

Q: Discuss in detail the multidisciplinary nature of gender studies

## INTRODUCTION:

### Gender Studies

Gender studies investigate the actual (Physical and Biological) gender differences between women and men, but think especially critical about what these differences mean in a socio-cultural context. Gender is a classifying principle in society and culture. It is a remarkable discrimination tool in the distribution of labour, care, possessions, income, education, organizational qualities or diseases.

### Multidisciplinary Meaning

Multidisciplinary field of study is that in which people from different backgrounds having specialization in different fields of study work together and produce a combined field of science and piece of work. In multidisciplinary subject each person added knowledge to the new discipline based on his/her understanding of subject.

# Multidisciplinary Nature Of Gender Studies

Historically the roots of Gender studies can be traced in Social Science and humanities disciplines. Gender studies is multidisciplinary in nature as seeks to study different disciplines / Social Science i.e anthropology, Economics, Politics, Sociology, Biology and other from the perspective of gender.

## 1) Sociology:

Sociology refers to social behaviour, society, patterns of social relationship, social interaction and culture that surrounds everyday life.

Under sociology we study gender studies to see that how society gives different gender and how understanding of different gender developed in society.

## 2) Anthropology:

Anthropology is the scientific study of humanity, concerned with human behaviour, human biology and societies, in both the present and past, including past human species.

Under this discipline we can study gender studies as how different genders evolved through history.

### 3) Psychology:

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. Under Psychology we can study gender studies to understand human nature and particularly the human nature of sexuality.

### 4) Biology:

The discipline can help in developing the understanding regarding the biological difference between different genders. When we study the biology difference between genders in gender studies then we basically study gender studies under the umbrella of biology.

### 5) Economics:

Economics is a social science concerned with the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. It explains the economic role played by women at the both household and national levels. Participation of women in the labor force, wage differentials, and occupation distribution by gender, as well as determinants of women's active economic participation and their contribution.

to national development.

## 6) Social Work

Social workers are professionals who aim to enhance overall well-being and help meet basic and complex needs of communities and people.

Social workers intersect Gender Studies in many ways, from treatment for domestic violence, to locating support for single mothers, to ensuring equality for women worldwide.

## 7) Literature

Literature is defined as books and other written works, especially those considered to have creative or artistic merit or lasting value.

Gender and literature examine the ways in which women writers address the particular circumstances of women's lives during particular decades. It traces the construction of gender as depicted in literature and other cultural productions.

## 8) History:

Gender history is a sub-field of history and gender studies, which looks

at the Past from Perspective of Gender. It is in many ways, an out-growth of women's history. Gender historians are also interested in how gender difference has been perceived and configured at different times and places, usually with the assumption with that such differences are socially constructed. These social construction of gender throughout time are also represented as changes in the expected norms of behaviour for those labelled male or female.

## Education:

Education is the biggest tool that define gender role in society. Gender studies seeks to improve the overall perception of gender development through the academic arena with a wide range of gender appropriate subjects. Gender studies move out of the domain of common perception of masculine and feminine thus redefining the scope of individual identity. Gender studies aims to disclose the discrimination among the education of men and women.

## 10) Law:

Gender equality is achieved when both sexes enjoy the same rights and opportunities across society, including access to justice and to economic and social gains. Law are made to protect equal rights of men and women without any discrimination. The laws against rape and sexual harassment in the work place still need to be worked upon. Gender studies provide a space where equal opportunities is not just a slogan but a requirement for men, women and transgender.

## Conclusion

Gender studies is contributing on all these disciplines and all these disciplines are also contributing in gender studies.

There are researches involving gender studies with other disciplines and also work is being done in other disciplines regarding gender studies.

Q: What are the fundamental differences between Gender Studies and Women's Studies. Substantiate your argument(s) with examples. Highlight the current status of Women Studies in Pakistan.

## Introduction

In Gender Studies we study all the genders not only women. On the other hand Women Studies is based on only women. Under Gender Studies we study all genders including males, females, gay, lesbian, trans, bi etc. But under women studies we remain focused on only one gender that is women.

