Definition of Gender

Gender refers to the **socially constructed roles, responsibilities, attributes, and behaviours** that a society considers appropriate for men, women, and other gender identities. Unlike **sex**, which is biologically determined, gender is shaped by cultural, social, political, and economic contexts and can vary across time and societies.

Examples of gender roles include:

- Women are often expected to perform caregiving and household tasks.
- Men are expected to be the breadwinners or work outside the home.

Definition of Gender Economics

Gender Economics is a branch of economics that studies how gender differences affect economic outcomes such as income, employment, education, and access to resources. It also analyses how economic policies and systems can either reduce or reinforce gender inequality.

It incorporates insights from **feminist economics**, labour economics, development economics, and social policy.

"Gender economics is the study of how gender relations affect economic outcomes and how economic policies affect gender relations."

- **Diane Elson (Feminist Economist)**

"Gender economics is concerned with understanding how economic activities and outcomes are influenced by gender-based divisions of labour, access to resources, and social norms."

- **International Labour Organization (ILO)**

"Gender economics addresses the power relations between men and women in the economy and analyses the gendered nature of economic structures."

-**Nilufer Cagatay (UNDP & Gender Economist)**

Purpose of Gender Economics / Objectives of Gender Economics

The main purposes of studying gender economics are:

1. **To Analyze Gender-Based Disparities**

- It has to examine the differences in income, employment, education, health, and property ownership between men, women, and other gender identities.

2. **To Recognize the Value of Unpaid Work**
   - One has to acknowledge and include unpaid domestic and care work (mainly performed by women) in economic analysis and national accounts.

3. **To Promote Gender Equality in Economic Participation**
   - We need to encourage equal opportunities and participation of all genders in the labour market, entrepreneurship, and decision-making.

4. **To Influence Gender-Responsive Policies**
   - It has to provide data and analysis that help governments and institutions design policies that reduce gender inequality (e.g., maternity leave, equal pay, childcare support).

5. **To Bridge the Gender Wage Gap**
   - It helps to understand the causes of wage differences between men and women and develop strategies to reduce income inequality.

6. **To Ensure Equitable Access to Resources**
   - It should advocate for equal rights to education, healthcare, credit, land, and employment opportunities for all genders.

7. **To Empower Women and Marginalized Genders**
   - By focusing on removing structural barriers and promoting economic empowerment, especially in rural and underdeveloped areas.

8. **To Support Sustainable and Inclusive Development**

   It should achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Particularly Goals like Gender Equality and Decent Work and Economic Growth.

9. **To Develop Gender-Sensitive Economic Indicators**
   - Gender Economics should promote collection and use of sex-disaggregated data and time-use surveys for better economic planning.

10. **To Challenge Gender Bias in Traditional Economics**
    - It has to critique mainstream economic theories that overlook gender roles and introduce feminist and alternative approaches.
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Importance of Gender Economics

Understanding and applying gender economics is important for several reasons:

1. **Promotes Inclusive Growth**: It ensures that economic growth benefits all members of society, including marginalized genders.
2. **Reduces Poverty**: By empowering women economically improves household welfare and reduces poverty.
3. **Improves Economic Efficiency**: It utilize the talents of all genders that boosts productivity and innovation.
4. **Achieves Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: Particularly Goals like Gender Equality and Decent Work and Economic Growth.
5. **Supports Human Rights and Equity**: It recognizes and addresses systemic gender-based discrimination.

Gender Analysis – Purpose and Scope

Introduction:

Gender analysis is a systematic approach used to examine the differences in roles, responsibilities, and access to resources, opportunities, and power between women, men, and other gender identities in a given context. It plays a crucial role in designing inclusive policies, programs, and development initiatives that promote gender equality and social justice.

Purpose of Gender Analysis:

- It helps to identify Gender Inequalities and thus it uncovers disparities between men and women in various spheres of life.
- It helps to understand Gender Roles and Relations which in turn analyzes how gender norms shape societal roles and expectations.
- It aids to promote Inclusive Development and thus it ensures both men and women benefit equally from development efforts.
- It also improves Policy and Project Effectiveness which makes policies more effective by addressing diverse gender needs.
- It empowers Marginalized Groups which supports empowerment and capacity-building of women and gender minorities.
- It complies with Legal and Institutional Requirements: and thus meets requirements for gender mainstreaming in development.

