations. Such a hypothesis is difficult, if not impossible to test, nut what currently known is that gender socialization gets underway almost immediately after the child is borne. Research shows for instance, that the vast majority of comments parents make about their babies immediately, following birth concern, the babies sex (Woolett et al. 1982) mover over, although there are few physiological or behavioral differences between males and females at birth, parents tend to respond differently to newborn on the basis of sex. For example, when asked to describe their babies within twenty-four hours of birth new parents frequently use gender stereotypes, infant girls are described as ting, soft and delicate, but parents of infant boys use adjectives such as strong, alert and coordinated to describe their babies. Interestingly, fathers provide more stereotyped descriptions than mothers (powers, 1981). We also examine the variables of race and social class in the allied material.

OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit along with the4 suggested readings you should be able to:

- discuss specific nature of children's environments
- define early peer group socialization

Major Topics

7.1 The Gender Specific Nature of Children's Environment
7.2 Early Peer Group Socialization
7.3 By the Time a Child is Give
7.4 Gender Equality Continuum
7.5 Socio-ecological Model

7.1 The Gender Specific Nature of Children's Environment

What is the easiest and most accurate way for a stranger to determine the sex of an infant? According to Madeline Shakin and her associates (1985), a baby's clothing provides the best clues. The color of the clothing alone is reliable source for sex labeling; the vast majority of the girls wore pink and yellow, while most of the boys were dressed in blue or red. The style of children's clothing also varies by sex. The girls' wear dresses trimmed with ruffles and lace; at bedtime, they wear nighties with more of the same, and for leisure activities, their slacks sets may be more practical, but chances are they are pastel in color and decorated with heart and flowers. In contrast, boys wear three-piece suits on special occasions, at bedtimes they wear astronaut, athlete, or super-hero pajamas; and for leisure activities, their overalls or slacks sets are in primary colors with sports or military decorations. Even the disposable diapers are different for girls and boys, not only in the way they are constructed but also in the way they are decorated. All of this may seem insignificant, even picky to you. However, whatever we emphasize here is that clothing is a significant part of children's environment in determine the gender identity.

Parents are more directly involved in construction of specific environments for their children with the nurseries, bedrooms, and playrooms that they furnish and decorate. The classic study in this regard was conducted by Rheingold, Cook (1975), who actually went in to the middle class homes, and examined the content of children's rooms. The comparison of boys' and girls' rooms is a study of contrasts. Girl's room reflected traditional conceptions of femininity, especially in terms of domesticity and motherhood. Their rooms were usually decorated with floral designs and ruffled bedspreads, pillows, and curtains. They contained an abundance of baby dolls and related items like dollhouses as well as miniature appliances, e.g., toy and stoves. On the other hand, the items found in boy's room were presenting the reflection of traditional notions about masculinity. Boy's rooms had more animals' motifs and were filled with military toys and athletic equipment.

They also had building and vehicular toys like blocks, trucks and wagons. Importantly, the boys' rooms had more toys overall as well as more types of toys, including those considered educational. Given with similar findings were obtained more than ten years later (Stoneman et.al 1986), it appears that Rheingold and Cook's conclusion remain applicable, at least with regards to the gender specific environment of middle-class children.

To sum up our discussion so far, we have seen that virtually every significant dimension of a child's environment like his or her clothing, bedrooms, toys, and to some educational traits (books) is structured according to cultural expectations of appropriate gendered behavior. Children actively try to organize all the information they receive daily, their parents and other adults are clearly providing them with the means. Consequently, the children cannot help but conclude that the sex is an important social category. By the time, they are ready for the school, they have learned to view the world in terms of a dichotomy: his or hers. It is the specific nature of children's environments, which influence the gendered identity and behavioral patterns.

7.2 Early Peer Group Socialization

As we noted previously, socialization is not a one-way process from adults to children. Rather, childhood socialization is a collective process in which "children creatively appropriate information from the adult world to produce their own unique peer cultures" (Corsaro and Eder, 1990:200). Indeed, according to Beverly Fagot (1985), children's same sex peers are the most powerful agents of socialization.

Children socialize with one another thought their everyday interactions in the home and at play. Research indicates, for example, that one of young children's first attempts at social differentiation is through increasing sex segregation. Observations of young children at play indicate that they voluntarily segregate themselves into same-sex groups. This preference for play with same-sex peer emerges between the ages of two and three and grows stronger as children moves from early to middle childhood (Feiring and Lewis, 1987; Maccoby and Jacklin, 1987). Moreover, when compared with girls, boys tend to interact in large groups, be more aggressive and competitive, and engage in more organized sports (Corsaro and Eder, 1990; Maccoby, 1988; Thorne, 1986).

