

CSS-2018:

Q: Fundamental differences between Gender Studies and Women's Studies? Substantiate your argument(s) with examples? Highlight current status of women studies in Pakistan?

Ans: Outline:

1. Introduction.
2. Fundamental differences between Gender studies and women studies:
  - A) Defining gender studies and women studies.
  - B) Historical origin of gender studies and women studies.
  - C) Focus of research of respective disciplines.
  - D) Nature of subjects.
  - E) Goal of respective studies.
  - F) Theoretical differences.
3. Arguments:
  - A) Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary approaches of respective subjects.
  - B) Conservative and Broader lens of Women Studies and Gender Studies, respectively.
4. Status of Women studies in Pakistan:
  - A) Tracing the history and origin of the subject.

- B) Alam-e-Nisva.
- C) Efforts of PAWS.
- D) Centres of Excellence - by Ministry of Women Development.
- E) National Plan of Action.
- F) Academic advancement of the subject.

## Introduction:

Women studies is a discipline that deals with the women-centric issues, traces back the root causes, their related implications in the society. While, Gender studies has more open approach and deals with concerns related to all genders women, men, intersex and LGBTQ. One discipline has a spotlighted approach and addresses oppression by addressing the single gender, while other has a broader ambit. The impact and contemporary status of women studies in Pakistan highlights the development of the subject in the country.

## Fundamental Differences between Gender Studies and Women's Studies:

Characteristics	Gender Studies	Women's Studies
-----------------	----------------	-----------------

→ Definition	It is a multidisciplinary subject that	Women's studies is an interdisciplinary
--------------	--	---

## Characteristics

## Gender Studies

## Women's Studies

deals with the study of different genders, with broader unbounded lens, traces the cultural construction of genders, causes and impacts of gendered norms in the society.

subject that deals with the issues related to women and inequality caused by patriarchy and highlights the roles of women contribution of respective field.

## → Focus of Research

Broad visionary focus covers all the genders under the ambit and talks about their equity and rights.

Focuses merely on the women and disparity between men and women created by patriarchal society.

## → Origin

It is the offshoot of 3rd wave and is associated with the contemporary wave as well.

It is a predecessor of gender studies, began in 60s as offshoot of second wave.

## → Nature of subject

It is multidisciplinary as well as interdisciplinary subject and its strands are extended to other disciplines as well.

It is an interdisciplinary subject and is strictly bounded to women centric issues.

## → Goals of subject

It demands equity for all genders, and recognition of their rights.

It merely demands the equal treatment of women and men.

→ Theoretical differences

It involves the Postmodern theory and Queer theory, and is associated with Gender and Development (GAD) approach.

It involves the theoretical perspective of feminism, and is associated with Women in Development (WID) and Women and Development (WAD) approach.

## Arguments:

Women study has the interdisciplinary vision - isolated vision with making the change from within. This idea is a good way of highlighting the oppression caused by patriarchal society, but the one gender approach of this subject is considered conservative. All oppression is connected, and the only way to overcome is to make sure our work for justice and visions of peace are connected. (Forbes, Maeghan Davis, 2020). Given the earliest example related to women oppression, suffrage movement, the movement that merely talked about giving the right to vote to women. Though, it is the cornerstone behind all the development and awareness against and regarding patriarchal society; but the first recognition

was given to the white, educated, middle class women. This shows that with the bounded vision, the result would be small fitting in the four walls as well. Then comes Gender studies, with an approach broader enough to consider all the genders irrespective of their race, culture, caste and society.

Tracing back the need of Women Studies itself provides the answer to the need of Gender Studies. Women observed the marginalization of their gender in this patriarchal society, and hence, vocalized it through the feminist approach; to put an end to it. But merely focusing on men and women and their equality means marginalizing the other genders in the exact way the women were marginalized. There is a dire need to vocalize for intersex community and gender diverse community as well. This proves that to deconstruct the social impositions the broader vision is a better option.

## Status of Women Studies in Pakistan

Rubina Saigal, in the State of Women's Studies in Pakistan; Gender studies is a social discipline within the women's movements and feminist fights that have raged all over the world.

Even though the world wide struggle began more than hundred years ago, but this subject is still new and developing all around the world. It has a proper history in Pakistan as well. It began in response to the Hudood Ordinance and Zia Ordinance imposed by the then government. The Ordinance was backed by the idea of establishing Islamic laws, though the rules were contrary to the Islamic teachings. The Ordinance worsened the case and status of Women, but oppression caused the reaction; in the words of Malala Yousafzai, "We don't realize the importance of voice until we are silenced." The forthcoming governments saw the setbacks and the work on Women's Studies initiated politically with the formation of Ministry of Women and Development in 1989.