3

Scope of Gender Analysis:

Gender analysis can be applied across multiple levels and sectors, including:

- **Household Level:** It examines the division of labor and decision-making within families.
- **Community Level:** It helps to studies cultural norms and power dynamics influencing gender roles.
- **Workplace and Economic Activities:** It helps to analyzes employment patterns and gender wage gaps.
- **Education and Health:** It evaluates disparities in literacy, school attendance, and healthcare access.
- **Political Participation and Leadership:** It helps to measures representation of women in leadership roles.
- **Access to Technology and Information:** It investigates digital literacy and access gaps.
- **Conflict and Disaster Response:** It considers gendered vulnerabilities in crises and disaster relief.

Tools and Methods Used in Gender Analysis

- Gender-disaggregated data
- Gender needs assessment
- Gender budgeting
- SWOT analysis with a gender lens
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
- Social and Institutional Mapping

Conclusion:

Gender analysis is an essential tool for achieving equity, inclusion, and sustainable development. By examining the differences and inequalities based on gender, it helps in removing barriers to equal participation and ensures that all individuals can contribute to and benefit from economic, social, and political progress.

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Feminist Perspective in Economics: Classical, Neoclassical & Post-Keynesian Schools:

Introduction:

Feminist economics critically analyses how traditional economic theories have marginalized or ignored women's roles, contributions, and experiences. It challenges the **androcentric bias** in economic thought and seeks to restructure economic theories to include **gender relations**, **care work**, and **social reproduction**. Feminist economists critique and reinterpret major economic schools, including **Classical**, **Neoclassical**, and **Post-Keynesian** economics.

1. Classical Economics and Feminist Critique

Overview of Classical Economics:

- It is associated with **Adam Smith, David Ricardo, John Stuart Mill**, etc.
- It is focused on production, labor value, capital accumulation, and markets.
- It also assumes **individual self-interest and free-market efficiency**.

Feminist Critique:

- **Invisible Role of Women:** Women's unpaid household labor and care giving roles were ignored, despite being essential for supporting productive labor.
- **Public-Private Divide:** The economy was seen as public (male-dominated production sphere), while the home (private/female sphere) was excluded.
- **Labor Theory of Value:** Focused only on market labor, excluding domestic and reproductive labor performed mainly by women.
- **John Stuart Mill's Exception:** Among classical economists, Mill recognized women's subordination and advocated for **equality in marriage and employment**, but his ideas had little impact on mainstream economics.

Feminist Reinterpretation:

Feminist economists argue for expanding the notion of labor to include **unpaid domestic work**, and recognizing its role in economic value creation and social reproduction.

2. Neoclassical Economics and Feminist Critique

Overview of Neoclassical Economics:

- It is emerged in the late 19th century with economists like **Alfred Marshall**, and continued with **modern microeconomics**.

- It emphasizes **rational choice, utility maximization, marginalism**, and **market equilibrium**.

Feminist Critique:

- **Homo Economicus:** The concept of a rational, self-interested, utility-maximizing individual is criticized as **gender-neutral but male-biased**.
- **Household as a Single Unit:** Neoclassical models often treat households as unified entities with shared goals, ignoring **intra-household gender inequalities**.
- **Disregard for Power and Institutions:** Gender power dynamics, discrimination, and social norms are largely ignored.
- **Underestimation of Unpaid Work:** Time and labor spent on **childcare, cooking, cleaning**, etc., are unaccounted for in national income and labor statistics.

Feminist Reinterpretation:

- It emphasizes **bargaining models within households** (e.g., Amartya Sen's cooperative-conflict model).
- It advocates for **time-use surveys** and **gender-disaggregated data**.
- It also pushes for inclusion of **care economy** and redefining productivity.

3. Post-Keynesian Economics and Feminist Insights

Overview of Post-Keynesian Economics:

- It is inspired by **John Maynard Keynes** but developed further by economists like **Joan Robinson, Paul Davidson**, and others.
- It focuses on **uncertainty, effective demand, income distribution**, and **institutions**.
- It challenges the assumptions of equilibrium and perfect information.