Throne (1993) is critical of much of this research for focusing solely on sex differences and ignoring sex similarities and cross-section interaction. She gives several examples in which young children work cooperatively and amiably in sex-integrated groups. The research further points out that children frequently engage in "border work"; that is, they attempt to cross in to the world of other sex and participate in cross-gender activities. There is considerable evidence, however, that children reward gender appropriate behavior (Goodnough, 1990; Carter and McClosky, 1983; Langlois and Downs, 1980). Boys are specially criticized more by their peers for cross-gender play, but both boys and girls who choose gender-appropriate toys are more likely to have other children play with them (Roopnarine, 1984). Keeping in view the research conducted on role of peer in socialization process, we can say that young children should be considered partners with parents and other agencies in socialization, including gender socialization.

7.3 By the Time a Child is Five

At the outset of this unit, we argued that children are born into a world that largely favors the male. Throughout much of the remainder of our discussion, we examined research that indicates that this male preference carries over into 'parents' and 'other adults' interactions with children. We have seen here that during early childhood, boys and girls are socialized into separate and unequal genders. Little boys are taught independence, problem-solving abilities, assertiveness, and curiosity about their environment, skills that are highly valued in our society. In contrast, little girls are taught dependence, passivity, and domesticity like traits that our society devalues. Children themselves reinforce and respond to adults socialization practices by socializing one another in per groups.

We have already discussed four theories of explanations of how the process of gender socialization takes place. The first, Freudian identification theory, argues that all children pass through a series of psycho-sexual stages, with the phallic stage the most crucial for the development of gender identity. It is during this stage that boys and girls attempt to resolve their respective gender-identity complexes by identifying with same-sex parents. However, identification theory's emphasis on the unconscious nature of this process makes it virtually impossible to verify objectively.

Social learning theory maintains that children learn gender the same way they learn other behaviors and attitudes through reinforcement (reward and punishment for specific behaviors) and by imitating adult models. Cognitive-development theory contends that children acquire gender as they try to make sense of their everyday observations and experiences. Sex, according to this perspective is a natural category for them to use in their organization efforts. Both of these theories have received some empirical support, but both have also been extensively criticized. The former depicts gender socialization as a simple case of "monkey see monkey do", whereas research indicates that it is far more complex. The latter, by portraying gender polarization as natural, overlooks the role of culture and social structural factors in the process of gender socialization.

The fourth theory, Bem's encultured lens theory of gender formation, plays on the strengths of the social learning and cognitive-development theories, while avoiding their pitfalls. Bem sees gender socialization as a special case of enculturation thought that the gender lenses of a culture are transmitted to new members. It is this process in which those being socialized actively take part, but Bem places considerable emphasis on how culture and social institutions transmit the lenses of gender polarization, androcentrism, and biological essentialism by structuring males and females everyday experiences in particular ways and by bombarding society's members with meta messages about gender.