Aam-e-Niswan, a journal of Women's Studies in Pakistan, acted as a cornerstone behind the development of Women's Studies. The journal in association with Pakistan Association of Women's Studies (PAWS), published articles related to the subject and evoked awareness. PAWS founded in March 1991, acted as a catalyst to bring the empowerment among the women in Pakistan. By various

research centers, articles, journals it raised the awareness regarding the issue. It helped with the inculcation of the discipline of Women's Studies in various institutions; Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, Sindh University Jamshoro, to name a few. Ministry of Women and Development (MWD) came up with the idea of creating Centres of Excellence for Women Studies in Pakistan, this began with the five universities approach to inculcate the Women Studies academically.

Currently, ~~there~~ is swift advancement of Women's Studies is observed in Pakistan. The subject has been vastly integrated academically within the country. The country provides MA, M.Phil and PhD programs of the subject. It has given recognition in the revised curricula by Higher Education Commission, and is also added as a subject in the CSS by Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) as well. The idea to introduce the subject on primary level is also under the discussion for further advancement.

Gender has multiple meanings.  
How do you deconstruct the word Gender?

Ans: Outline:

1. Introduction.

2. Defining Gender:

A) Multiple meanings of gender.

B) Multiple types of gender.

3. Deconstructing Gender:

A) Gender a societal construct.

B) Pre defined roles — Constructed roles.

C) Preassigned fashion.

D) Associated colours.

E) Set societal perspectives.

4. Conclusion. ~~Conclusion~~

Introduction:

Gender is a socially constructed phenomenon used to assign certain attributes under the tags of femininity and masculinity. It is acknowledged differently by people of different culture, race and society; and it is of various types. Gender is merely an illusion created by society. It is constructed with pre-defined roles, particular assigned fashion, and a set perspectives associated with women, men, intersex, and gender diverse people.



# Defining Gender:

Gender is perceived differently and has been defined differently by everyone.

According to (WHO) World Health Organization:

"Gender refers to socially constructed characteristics of women and men—such as norms, roles, relationships of men and women and between men and women."

According to Canadian Institute of Health Research: "Gender refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities of girls, women, boys and men, and gender diverse people."

To put it simply; Judith Butler defined it as: "Gender is not the result of nature, but is socially constructed."

Clearly these definitions suggest that gender refers to the characteristics of men, women and gender diverse people constructed by society.

→ Different types of Gender:

- i) Cisgender: A person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered at the time of their birth.
- ii) Agender: A person who does not identify itself with any gender.

- iii) Binary: A person who is either male or female under the classified definitions.
- ii) Non-binary: A person who doesn't identify either as male or female.
- i) Queer: It means uncertain gender, that is strange, odd, or doesn't come under the ambit of pre-defined genders.

## Deconstructing Gender:

Gender is socially constructed, the roles created by society are so engrained that they have the tendency to take over biology. Defining this pre-constructed version of gender (Simon de Beauvoir said; "One is not born but become a woman.")

The society has certain perception about defining male gender by assigning it with certain attributes; same is for the gender female.

A man is considered man not because of the anatomy/physical appearance, but because he is the breadwinner, strong, rational, dominant being. A woman, in same way, is not a woman because of her biology but because she is the caretaker, weak, irrational, and submissive being. There are certain attributes that make men and women of society.

### Pre-assigned fashion:

Even the fashion is gendered. The society expects men to wear certain suits, and if they wear shirt they are excluded out from male gender in the eyes of society. Same is the case for women. Today, if one has to praise a woman because she comes off as strong and independent; people say; "She wears the pants." ~~to do~~ This shows how <sup>fashion</sup> traits are associated with genders.

### Associated Colours:

The society has constructed gender such a way that even colours are associated with different genders. Pink is the colour of girls and blue is the colour of boys. This colour theory, even in this advanced era, is applied while celebrating the gender reveal. Even after awareness regarding the gendered society, girls are expected to play with dolls and boys are expected to play with cars.

### Set Societal Perspective:

The society has defined certain roles for certain genders. Women are expected to stay at homes, play the role of ~~color~~ caretaker

raise the children; if the women are working they are payed less wages. And, Men are expected to stay outside the home and provide financial aid for family. If we take example of <sup>a couple of</sup> celebrities that work in the same industry and have kids, only the female celebrity is asked about managing the work life with kids, as though kids are only the 'Mothers' responsibility.

