

Discuss in detail the multidisciplinary nature of gender studies

## Introduction

Gender studies is a multidisciplinary in nature. It is an extensive subject catering to social, political, public, private, biological and cultural issues of women. An understanding of the social, cultural and biological setup of gender in our society creates a lot of space for gender studies to integrate with other disciplines. Since gender studies talks about differences between individuals based on their social upbringing, genetic background as well as psychological inclinations, therefore, it is prominently interrelated to discipline such as literature, law, political science, sociology, psychology etc.

## Gender Studies as Multidisciplinary

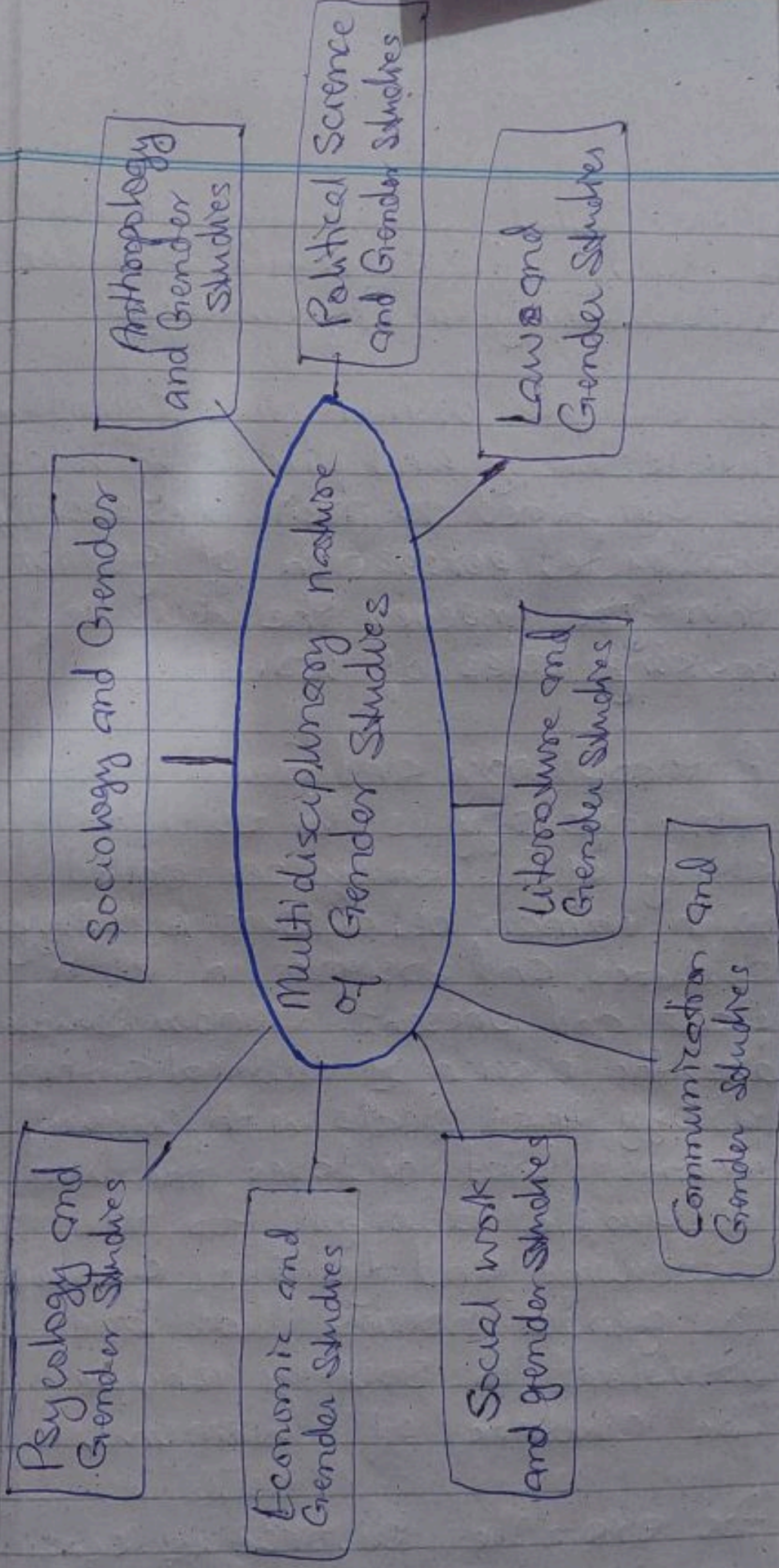
Before exploring the multidisciplinary nature of gender studies, it is imperative to understand the meaning of something which is multidisciplinary. Thus it is defined

as:

"The process in which <sup>or</sup> researchers work independently yet at a same time from a different disciplinary perspective to address a common problem"

Historically, the roots of gender studies can be seen attached to social sciences. Thus, gender studies is multidisciplinary in nature as it is interlinked with the following discipline and widens the scope of understanding gender studies.

