

BACHELOR OF ARTS EXAMINATION, 2024

(1st Year, 2nd Semester)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

[Academic Writing Skills]

Time : Two Hours

Full Marks : 30

Answer *either* in English *or* in Bengali.

CO1: (Answer any one question from CO1) Marks: 10

1. A. Distinguish between academic writing and non-academic writing.
B. Why is a rigorous literature search important in research writing?

CO2: (Answer any one question from CO2) Marks: 10

2. A. Define a Research Report. What are the main constituents of a Research Report?
B. Write a summary of the following passage and give it a suitable title:

New technological developments in reproductive science have made it possible to separate three different aspects in the biological experience of motherhood. Three different women could potentially perform what I term the key 'mother functions'-providing genetic material (the egg donor); gestating the foetus for nine months (the surrogate or 'gestational mother'); and rearing and bringing up the child (the 'social mother'). In the older biological understanding of motherhood, these three functions are assumed to be fused in one woman; but now there could be two or three women performing these three separate roles in each pregnancy. Thus, a woman can now carry in her uterus through in vitro fertilization (IVF), that is, fertilized outside the body, an embryo that could be from her own egg or another woman's, fertilized by a donor's sperm or that of her husband or lover. The child born out of this process is often meant for someone else to bring up (surrogacy), but women may also opt for their own child using this process. This means that a woman who does not want a man in her life can become pregnant through donor sperm; this process may also be used by married women if they or their husbands cannot produce the required quality of egg or sperm.

There are legitimate feminist concerns about the exploitation of poor women who perform commercial surrogacy, which we will address in a later section. But what are the implications of these technologies for a feminist understanding of 'family'? Here, the most significant feminist concern is that the promotion of these technologies by major drug companies and market forces, reinforces the patriarchal assumption that only biologically related children are one's 'own', thus attempting to marginalize the option of adoption. At the same time, though, many feminists also recognize the potential of these scientific-technological developments to fracture, in principle, patriarchal constructions of 'motherhood' which conflate the social role with 'biology'. That is, what does it do to the idea of 'motherhood' once the 'womb' (the surrogate) has been separated from the 'mother' (the 'social' mother who will bring up the child)? And is it not possible that these developments could potentially reduce the heterosexual monopoly over the family by enabling 'socially infertile people' as Chayanika Shah terms them-that is, single women, single men and same-sex couples-to have biologically related offspring? It is also important to open up and unravel the very idea of 'biologically' related families, which are assumed to be the only kind of family possible.

[Turn over

CO3: (Answer any one question from CO3)

Marks: 5

3A. Discuss the basic ingredients of a conclusion.

B. Paraphrase the paragraph below:

Employment of men not only confers social status and position but also translates as an asset in ensuring a good marriage, i.e., a marriage with a large dowry. Employment has arguably come to influence marriage decisions: when to marry and who to marry. It is not as if the unemployed do not get married or do not get "good girls" as brides. They do, but a lot depends on the financial and social status of the family they come from. But generally it can be observed that the unemployed either settle for lesser matches or do not get married at all. Indeed, a substantial number of the unmarried are to be found among those who are unemployed, which is also popularly held responsible for pushing up the age of marriage for males, thereby causing a great deal of anxiety. Anxiety around the unmarried status of men is reflected in a popular observation in Haryana: "If you want to seek help from someone in order to get your work done, then start talking about the possibility of his son's marriage". In fact, there is a prior presumption about the unemployed status of an unmarried man.

CO4: (Answer any one question from CO4)

Marks: 5

4. A. What is the role of references in academic writing?

B. Why is it important to avoid plagiarism in academic writing?