## => Conclusion:

The gender is a product of societal construct. Certain genders are defined with the associated roles, and prejudicial set perspectives. This creates hierachial system in the society by confinding the genders to defined roles. The development of the field of Gender studies has highlighted the concern, and now, gender is defined as how a person identifies himself.

Q: Discuss in detail the multidisciplinary nature of gender studies.

Ans: **Outline:**

1. Introduction.
2. Defining 'Multidisciplinary'.
3. Gender Studies as multidisciplinary subject.
4. Role of Gender Studies in different fields/disciplines:
  - A) Sociology and Gender Studies.
  - B) Anthropology and Gender Studies.
  - C) Psychology and Gender Studies.
  - D) Law and Gender Studies.
  - E) Political science and Gender Studies.
  - F) Literature and Gender Studies.
  - G) Cinema studies and Gender Studies.
  - H) Economy and Gender Studies.
  - I) Sports and Gender Studies.
  - J) Religion and Gender Studies.
5. Conclusion.

## Introduction:

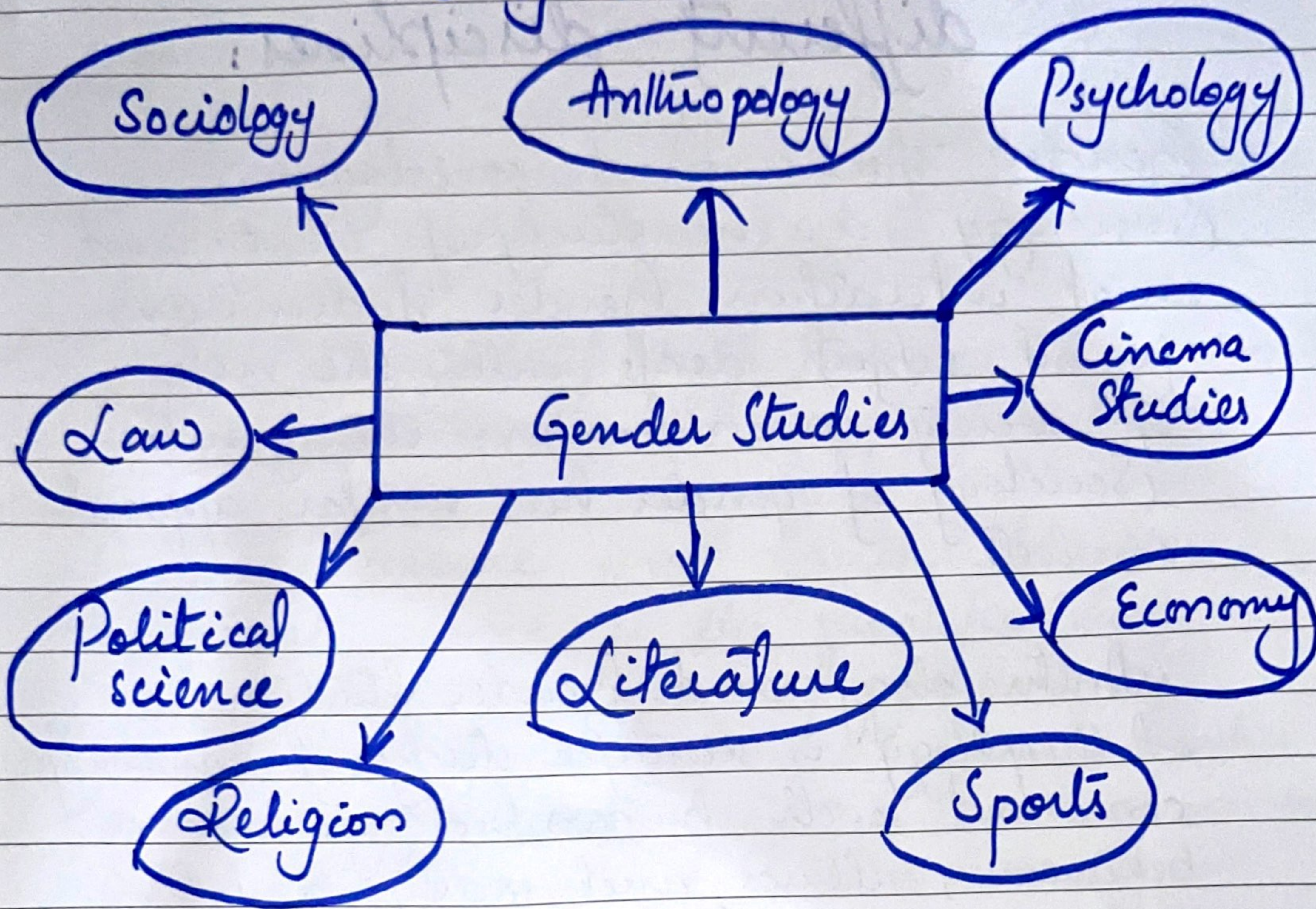
Gender studies deal with the study of different genders, their status, and their defined in patriarchal society. It was presumed that gender studies only educate about rights of women, history of feminist movements, and marginalization of women. Then, the broader lens was added to the subject, and made it a subject that defines roles of women, men, intersex and gender diverse people assigned by society. It is expected that it is not related to any discipline and is gender-centric subject. But, it is a subject that deals with the gender on the basis of their social upbringing, the impact of social behavior over gender, the psychological inclination of gender, the role of gender in sports, cinema, and, this way it is associated with sociology, anthropology, psychology, sports, cinema studies and many other discipline — multidisciplinary subject.

