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Reg. No. :

Name :

Second Semester M.A. Degree Examination, August 2025

English Language and Literature

EL 523 : GENDER STUDIES

(2022 Admission Onwards)

Time : 3 Hours

Max. Marks : 75

I. Answer any **five** of the following questions in about 50 words:

1. What is Agency?
2. What is Écriture feminine?
3. Why does Lorde say "we were never meant to survive"?
4. What does Laura Mulvey mean by the "male gaze"?
5. What is workplace harassment?
6. What are the main objectives of the POCSO Act, 2012?
7. How are women typically portrayed in superhero comics according to Gibson?
8. What role does silence play in the narrator's experience of abuse in *When I Hit You*?

(5 × 2 = 10 Marks)

P.T.O.



II. Answer any five of the following questions in all about 100 words.

9. Analyse the role of social media and ICTs in Gender activism in India.
10. The intersection of gender and caste in the Namboodiri community as portrayed in *Antharjanam: Memoirs of a Namboodiri Woman*.
11. The role of society in shaping the identity of women, according to de Beauvoir.
12. Theme of displacement in "The Thing around your Neck".
13. The reinforcement or challenge of hegemonic masculinity through popular culture.
14. The evolution of feminist movements across the first, second, and third waves.
15. The role of caste and gender in the practice of matchmaking in Kerala.
16. The significance of the slogan "The personal is political" in feminist thought.

(5 × 5 = 25 Marks)

III. Answer any two of the following questions in about 300 words choosing one from each group.

Group A

17. Examine how T. Muraleedharan addresses the intersections of gender, sexuality, and social marginalisation in his exploration of queer theories.
18. Discuss the key features of patriarchy in the Indian context and the ways in which it is resisted.
19. Critically analyse Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity as outlined in "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire."



Group B

20. Discuss how the Western historical model of disability differs from the emerging perspectives in Indian disability studies.
21. Examine the effectiveness of cyber laws in addressing online abuse and harassment, particularly against women and children.
22. Briefly examine how gender intersects with identities like caste, class, race, religion, disability, and sexuality to shape experiences of oppression and resistance.

(2 × 15 = 30 Marks)

- IV. Critically analyse and answer any one of the following questions in about 150 words.
23. Critically evaluate how evolving understandings of sex and gender challenge traditional binaries and influence contemporary debates on gender fluidity and identity.
 24. Present the main arguments in the given passage in not more than two sentences and attempt a one-page critical note on the passage.

Gender-based violence in India remains a persistent and complex problem, rooted deeply in patriarchal structures. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), over 445,000 cases of crimes against women were reported in 2022, marking a 4% increase from the previous year. These include domestic violence, sexual assault, dowry deaths, acid attacks, and workplace harassment. While legal reforms like the Domestic Violence Act (2005) and the POSH Act (2013) exist, their implementation is often weak, especially in rural areas where traditional hierarchies dominate. Patriarchy in Indian society shapes expectations of female behaviour, frequently blaming the victim and protecting the perpetrator. Cultural practices such as child marriage, honour killings, and gender-biased sex selection continue to reinforce the idea of male superiority and control. Efforts by feminist movements and civil society have brought attention to these issues, but systemic change remains slow. Education, awareness, and stronger law enforcement are necessary, but alone they are insufficient without a shift in social attitudes. Gendered violence is not only a legal concern—it is a societal one that calls for introspection and collective responsibility. The challenge lies in dismantling not just harmful practices, but also the invisible cultural codes that sustain them.



25. Examine the theme of marginalization and identity in the transgender community in India, taking the following passage as a critical point of reference in your analysis.

"Fear. I was scared to walk on the road for fear of people recognizing me. I was worried someone might tease me while I walk on the road. I was afraid the police might arrest me. I avoided taking the bus, not sure whom I could sit next to. I was scared to use the public toilet for fear that people might know my difference. I was scared that rotten tomatoes might hit me in the market. I was scared of falling in love for fear of being hit hard. Fear of anything and everything. Why am I so scared? This question haunts me.

Is it the fear of having changed into a hijra through castration? Or that I was born a male but wore female clothing? Is it due to the way I live—cast aside by my parents, unrecognized by society, penalized by the law and begging or prostituting for a living? What mistake did I commit? Did not my mother bear me for ten months, like my siblings? Why should I suffer this fate? Why should I live in perennial fear all my life? Can't people understand how much I am suffering—like the curd churned by the ladle or the worm burnt in the heat?"

(1 × 10 = 10 Marks)