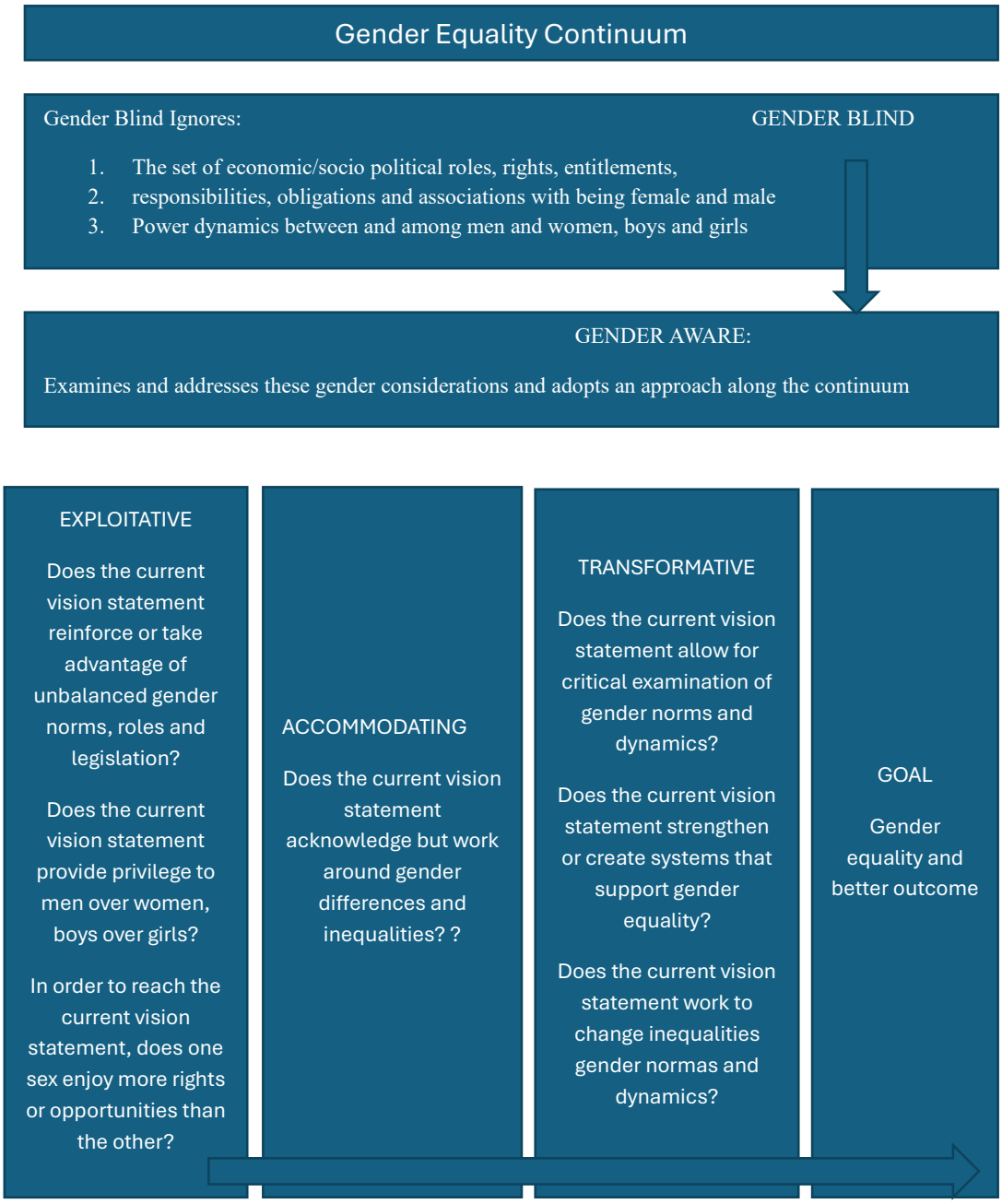
In this unit, we have understood that gender-typed clothing, room furnishings, toys, and books serve both to organize children's everyday experiences in term of children dichotomy and to reinforce children for stereotypic gender-appropriate behavior. Not surprisingly, children as young as two years old already adhere to gender stereotypes and exhibits preferences for gender typed toys and activities.

May we conclude, then, that nonsexist socialization is impossible? Certainly not. Considerable research is under way to evaluate a variety of nonsexist socialization techniques (Lorber, 1986). Davies's (1989) study indicates that attempts at nonsexist socialization by parents do have a positive impact on children's attitude and behavior. We also considered Bem's suggested strategies for nonsexist socialization, which we think have merit and deserve further exploration. However, we must keep in mind that parents are not the only ones

responsible for gender socialization. Indeed, schools and the media take up where parents leave off, and peers remain active socializers throughout our lives.

7.4 Gender Equality Continuum

It is important to understand the pattern of intervention, which may use GTA approaches. Here we take example from the report published by USAID about health communication capacity collaborative (2016). In the report concept of "Gender Equality Continuum" has been used as a tool for planning framework to execute behavior change communication. The purpose of using this framework was to execute gender-transforming program. In addition to this, this tool has potential to assess intervention and its effectiveness for identifying, examining and addressing gender consideration/ limitations. Moreover, this framework also help to determine how go further along with transformative gender programming (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).


Gender Equality Continuum
Gender Blind Ignores:
GENDER BLIND
1. The set of economic/socio political roles, rights, entitlements,
2. responsibilities, obligations and associations with being female and male
3. Power dynamics between and among men and women, boys and girls
GENDER AWARE:
Examines and addresses these gender considerations and adopts an approach along the continuum
EXPLOITATIVE
Does the current vision statement reinforce or take advantage of unbalanced gender norms, roles and legislation?
Does the current vision statement provide privilege to men over women, boys over girls?
In order to reach the current vision statement, does one sex enjoy more rights or opportunities than the other?
ACCOMMODATING
Does the current vision statement acknowledge but work around gender differences and inequalities? ?
TRANSFORMATIVE
Does the current vision statement allow for critical examination of gender norms and dynamics?
Does the current vision statement strengthen or create systems that support gender equality?
Does the current vision statement work to change inequalities gender normas and dynamics?
GOAL
Gender equality and better outcome

From the above given framework we learn that the gender equality continuum shows a process of analysis which starts with identification of the approach either intervention is gender blind or gender aware. As mentioned previously gender blind policies or approaches does not bring gender consideration into the notice. Generally, gender blind approaches do not consider socio-culturally, politically and economic defined roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements, obligations and power relation which are associated with gender category of male and female, boys and girls. Other hand, gender aware policies and programs specifically target and address the socio-political and economic roles, responsibilities, policies, obligations, entitlements concerning gender dynamics among men, women, boys and girls (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).