Feminist Engagement with Post-Keynesianism:

- It is more receptive than other schools due to its emphasis on **institutions, power relations**, and **distribution**.
- **Joan Robinson**, a notable Post-Keynesian, highlighted **gender inequality in wages** and **segmented labor markets**.
- Feminist Post-Keynesians integrate **gender** into analysis of:
    - Employment patterns and labor markets.
    - Wage discrimination and occupational segregation.

- o The macroeconomic role of **social reproduction** (e.g., care work sustains labor supply).
- **Critique of Fiscal Austerity:** Feminist economists argue that austerity policies harm women disproportionately due to cuts in social services and welfare.

Feminist Reinterpretation:

- It proposes **gender-aware macroeconomic models**.
- It promotes **gender budgeting** and public investment in care infrastructure.
- It highlights how **economic insecurity affects men and women differently**.

Comparative Summary:

School	Feminist Critique	Feminist Contribution
Classical	Ignores unpaid labor, focuses on market production	Recognize domestic labor as economically valuable
Neoclassical	Assumes rational agents, neglects gender inequality	Bargaining models, time-use studies, care work analysis
Post-Keynesian	More flexible, lacks gender integration	Gender-aware macro models, fiscal policy analysis

Conclusion:

Feminist perspectives in economics challenge the **male-centric assumptions** of traditional theories. While **Classical and Neoclassical** schools largely ignore gender issues, **Post-Keynesian** economics offers a more flexible base for feminist integration. Feminist economists advocate for **inclusive, just, and equitable economic frameworks** that value all forms of labor—paid or unpaid—and address **structural inequalities**. Their work has not only reshaped economic theory but also influenced **policy-making, development planning**, and the pursuit of **gender equality in economics.**

Economic Measurement and Gender:

Explain how economic measurements fail to capture gender disparities. What improvements can be made?

Economic measurements are critical tools used to assess a country's development, progress, and well-being. However, traditional economic indicators like **Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment rates, and national income** often fail to capture the full scope of **gender disparities**. This leads to **underrepresentation** of women's contributions and an **incomplete picture** of

economic realities. The following are the economics measurements that fails to capture gender disparities:

1. Exclusion of Unpaid Work

- One of the biggest failures is the **exclusion of unpaid care and domestic work**, which is largely done by women (e.g., cooking, cleaning, child and elder care).
- This work contributes to household and societal well-being but is not counted in GDP or national income statistics.

2. Labour Force Participation Bias

- Economic data often capture only **formal sector employment**, overlooking the **informal sector** and **part-time work**, where many women are engaged.
- Women may be working but classified as **"not in the labor force"** because their contributions do not meet formal definitions of employment.

3. Wage Gap and Income Inequality

- Average income and employment statistics often **mask the gender wage gap**, where women earn less than men for the same or similar work.
- Earnings data may not be disaggregated by gender, resulting in a lack of insight into income inequality.

4. Lack of Gender-Disaggregated Data

- Many economic indicators are presented in aggregate form, **without distinguishing between men and women**, making it difficult to analyze gender-specific outcomes.

5. Ownership and Access to Assets

- Measurements often ignore **gender differences in asset ownership** (land, credit, property, technology), even though access to these significantly affects economic empowerment.

6. Social and Cultural Bias in Data Collection

- Surveys and censuses may carry **implicit gender bias** in the way questions are framed or who is interviewed (usually the male head of household), ignoring women's perspectives.

7. Underestimation of Women in Entrepreneurship

- Female entrepreneurship, particularly **home-based or micro-enterprises**, is underreported due to lack of registration and visibility in official data.

Improvements That Can Be Made

1. Incorporation of Unpaid Work in National Accounts

- Use of **Satellite Accounts** (as recommended by the UN System of National Accounts) to **value and report unpaid domestic work**.
- By conducting **Time Use Surveys** to quantify hours spent by men and women on unpaid tasks.

2. Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection

- Mandate the collection and publication of **sex-disaggregated statistics** across all economic indicators (wages, employment, education, credit access).
- Use this data to design targeted gender-sensitive policies.

3. Measure Quality of Employment

- Go beyond mere employment numbers to consider the **quality, security, and conditions** of work—especially for women in precarious or informal jobs.

4. Track Gender Wage Gap Separately

- Introduce regular and transparent reporting of the **gender wage gap** across sectors, regions, and educational levels.