## Difference between the Gender studies and Women's Studies

### Gender Studies

### Women Studies

1) First developed in 1980s

1) Women Studies first course developed in late 1960s, UIA, San Diego state university

2) Off shot of 3rd wave of feminism

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3) ~~sp~~ Included women, men and third sex studies

3) specific to Women's studies

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| 1) Women Studies and queer theory  | 4) Support the idea of women centred knowledge (feminism theories)  |
| 2) Cross cultural studies of gender  | 5) Challenged to male-defined and male-centred knowledge Teaching and research on women's issue to break down hierarchies |
| 3) Gender studies begin from the critical position established by women's studies in order to look more broadly at gender as a phenomenon  | 6) Women Studies is basically an older subject then the gender studies.   |
| 7) Gender studies is based on number of theories including Psychological, Constructivist, Critical Study of Masculinity, Queer studies etc | 7) Women's studies evolves around feminist theory   |
| 8) Gender study is multidisciplinary   | 8) Women's studies is interdisciplinary   |
| 9) Foundation of gender studies is based on consciousness raising that how we can raise of students  | 9) Women studies is no strong focus on raising consciousness of students  |



the consciousness of the people.

10) There is no activism of feminist in gender studies as gender studies is not based on women only

11) Freedom in sexual orientation

12) Gender studies is Multi-entities

13) It is Liberal

14) Highlighted stereotypes pertinent of all entities inform their own preferences or behaviors  
(eg) I play with dolls because I am a girl - trucks for boys etc

15) Pinpointed language biasness for all entities

10) On the other hand there is feminist activism in women's studies.

11) Lack of freedom in sexual orientation

12) Women studies is single entity

13) Women studies is conservative

14) Highlighted stereotypes pertinent of women  
a) Personality trait  
b) Appearance  
c) Occupation  
d) domestic behaviour

15) Pinpointed language biasness for women  
a) weaker  
b) sex oriented  
c) abusive language  
(eg) Bachler/spinner

## Current status of Women Studies in Pakistan

Pakistan acceded to CEDAW, (Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women) places constraints on the MoWD, there is nonetheless a commitment to the overall development of women, including education.

Among the ministry aims, and objectives is included the following: to expedite and substantially enhance women's literacy rates, improve attainment level of girls and women at all levels of education (both academic and professional) to reduce the gender gap, and to deorient existing curricula by making them gender sensitive.

Thus, there is a Policy Commitment to higher and academic education under which women studies centres would fall.

### ↓ Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU)

The aim and objective of the Women Research and Resource Center (WRRC) of the Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi are to sensitive women on Gender issues and to focus on Fatima Jinnah Women university students for enhancement of education and employment opportunities, for all

disciplines.

## 2) Karachi University:

Some centres, such as the one run by Karachi University reflect a serious and rigorous women studies approach in their course contents.

## 3) Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad

The Women's Studies Centre, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad has offered three certificate courses attended by 64 participants. The courses were interdisciplinary in nature and content. Currently, the center offers a six-week introductory course in women studies, which is constrained due to a severe shortage of funds.

## 4) The Institute of Women Development Studies (IWDS)

It was established in 1994 by the University of Sindh Jamshoro. The aim of the Institute is to replace the outmoded value system with one that emphasises equality and mutual respect and dignity among members of both sexes and to help to remove disparities in the provision of educational facilities.

## 5) Allama Iqbal Open University:

The aim and objectives of the Women Studies department of the Allama Iqbal Open University established in 1997 with funding from the Ministry of Women's Development, include among others; to introduce women studies as an academic discipline through the distance learning system. Create awareness and sensitisation to gender issue at the community level through seminars and workshops, and to launch media programmes to emphasise women's role and their contribution in national and international developments.

## 6) University of Balochistan

There has so far been no teaching activity at the Gender/Women Studies Centre, University of Balochistan in Quetta. A few certificate courses were conducted earlier but the space for teaching has been given to Islamic and Persian department with the result that all teaching activity has been suspended. The approach of the Centre seems to be currently based on gender sensitisation workshops and seminars.

## Conclusions

Women studies consider the women history and gender studies consider the men role in the women history. Women studies pondered upon the women's studies and women struggle for freedom so that the issue could meet the debated desk as soon as possible. Where as gender studies is the paradigm shift.