When gender equality continuum moves further it specifically target about the gender exploitative, accommodative, and transformative aspects of the program and project. During the planning phase or development of the framework, organization contextualize and examine that the vision statement of the project/program reinforce or take advantages of unbalanced gender norms and roles. It also critically examine if through any means vision statement of the project/program gives any privilege to men over women. Similarly, it look into the matter if there are more rights and opportunities for any specific sex or gender.

In next part, it is also examine if vision statement focusing about the gender differences or not. Finally, the vision statement indicates about intended gender transformative pattern/approach and promote gender equality.

However, to guide program design and achieve intended program outcomes, program managers can use various gender analysis and behavior change frameworks and models. When selecting a framework, it is important to consider the following:

a) How do behavior change communication (BCC) and gender theories relate to these frameworks? For example, how does “power” within families, communities and social structures influence behavior?

b) What kinds of health and gender-related outcomes is your program looking to achieve?

c) How does gender affect access and utilization of health service delivery interventions?

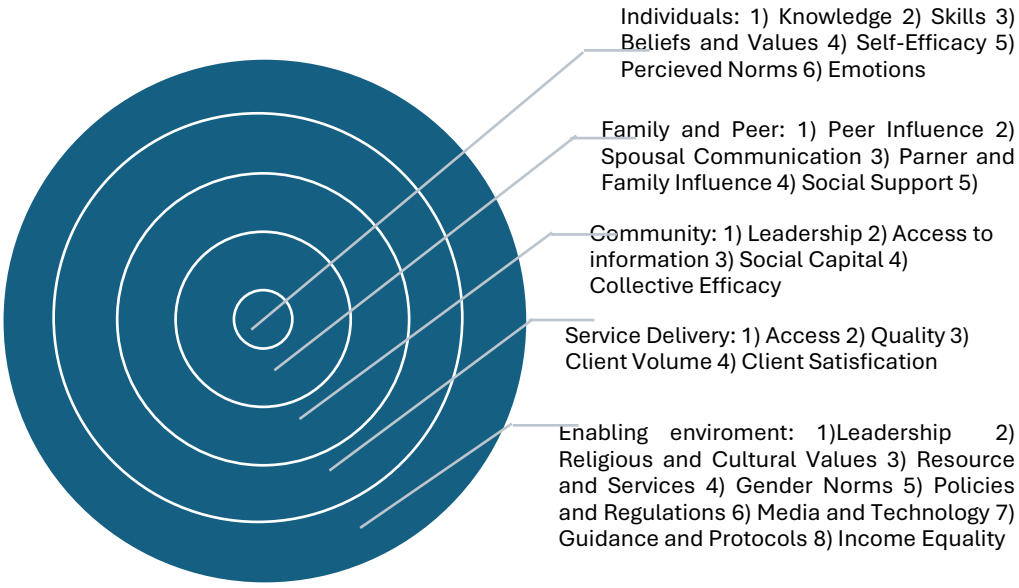
d) What kind of intervention, or combination of interventions, are most likely to lead to gender transformative behaviors?

e) How do we anticipate that women and men will understand the program messages or activities differently?

f) How, if at all, do we anticipate these answers will differ for sub-groups of men and women such as those from lower income groups or with less education?

7.5 Socio-Ecological Model

A person's behavior is influenced by many factors both at the individual level and beyond. The levels of influence on behavior can be summarized by the socio-ecological framework. This framework recognizes that behavior change can be achieved through activities that target four levels: Individual, interpersonal (family/peer), community and social/structural (Health Communication Capacity Collaborative 2016).



7.6 Glossary

- **Complexes Modeling:** the process by which children imitate the behavior of their same sex parent, especially if the parent rewards their imitations or is perceived by them to be warm, friendly, or powerful; a central concept of the social learning theory of gender socialization

- **Socialization:** The process by which a society's values and norms including those pertaining to gender, are taught and learned.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1. "The style of children's clothing also varies by sex" Elaborate the statement.

Question 2. Why and what are differences in toys for girls' and boys' toys?

Question 3. "Children socialize one another through their everyday interactions in the home and at the play". Elaborate the statement with examples?

Question 4. Write a comprehensive note on the following:

a) Early peer group socialization.

b) The importance of adults' behaviors and attitudes in child.