- (1) Sociology and Gender Studies  
Sociology is the study of society and social interaction. It also studies social culture, relations and institutions. Gender studies, the parent subject, also deals with women related culture and the role of society in shaping the choices and decisions of women. The sociology of gender examines how society influences



the social construction of gender as well as the difference between masculinity and femininity.

For example, women are considered intellectually and physically weak as compared to men. This socially constructed perception of gender therefore impedes the decision-making roles of women.

### 3) Anthropology and Gender Studies

Anthropology is the scientific study of humanity, concerned with human behaviour, biology, cultures, and societies in both past and present. Gender Studies are the branch of cultural anthropology that deals with cultural norms that dictates the lives of people belonging to the masculine and feminine gender. The gender norms that are prevalent in society shape the culture of women.

for example, divorce is considered nothing more than a taboo

and stain on womanhood. This is a norm, or to be specific, a gendered norm that applies to women just because of a patriarchal mindset. Moreover, the radical school of thought on feminism also talks about the same thing.

### 3) Psychology and Gender Studies

Psychology is the scientific study of human minds, and it functions specially by studying those human behaviours that are affecting their minds. Gender psychology, on the other hand, deals with the psychological and social impacts of sex differences as well as the role and development of gender identity. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theory of feminism is an epic example of psychological behaviour linked gender inequality which is prevalent in society.

For example, female students facing stereotype threat in math exams can perform worse due to anxiety.

4) Economics and Gender Studies  
Economics is a social sciences subject that deals with the production, distribution, and consumption of goods. It also involves individuals, businesses, government, and other sectors in making decisions about resources, relocation. Gender studies, on the other hand, are closely linked to this discipline since gender studies also talks about economic equality for women. Participation of women in the labour force, wage difference and an unequal number of opportunities in various sectors of the state are all address by gender studies from an economic point of view. Marxist feminism is a huge supporter of economic equality for women and blames patriarchy and power relations for gender inequality.

5) Political Science and Gender Studies  
Political science is a social science field and a scientific study of politics. It deals with

the structure of government, power and politics. It also involves political thoughts, behaviours, constitution and laws. Gender studies take political science as a discipline and talk about political equality and the rights of women. It says that certain legislations are discriminatory and tend to satisfy patriarchal norms only. Moreover the political representation of women in third-world countries is the least as per UN Women.

5) Social work and Gender Studies  
Social work deals with the basic needs of communities, vulnerable and oppressed people, especially those living in poverty. Social work also discussed the violence, slavery and other oppressive things done by men to women via the gendered lens. Radical feminists were of the view that it is men who are responsible for forcing women into stuff like prostitution, pornography, and other setting artificial beauty standards. Therefore, social

work in a gendered perspective deals with such oppressive acts done by men to women, thus relating gender studies and social work.

7) Literature and Gender Studies  
Literature is specifically related to books, and work of prominent authors sometimes in the form of fables, drama, autobiography, prose, and poetry etc. Gender and literature are closely related because literature promotes women's writing of famous women authors depicting social problems of society.

For example, "Chothi ka Jora", a famous writing of famous feminist Ismat Chughtai, sheds light on early women marriages and the financial crunch that she faces being a widow in a male-dominated society.

Another example, the famous book "My Feudal Lord" by Tahmineh Durrani also discussed social problems faced by women.



## 8) Law and Gender Studies

Gender equality is achieved when both sexes are given equal rights and opportunities via legal framework.

Laws, which are made facilitate people are unable to protect women's right.

Gender studies persuades people and especially legislators, to make gender equal laws for men, women, and transgenders. Despite having laws, all these issues, are just on limited to paper. However, implementation is required in true spirit.

### Laws

### Description

1 Law against protection from harassment against women at workplace, 2010

Talks about women protection against harassment in the workplace.

2 Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2004

Protection to women against crime of honour killing

3 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2012

Protection to women against domestic sexual mental abuse

## Conclusion

Gender studies, although it seems like more than a multidisciplinary in nature. Gender studies are reflected in all the above-mentioned discipline irrespective of their nature. Other subject, such as psychology, social work, political sciences, economic etc are engaged somehow in gender studies. Gender studies have become a part of almost every discipline focusing on women and addressing the issue faced by them in various fields. Gender studies is, therefore, an evolving subject and create an understanding that the study of gender shall remain incomplete without probing the psychology, sociology, biological aspect of the life of a human being.