TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, 
MUMBAI

Research Aptitude Test (RAT) 
M.Phil/Ph.D. Programmes

Model Paper

Instructions:

1. The scoring for RAT is 100 marks and the interview is for 100 marks. RAT will assess research and analytical abilities and personal interview will assess your research aptitude, competence and subject knowledge and suitability to join the research stream.

2. The duration of the test paper is for 2 hours carrying 100 marks.

3. The test paper consists of Part I and II. You are expected to answer all the parts.

4. Part I will assess the analytical skills and it is for 40 marks. You are required to answer either of the two - the qualitative part or the quantitative part. Both the choices carry equal marks and you need to answer all the questions within that.

5. Part II will assess the conceptual and interpretative skills and it is for 60 marks. These questions will assess your subject specific competence in answering the questions. The questions would cover wide-ranging social sciences subjects and you have to answer 3 questions out of 18 choices. Each answer carries 20 marks.

6. Write your Admit Card No. legibly in the box below. Do not write your name on the Answer Sheet.

7. Hand over the test paper upon completion to the invigilator without fail.

8. This paper is common to both M.Phil and Ph.D. candidates.

ADMIT CARD NO. 

INVIGILATOR'S SIGNATURE 

Marks Obtained:

For PART I: 

For PART II: 

TOTAL 

Examiner’s Signature with Date
PART I: ANALYTICAL SKILLS

Quantitative Part with one question to be answered (OR) Qualitative Part with two questions to be answered.

QUANTITATIVE PART:

The paper will have two tables and the candidate has to choose one. A sample is given below:

**Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment in India**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSS 66th Round (2009-10)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Force as a percentage of Population</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed as a percentage of Population</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed as a percentage of Labour Force</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSS 61st Round (2004-05)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Force as a percentage of Population</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed as a percentage of Population</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed as a percentage of Labour Force</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Labour includes employed and unemployed.

Source: NSSO (2011), Key indicators of employment and unemployment in India 2009-10, Ministry of statistics and programme implementation, Government of India.

**QUESTION:** Drawing cues from the above table, elucidate basic patterns relating to labour force, employment and unemployment? **(500 words)**
QUALITATIVE PART:

The paper will have two passages and the candidate has to choose one. A sample is given below:

Please read the following passage and answer all the questions given below. All questions carry equal marks.

**Feminism and the Family – Thoughts on International Women’s Day**

March 8, 2012

Excerpts from the forthcoming book by Nivedita Menon, *Seeing Like a Feminist* (Penguin India/Zubaan Books)

Have you heard of ‘nude make-up’?

This is what it is:

‘Nude makeup looks are all about your skin looking fresh and dewy, without looking like you’re even wearing any makeup. All you need is eyeliner, mascara, nude lipstick, and a highlighting blush that will give your skin a natural-looking glow.’

The whole point of nude makeup clearly, is to spend hours painting your face in order to make it look like you never touched it at all.

The maintaining of social order is rather like that. It requires the faithful performance of prescribed rituals over and over again throughout one’s lifetime. Complex networks of cultural reproduction are dedicated to this sole purpose. But the ultimate goal of all this unceasing activity is to produce the effect of untouched naturalness.

When one ‘sees’ the world like a feminist though, with the gaze of a feminist, it’s rather like activating the ‘Reveal Formating’ function in Microsoft Word (what an earlier generation of WordPerfect users knew as ‘Reveal Codes’). The feminist gaze reveals the strenuous, complex formatting that goes on below the surface of what looked smooth and complete.

What do I mean by feminism? A feminist perspective recognizes that the hierarchical organizing of the world around gender is key to maintaining social order; that to live lives marked as ‘male’ and ‘female’ is to live different realities. But simultaneously, to be a feminist is to imagine occupying the marginal position with reference to every dominant framework. For instance, any possible female reader of this post would be in a relatively powerful position with regard to working class men she interacts with daily – the auto rickshaw driver, the janitor, the domestic servant; and if she is an upper-caste Hindu in India, or white American anywhere, with regard to men who are not. At the same time, she would experience her relative powerlessness as a woman if faced by a man in a position to attack her sexually, regardless of his class or caste position; or when she compares her life choices and autonomy with those of a man of her class. Needless to say, it is not only ‘women’ who can adopt feminism as a political stance and way of life, but men who choose to do this have to be taking a stand against the privileges that they could otherwise take for granted.

Feminism is thus not about individual men and women, but about understanding the ways in which ‘men’ and ‘women’ are produced and inserted into patriarchies that differ according
to time and place.

When a feminist ‘sees’ from the position of marginality s/he has deliberately chosen to occupy, it is a gesture of subversion towards power; it disorganizes and disorders the settled field, resists homogenization, and opens up multiple possibilities rather than closing them off (...)

Source: http://kafila.org/2012/03/08/feminism-and-the-family-thoughts-on-international-womens-day/

QUESTION 1: How does the author articulate the relationships between feminist perspectives and power? (250 words)
QUESTION 2: “Feminism is thus not about individual men and women, but about understanding the ways in which ‘men’ and ‘women’ are produced and inserted into patriarchies”. What would this mean for the study of your own area of interest? (250 words)
PART II: CONCEPTUAL & INTERPRETATIVE SKILLS (60 marks)

This part will assess your subject specific competence in answering the questions. Indicate the question number that you are attempting correctly.

Attempt 3 questions out of the 18 choices. Each question carries 20 marks (each answer can be of 500 words). This model contains only 10 questions as samples.

Q1: Critically evaluate the significance and contribution of women’s studies to knowledge building in higher education. Please illustrate your answer from any disciplinary standpoint.

Q2: Comment on the role of public transport in sustainable urban development.

Q3: Discuss the recent controversy surrounding the definition and estimation of poverty in India.

Q4: Globalisation has encouraged labour mobility in rural areas. How does this help or affect landless labourers?

Q5: The judicial decision of death penalty followed by politics of clemency has been debated extensively. In the light of these decisions, examine the nature and character of Indian state.

Q6: “The only known solution to ecological overshoot is to decelerate our population growth faster than it's decelerating now and eventually reverse it—at the same time we slow and eventually reverse the rate at which we consume the planet's resources. Success in these twin endeavors will crack our most pressing global issues: climate change, food scarcity, water supplies, immigration, health care, biodiversity loss, even war.” (Source - 'The Last Taboo' by Julia Whitty). Critically analyse the above statement.

Q7: Companies are not really interested in employee well-being, except for instrumental reasons. Discuss the validity of this statement.

Q8: For decades, micro credit has been considered as a solution for poverty alleviation. However, the interest rates of this credit vary from 20 percent to 200 percent in Mexico, Bangladesh and India. Poor members are under extreme social pressure. It has pushed them into debt traps. Comment and substantiate your agreement or disagreement with arguments.

Q9: It is often claimed that private schools impart a better education than public (government) schools. Do you agree or disagree? Explain why.