Further Readings

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Unit: 8

CHANGING GENDER ROLES WITHIN THE FAMILY

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INTRODUCTION

Human sex differences, except for purely physical differences, are due largely to different socialization. Sex role are changing as a result of (1) discrediting of sexist's beliefs (2) work role changes brought by industrialization and urbanization and (3) organized action. Most forms of sex discrimination in the world have been outlawed but have not disappeared. Affirmative action programmes seek to implement existing legislation, while the drive for the equal rights amendment seeks to complete the legal barriers to sex discrimination.

Marxist perceives sexism is a form of class exploitation with sex equality. Evidence for this theory is un-convincing, although Marxist societies have been substantially reducing sex discrimination. Whether androgynous sex role is possible or desirable is sharply debated but not yet known.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit along with suggested readings, you should be able to discuss the:

- sexual foundations of human social life
- changing sex role
- normal gender behavior
- Marxists analysis of sexism and future sex roles

Major Topics

Sexual foundations of human social life

8.1 Sexual Foundations of Human Social Life.
8.2 Changing Sex Role
8.3 Marxists Analysis of Sexism
8.4 Future Sex Roles
8.5 Glossary

8.1 Sexual Foundations of Human Social Life

The sex drive is one of the building blocks for human social life. While no inborn drive compels humans to act in any particular way, each drive consists of a set of recurrent tension states, which impels people to some kind of activity to relieve the tension. A drive cannot be ignored and will not "go away". Some ways of relieving tension will be found, will be repeated by many people, and will become part of the culture. What are some features of the human sex drive, which have affected our patterns of social life?

8.1.2 Continuous Sexuality

The female of most species is receptive only during a seasonal estrous period, while strenuously rejecting sexual overtures at all other times. In many species the mating season is the only time when male and female associate. The human species shares with the anthropoids the biological fact of continuous sexuality, meaning that the female may be sexually receptive at any time.

8.1.3 Variety and Continuity

The twin human desires for sexual continuity and sexual variety are another part of the biological basis for human social life.

8.1.4 Tractability of the sex Drive

In most species the sexual behavior of all adult healthy males (or of females) is very much alike. True, some learning may be involved. Human sexual feelings and behaviors are culturally patterned.

8.1.5 Sex Difference

Since the beginning of the recorded history, the differences have been noted between the men and women. The sexes differ visibly in some physical characteristics. Do they also differ in behavior capacities and natural inclinations? Are any such differences great enough that the culture must in some way take account of them? Apart from physical characteristics and reproduction function, most sex differences are social products, not biological building blocks.

8.2 Changing Sex Role

Over the centuries, women are considered the helper of men. Yet with the evolution of human societies specifically with the phenomenon of industrialization and advancement in science and technology, the social roles have been dramatically changed. There are quite few factors in sex-role change. These are as follows:

8.2.1 Declining sexist Beliefs

Over the centuries as discussed earlier, people now agree that there are few (if any) innate sex differences in abilities and aptitudes, excepting for those which are purely physical. Even the physical differences are shrinking. In many fields of life, women are catching up the men and may soon surpass them in some events.

8.2.2 Changing Work Roles

The importance attributed to the work one does has always been closely related to one's status and power. In ancient times, the priest has more status and power but in modern times scientists are given may be said to have taken their place. Same like, from hunting and gathering society to postindustrial societies, man and woman have witnessed changing work roles. While women have been very slow to gain power commensurate with their economic contribution, the economic base for male dominance is steadily eroding.

8.2.3 Organized Action

The functional perspective stresses the importance of women's work as the prime determinant of women's status. Yet the experiences of the recent times do not fully support the analysis. The proportion of labor force increased substantially, yet the income gap between the employed men and women also increased during most of the period. While it may be true that in the long run functional roles determines sex statuses, this force takes a long time to operate. In the short run, the conflict perspective may suggest more effective techniques for changing sex roles. The present feminist effort to change sex roles through organized action is clearly based upon the conflict model of social change. The "old" feminism of the nineteenth century eventually gained voting rights but not much else. The "new" feminism is an expression of the general spirit of protest which developed in the 1960's. The new feminism has perused three principal strategies:

- A legal attack upon all forms of formal sex discrimination.
- An attack on upon traditional sex-role socialization.
- An attack upon sexist institutional practices.

8.3 Marxists Analysis of Sexism

Marxist ideology views sex inequality as an aspect of class exploitation and assert that sexism cannot be ended without a socialist revolution (Ostrander, 1973;

Reiter, 1975; Syzmanski, 1976; Eisenstein, 1977). But socialist revolution carries no guarantee of sex equality. A polish sociologist concludes in his research that "available statistical data do not give evidence that women's situations in capitalistic and socialistic countries are substantially different" (Horszowski, 1971).