5. Improve Asset Ownership Data

- Collect and report data on **individual ownership** (not just household ownership) of land, property, and bank accounts, disaggregated by gender.

6. Inclusion of Informal and Home-Based Work

- Adapt labour force surveys to include **home-based work, piece-rate work, and other non-traditional employment** where many women are engaged.

9

Use of Composite Gender Equality Indicators

- Supplement GDP with **Gender Development Index (GDI), Gender Inequality Index (GII)**, and **Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)** to get a broader view of development.

8. Capacity Building and Training

- Provide training for data collectors and policy analysts in **gender-sensitive research methodologies** to avoid bias and misrepresentation.

Conclusion:

Thus, current economic measurements are insufficient and gender-blind, leading to policies that fail to address the unique economic realities faced by women and marginalized genders. By reforming these measurements, we can move toward a more accurate, equitable, and gender-just economic system. These changes are essential not only for fairness but also for sustainable and inclusive development.

Discuss the Empirical Challenges in Studying Gender and Economics

Introduction

Gender economics focuses on understanding how gender roles and relations impact economic outcomes and how economic policies affect gender equality. While the field is expanding, researchers and policymakers face significant **empirical challenges**—especially in terms of data collection, interpretation, and representation. These challenges hinder the formulation of effective gender-responsive policies.

Empirical Challenges in Gender Economics

Empirical challenges refer to the **difficulties in collecting, measuring, analysing, and interpreting real-world data** related to gender differences in economics. These issues arise from **social norms, institutional biases, inadequate methodologies**, and **limited availability of sex-disaggregated data**. The following are the major Empirical Challenges in Studying Gender and Economics:

1. Lack of Sex-Disaggregated Data

- Many economic datasets report only **aggregate-level information**, not distinguishing between men and women.

- This masks gender disparities in **income, employment, property ownership**, and **credit access**.

2. Underreporting of Unpaid and Informal Work

- A significant portion of women's labour, especially **unpaid domestic and caregiving work**, is **not included in national income accounting** (like GDP).
- Similarly, **home-based or informal sector work** done by women is often excluded from labour force surveys.

3. Cultural and Social Biases in Data Collection

- Surveys and censuses often **interview male heads of households**, ignoring women's contributions.
- **Patriarchal social norms** may discourage women from revealing information about work or income, leading to **data inaccuracies**.

4. Invisibility of Intra-Household Inequalities

- Traditional household-level data **treat the household as a single economic unit**, ignoring how **resources, income, and decision-making** power are distributed within the household.
- Women may not have **equal access to income, food, or health care** despite living in the same household.

5. Challenges in Measuring Gender Wage Gaps

- Wage gap data may fail to account for **hours worked, job type, education, and unpaid labour**, leading to **incomplete or misleading conclusions**.
- **Occupational segregation** (concentration of men and women in different jobs) is hard to quantify across informal and formal sectors.

6. Inadequate Time Use Surveys

- **Time use surveys**, which capture how much time individuals spend on different activities, are **not regularly conducted** in many countries.
- Where they exist, **methodological inconsistencies** limit cross-country comparisons.

7. Limited Measurement of Empowerment and Agency

- Economic studies often **focus on material indicators (income, assets)** and ignore **non-material aspects** such as **decision-making power, mobility, autonomy**, and **voice**.
- These subjective factors are difficult to measure but critical to understanding gender dynamics.

8. Intersectionality Overlooked

- Economic analysis often fails to consider **intersectionality** —how gender intersects with **caste, class, ethnicity, disability, and geography**.
- This leads to **overgeneralized findings** and weak policy targeting for vulnerable groups like rural women or women with disabilities.

9. Data Gaps in Entrepreneurship and Asset Ownership

- Data on **female entrepreneurship** is limited, especially in rural and informal contexts.
- **Ownership rights**, especially for land and property, are often **recorded in men's names** even if women contribute significantly.

10. Policy Blind Spots due to Incomplete Data

- Due to these data issues, **policies may be gender-blind**, reinforcing inequalities rather than solving them.
- Misrepresentation of women's economic roles can lead to **underfunded social programs** or **ineffective interventions**.