## Defining Multidisciplinary:

Multidisciplinary is defined as:

"The process in which researchers work independently yet at the same time, from a different disciplinary perspective to address a common problem."

# Gender studies as Multidisciplinary subject:



Gender study is the study of characteristics assigned with gender by society (sociology); role of human behavior in development of gender (Anthropology); psychological impact on the different genders (Psychology); laws related to different genders (Law); Policy made to provide rights to different genders and their role in politics (Political science); tracing back women writers (Literature). This shows that it is not merely an interdisciplinary <sup>subject</sup> discipline but a multidisciplinary subject!



# Role of Gender Studies in different disciplines:

## Gender studies and sociology:

Sociology is the study of society and social interaction. Gender studies, as a part subject, deals with the role of society in constructing the gender.

Sociology of gender has similar approach as well.

## Anthropology and Gender Studies:

Anthropology is scientific study of humanity, concerned with human biology, human behavior, cultures and society in both past and present. Gender studies in association Anthropology deals with human behaviors that dictate the gender defined roles.

## Psychology and Gender Studies:

Psychology is a subject that deals with human minds, and changes brought to it by different people. Gender study also deals with psychologically defining and imposing femininity and masculinity. e.g: Psychoanalytical theory of Sigmund Freud.



## Law and Gender Studies:

Law as a subject deals with the legal framework that runs society and interprets the rights of people. Gender studies in association with Law deals with the rights provided to women legally.

e.g: Law against protection from harassment against women at workplaces (2010).

## Political science and Gender Studies:

Political science is the scientific study of politics, structure of government, and division of power. Gender Studies in association deals with the role of women in politics, presence of gender disparity in the field etc.

e.g: Mary Wollstonecraft's book, *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*; theoretically it is considered starting point of formal entry of women into politics.

## Literature and Gender Studies:

Literature is related to subjects, writings of prominent authors in the form of plays, dramas, novels etc. Gender study highlights itself via literature as well.

e.g: Famous writing of Ismat Chughtai "Chauthi

"ka Jora" sheds light upon child marriages and financial crunch that she faces being a widow in the society.

### Cinema Studies and Gender Studies,

Cinema studies shows the reflection of society through television, and certain social media and OTT platforms. Gender studies strands are spreaded into this subject as well.

e.g: Ganga Bai Kathiawari demonstrates the life of prostitute, and how the people sell women and push them towards the sex worker field.

### Economy and Gender Studies:

Economy deals with the production, distribution and consumption of goods.

Gender studies is closely related to the field as it talks about economic equality of women.

e.g: Highlight the issue of 'Wage Gap'.

### Sports and Gender Studies,

Sports is dominated by males. Gender study related to it points out the disparity that lies in the field.

e.g: India has equalized the salary of male and female cricketers.

## Religion And Gender Studies

Religion studies look into different dimensions of different religions. Gender studies in association, traces the rights provided by different religions to women, the roles played by different women in different religions etc.

e.g: Islam talks about equal rights and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the first one to ascribe the property rights of women provided by Allah. Hinduism considers Lakshmi as a symbol of money.

Role of Mary and her importance in Christianity etc.

## Conclusion:

Gender studies is not an isolated subject that only deals with women-centric issue, or gender construct by society. Its stands are highly extended within other fields as well. Hence, it is considered a multidisciplinary subject.