Two surveys conducted before the disintegration of the USSR concluded that women have greater progress in the USSR than in comparison to USA, but in both countries, women are heavily concentrated in low-paid and low-prestige positions (Bartol and Bartol, 1975; Seibel, 1977). Another study reports that "women in Czechoslovakia do not work at the same job as men are for the same pay, and that family responsibilities are largely accountable for lack of opportunity and motivation for women to improve their status" (Somerville, 1978; review of Scott, 1974). The Marist rhetoric of sex equality, whatever its intent has had the effect of "freeing" women to fill two jobs. It is possible that increasing the labor force, instead of achieving sex equality, may have been the primary goal of communist policy (Sacks, 1976). In case of China, who achieved a great economic growth in recent decades, the status of women is still contested. Few reports virtually share positive indications with respect to women empowerment in China. But still there are others who highlight the constraints for women empowerment. It is difficult to know the degree to which the Marxist rhetoric has been carried into practice in China.

8.4 Future Sex Roles

The current trend in modern nations is clearly toward greater sex equality, but what forms of sex equality? Alice Rossi (1970) suggests three theoretical sex equality models:

8.4.1 A Pluralist Model

A pluralist model in which the sex roles are different but equal, with men and women holding different work roles, which are equally rewarded and prestigious.

8.4.2 An Assimilationist Model

An assimilationist model in which women are absorbed equally into all levels of the existing occupational and political system.

8.4.3 An Androgynous Model

An androgynous model in which the sex-role ascription is ended, with men and women filling occupational and household roles, which are practically identical.

8.5 Glossary

- Affirmative action: Process for actively locating, recruiting, training, hiring and promoting women until some stated goal has been attained.
- Sex drive: A biological urge to mate, in humans the biological basis for elaborate systems of socially learned sexual sentiments and practices.
- Sexism, Sexist: Treatring males and females according to traditional stereo typed assumptions about appropriate sex roles.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1. Under what circumstances do you think traditional patterns of male dominace might be restored?

Question 2. What evidence is there that sex role socialization in Pakistan is changing?

Question 3. When both partners work, what difficulties are created if one career is considered primary and the other subordinate? What then if both are considered equally important?

Question 4. What evidence is there for and against the Marxists theory that sex equality and economic equality are inseparable.

Question 5. What is meant by the statement that "Normal" sex roles are normal for only a specific time and place?

Further Readings

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Unit: 9

THE GREAT COMMUNICATION (LANGUAGE AND THE MEDIA)

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INTRODUCTION

The mass media are an important part of our everyday lives. Through them we are both entertained and informed. We will learn in this unit what is conveyed to us through the mass media infused with values and norms, including much about gender. In other words, the media survey is gender socializers and our focus in this unit will be on what media communicate about gender and how do they communicate it. We will examine the gender image depicted in print media (newspapers and magazines) in audio visual medium (television), as well as communication from common to both (advertisements).

Before we look at the content of specific media, it would be instructive for us to examine the primary means by which media messages are conveyed, that is through language. While “a picture paints thousand words”, the specific language itself expresses the specific cultures underlying values and expectations about gender.

OBJECTIVES

After studying the unit along with suggested readings, you should be able to:

- define sexism, language, gender and media.
- identify images of gender in media.
- analyze language and media as shapers of gender

Major Topics

9.1 Sexism and Language
9.2 Gender and the Media
9.3 Television: The Ubiquitous Media Socialize
9.4 Images of Gender in the Media
9.5 Language and Media as Shapers of Gender

9.1 Sexism and Language

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me!" How many times did you recite that chnat as a child? In response to jeers or name-calling, we tried to tell our tauntors that what they said had no effect on us. Yet, as we have grown older, we have come to realize that as words do not have the same sting as sticks and stones, they can indeed inflict as much harm. That is because words are symbols with meaning; they define, describe and evaluate the world in which we live. The power of words lies in the fact that the members of a culture share those meanings and valuations. Their common language allows the members of a society to communicate and understand one another, and thus makes for order in society. Language is a medium of socialization. Essentially, as a child learns the language of his or her culture, he or she is also learning how to think and behave as a member of that culture.

Nancy Henley, Mykol Hamilton, and Barrie Throne (1985) suggest that sexist bias of the English language takes of three principal form: "It ignores, it defines, it deprecates".