Solutions and Recommendations:

1. **Mandatory Sex-Disaggregated Data Collection**: Government and statistical agencies must collect and publish **gender-specific data** across all economic indicators.
2. **Regular Time Use Surveys**: To implement and standardize **time use surveys** to capture unpaid labour accurately.
3. **Gender-Responsive Budgeting and Research**: To incorporate gender analysis into all stages of economic planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
4. **Household-Level Individual Data**: To gather data at the **individual level** to better understand **intra-household resource allocation**.
5. **Training and Capacity Building**: To equip researchers and policymakers with **gender-sensitive tools and methodologies**.

6. **Use of Composite Indices**: To encourage use of **Gender Development Index (GDI), Gender Inequality Index (GII)** and **Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)** to track gender progress beyond GDP.

Conclusion:

Empirical challenges in gender economics limit our ability to identify, understand, and address gender-based inequalities. Overcoming these requires **methodological innovations**, **robust data collection systems**, and a **commitment to gender mainstreaming** in all aspects of economic analysis. Accurate and inclusive data is crucial for shaping a more equitable and effective economic system that truly reflects the contributions and needs of all genders.

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MCQ QUESTIONS FOR UNIT – I

1. **Gender refers to:**
   a) Biological differences between men and women
   b) Socially constructed roles and behaviours
   c) Economic inequality only
   d) Genetic structure

2. **Which of the following is a biological category?**
   a) Gender   **b) Sex**   c) Role   d) Identity

3. **Which economist is known for the Capability Approach and gender equality work?**
   a) Karl Marx   b) J. M. Keynes   **c) Amartya Sen**   d) Adam Smith

4. **Gender analysis helps to understand:**
   a) Physical health differences   b) Biological distinctions
   c) Economic & social inequalities based on gender   d) Agricultural output

5. **The main goal of gender analysis is to:**
   a) Promote men's rights   b) Study biology
   c) Identify and reduce gender disparities   d) Measure GDP

6. **Gender analysis is commonly applied in all EXCEPT:**
   a) Education   b) Health   c) Transport infrastructure   **d) Planetary science**

7. **Feminist economics emphasizes:**
   a) Laissez-faire policy   b) Ignoring gender roles
   c) Recognition of unpaid work   d) Profit maximization

8. **Which of the following is NOT a focus area of feminist economics?**
   a) Valuing domestic labour   b) Gender wage gap
   c) Stock market behaviour   d) Care economy

9. **The feminist economic approach is critical of:**
   a) Capitalist economies   b) Traditional gender roles
   c) Gender-neutral assumptions in mainstream economics   **d) All of the above**

10. **Classical economists often:**
    a) Emphasized gender equality   **b) Ignored women's economic roles**
    c) Focused on unpaid labour   d) Promoted feminist theories

11. **Neoclassical economics assumes that:**
    a) Men work more than women
    b) Gender affects rationality
    c) Individuals are gender-neutral rational agents
    d) Economics is purely political

12. **Post-Keynesian economics considers:**
    a) The invisible hand   **b) Power relations and institutional dynamics**
    c) Only formal markets   d) Gender irrelevant in labour decisions

13. **Which type of work is usually excluded from GDP?**
    a) Manufacturing   b) Paid office work
    c) Unpaid domestic work   d) Agricultural exports

14. **Time Use Surveys are used to:**
    a) Measure GDP
    b) Estimate employment in agriculture
    c) Track unpaid work and time spent on various activities
    d) Calculate taxes

15. **The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is developed by:**
    a) World Bank   b) IMF   **c) UNDP**   d) WTO

16. **A major empirical challenge in gender economics is:**
    a) Excess tax data   b) Too much data on men
    c) Lack of sex-disaggregated data   d) Overestimation of inflation

17. **Intra-household inequalities are hard to measure because:**
    a) Households are usually surveyed as a unit b) Only men respond to surveys
    c) Households are all the same   d) Data is never collected

18. **Unpaid care work is often:**
    a) Fully valued in GDP   b) Overestimated in surveys
    c) Invisible in economic data   d) Done mainly by men

19. **Intersectionality refers to:**
    a) Traffic systems
    b) Cross-country trade
    c) Multiple forms of identity-based discrimination
    d) Measuring market prices

20. **Which of the following helps address empirical challenges in gender economics?**
    a) Ignoring unpaid work
    b) Reducing household surveys
    c) Conducting Time Use and Gender Budgeting surveys
    d) Using only GDP

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