9.1.1 Ignoring

English ignores females by favoring the masculine form for all generic uses, as in the sentence: "Each entrant in the competition should do his best". According to the rukes of English grammar, it is incorrect to use "their best" as the singular form in the previous sentence. Moreover, the usage of the "he or she" form ("Each entrant in the competition should do his or her") is often attacked as being clumsy. Nevertheless. Feminists insist that common use of male forms as generic makes women and girls invisible and implicitly suggests that maleness and masculine values are the standard for humanity and normality. For the reason, there has been resistance to the terms like mail carrier, police officer and firefighter to represent the men and women who perform these occupations.

9.1.2 Defining

In the view of Henley and her colleagues, "language both reflects and helps maintain women's secondary status in our society, by defining her or her place". The power to define through naming is especially significant in this process. Married women traditionally lose their own names and take their husbands, while children generally take the names of the fathers and not their mothers. The traditions of naming reflect western legal traditions under which children were viewed as the property of their fathers and married women as the property of their husbands. The view of females as possessions is also; evident in the practice of using female names and pronouns to refer to material possessions such as cars, machines, and ships.

9.1.3 Deprecating

There are clear differences in the words that are applied to male and female things which men's dominant position in English-speaking societies. For example, women's work may be patronized as "pretty" or "nice". Whereas men's work is more often honored as "masterful" or "brilliant". In many instances, a women's occupation or profession is trivialized with the feminine ending –ess or –ette; thus, even a distinguished writer may be given second-class status as a poet or an authoress. In a clear manifestation of sexism, terms of sexual insult in the English language are applied overwhelmingly to women. One researcher found 220 terms for a sexuality promiscuous but only 22 for a sexually promiscuous man (Stanley, 1977).

9.2 Gender and the Media

It is generally believed that media portals of men and women are the outcome of public expectation and desires. This popular view is known as in technical term reflection hypothesis. Simply stated, the reflection hypothesis holds that media content mirrors the behaviors and relationships, values and norms most prevalent and dominant in society. There is certainly some truth to this position. After all, sponsor's (the media's most important paying customers) want to attract the largest audience possible, and providing what everyone wants or expects seems logical way to do this. However media analysts also point out that, far from just passively reflecting culture, the media active shapes and creates culture.

Media is a chief source of information to most of the people, as well as the focus of their leisure activity. A significant number of people uncritically accept media content as fact. Although there are intervening variables, such as the kinds of shows one watches and the behavior of real life role models in one's immediate environment, the media do appear to influence our worldview, including our personal inspirations and expectations for achievement, as well as our perceptions of others (Gross, 1991). Not surprisingly, therefore, feminist researchers have especially been concerned with media portrayals of gender. If these depictions are negative and sexist, or if they distort the reality of contemporary gender relations, they may nevertheless be accepted as accurate by a large segment of the public (Courtney and Whipple, 1983). It has been argued that with respect to their treatment of women, the media are guilty of symbolic annihilation (Tuchman et.al, 1978). That is, the media traditionally have ignored, trivialized, or condemned women.

9.3 Television: The Ubiquitous Media Socializer

In current times, television is the most important media socializer. The sheer pervasiveness of the television sets, as well as, television's unique characteristics do make this claim plausible. Researchers document the central place that television holds in the lives of people across the globe. In America, the average household consumption of television is fifty-five hours per week. Television also has special characteristics that add to its potency as an agent of socialization. For instance, it is free, it is available to just about everyone, and it does not even require viewers to leave the privacy of their homes, as movies and theatre do. It requires no special skills, such as literacy, to watch and everyone, regardless of sex, race, age, social class, sexual orientation, and often, geographic location, gets the same visual and verbal messages. Research shows, however, that these factors (sex, race etc.) may influence how members of various groups interpret or relate to program content (Berry 1992; Comstock 1991; Gross 1991; Press 1991; Richardson 1981).

An interesting point is that not only women have fewer roles on television, but also the characters played by women tend to be younger, less mature than male characters, and therefore less authoritative. Young female characters are typically thin and physically attractive. It is not to say that portrayal of women are not changed over the history. As Press (1991) identified the three periods of television programming with respect to the portrayal of women; prefeminst, feminist and

post-feminist. Press did found that in pre-feminist period, the portrayal of women were the most negative in comparison to feminist and post-feminist period. According to Press, we are now in post-modern period, where the traditional portrayal of women on television has challenged dramatically but still women are shown much in connection with the families, even if they are shown to be working outside home.

Despite a few strong independent characters shown on television, men are far more likely than women to solve problems. Infect, women usually need help from others to solve problems. Men are shown more powerful and less emotional; rarely do male characters cry, unless the objective is to make them silly or funny. In contrast, female characters express emotions easily, even, if they are successful career women's. Women are also more likely than men to use sex or romantic charm to get what they want. But there is one way that men are depicted clearly less favorably than women; they are the "bad guys" utilizing the tools of force and violence. Women's especially older ones are portrayed as victims on television. Of course, women seem more prominent on the television nowadays, and their characters appear more liberated. This may be because one of the biggest changes of prime-time programming has been the incorporation of women's rights and gender equality themes and programs that raise such issues typically take what could be described as feminist strand.

There are quite other dimensions to the topic of portraying of women on television. The most significant among others are racism and minority issues. As discussed earlier that representation of women is increasing on the television over the period, but the issue is still, the minority women remain dramatically under-represented. Additionally, majority of women characters on television are given to women with fair color and figures, resulting in under-representation of women with less fair color or figures giving rise to psycho-sociological disorders in the masses.

To sum up, television has become the significant component of human social life. Its outreach is dramatically increasing over the period. Indeed, television is "Ubiquitous" media socializer, with respect to ever-increasing size of audience together with the influential role; it is playing in socialization process specially in context of "gender".

9.4 Images of Gender in the Media

Defenders of the media sometimes argue that while media portrayals are often sexist, their effects are benign. “That only happens on television”. They say, “People don’t really believe that stuff”. There is evidence though, that appears to contradict this argument; many people, it seems, do believe that stuff. The majority of research on media effects has focused on television, largely because of its popularity, particularly with children, and because of its unique characteristics. A central issue is effects of violent television programming. With respect to violent behavior, television’s impact hardly seems benign. Is there similar relationship between television viewing and perception of appropriate roles for the women, and men?

Recent reviews of the literature have found evidence that viewers who watch television frequently are more sexist than who watch it only occasionally. The amount of television viewing was positively associated with stereotyping of both males and females, and stereotyping tended to increase with age, but decreased among those who were light viewers (Comstock, 1992; Courtney and Whipple, 1983; but for a partially opposing view see Perloff, 1977).

Some have argued that an observed relationship between television viewing and gender stereotyping does not necessarily mean that it is the television viewing that causes the stereotyping. It may be that those who tend to stereotype also tend to watch more television (Courtney and Whipple, 1983).

9.5 Language and Media as Shapers of Gender

Language and media are the primary means of disseminating information and plays significant role in shaping the gender images. Far from simply reflecting the values and norms of culture, the language and media shape and re-create culture. In this way, the language and media socialize us and with respect to gender, much of this socialization takes place through “symbolic annihilation”, which is a process of symbolically ignoring, trivializing or demeaning a particular group, which in this case has traditionally been women. In this unit, for example, we have found that the language “tells a woman that she is an after though, a linguistic variant, an ‘et cetera’”. Newspapers convey a similar message. Rarely are women or women centered events and issues considered to be worthy of serious attention as hard news; instead, they are ghettoized or distorted. Magazines, television, and the advertisements that dominate the both, promote what may be called cults of femininity and masculinity.

It is proposed that as discussed in this unit earlier that such depictions do have a negative impact on men's and women's behaviors and self-concepts. Having said that after review of research conducted also indicates that the media, particularly television, can be and is powerful force in breaking down sexist stereotypes by sensitively and realistically portraying women and men in non-traditional roles. Some observers have argued that this latter consequence is likely only if more women are hired for policymaking posts at newspaper, television stations, and advertising agencies. We too advocate a balanced representation of the sexes in these jobs; however, evidence we have discussed in this unit suggests that this not enough. In addition, a concerned public must take action. Successful strategies have included letter-writing campaigns to newspaper and television stations, a boycott of products promoted in sexist advertisements. At the very least, we must adopt the practice of using nonsexist language in our own communication. If language and the media help to construct what comes to be defined as reality, we must act to ensure that the reality constructed is a non-sexist one.

9.6 Glossary

- **Linguistic sexism:** Ways in which language devalues members of one sex.
- **Reflection Hypothesis:** The belief that media content mirrors the behaviors, relationships, values and norms most prevalent or dominant in a society.
- **Semantic derogation**: The process by which the meaning or connotations of words are debased over time.
- **Symbolic annihilation:** Symbolically ignoring, trivializing or condemning individuals or groups in the media.

Self-Assessment Questions

Question 1. Do women and men speak different languages?

Question 2. "The reason for the gender gap in newspaper is that newspapers often do not speak to women" elaborate your answer with examples.

Question 3. Write comprehensive note on the following:

a) Effectiveness of television

b) The importance of feminist programs

c) The importance of children programs

d) Discuss the role of visual aids in gender awareness about health problems.

e) "Media is helpful in stopping domestic volition", elaborate the statement.

Further Readings

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