

QUESTION # 1

Differentiate b/w gender studies and women studies. Discuss in detail multidisciplinary nature of gender studies?

Introduction:-

Gender studies is a field that focuses on gender identity, gender roles and intersectionality. Whereas, women studies is a field that deals with roles, experiences and achievements of women in the study. Therefore, this is the key difference between gender and women studies. Often gender studies is mixed with the women's studies; however there are striking differences between the two disciplines. Women's studies is mainly concerned with lives, problems, rights and struggles of women. It emerged during 1980s and led to development programs like Women in Development (WID). Gender Studies, on the other hand, is a study of all genders, their roles, identities and social construction in the society. It is much more diverse than woman studies and is multidisciplinary in nature, as its strands extended in Sociology, Anthropology, psychology, Gender history, political science and Biology.

Difference between Women's studies and Gender studies:-

| Characteristics | Women Studies | Gender studies |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Definition | Women studies is an interdisciplinary field that is concerned with roles, rights and achievements of women in society | Gender studies is the study of social, political, and economic roles of different genders in the society. |
| Origin | Women studies is an offshoot of 2nd wave of feminism | Gender studies is an offshoot of 3rd wave of feminism. |
| Focus of research | Women studies merely focuses on problems of women like patriarchy and talks about their rights | Gender study is primarily related to gender identity and it focuses on social construction of gender- |
| Nature of subject | Women studies is interdisciplinary in nature. | Gender studies is a multi-disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary in nature and extends its |

strands to other disciplines of social and biological sciences.

Theoretical differences

It involves theoretical perspective of feminism. Moreover, it involves Women in Development (WID) and Women and Development (WAD) approaches.

It involves Post-modern theory, Queer theory and encompasses Gender and Development (GAD) approach.

Goal of studies

Women's studies demands Gender equality, end of patriarchy. Its main aim is to make lives of women better.

It demand gender equity and explains position of all genders on class, caste, religion, ethnicity and sexual identity.

Concept of homogeneity

It does not involve concept of homogeneity in studies.

It does involve concept of homogeneity and studies homogeneous and heterogeneous individuals

Multidisciplinary approach:-

involves multiple disciplines to redefine a problem outside of the normal boundaries and reach solutions based on new understandings of complex situations.

Gender studies as a multidisciplinary subject:-

Gender studies is a multidisciplinary subject as it examines all aspects of life including media, culture, education, economy, rights, behaviors and government. Gender studies is an extended branch of various other disciplines.

Sociology in the social construction of gender:-

Society refers of interaction of people in the society. The term gender role is defined as all those behaviors and roles that a particular person does to prove himself or herself as having the status of a boy or man, a girl or a woman. In this subfields, feminists study a wide range of topics like, gender identity, social interaction, power, and oppression, and interaction of other

things like race, religion, social status with gender.

Psychology of identity:-

Psychology deals with human minds and its functions, especially affecting their behavior in a particular content. One school of thought commonly known as psychoanalytical feminists

focus on gender identity describes perception of one being male, female, none, both or somewhere in between

This school of thought has its roots in Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. While, Nancy Chodorow argues that gender identity is the result of complex developments that is related to mental development process.

Gender and economics:-

Economic is a social science that deals with the study of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. The gender problem in economics is still unexplored. It assumes that current economic problems and gender equality have some relation. Today's capitalism is exploiting women of all castes, race, and ethnicities, and it needs to be addressed.

Political science in understanding of Gender study:-

Political science is scientific study of politics and systems of governance. In 1976, Peter Merkel studied that field of comparative politics had been woefully deficient concerning study of women. More than 40 years later, the study of women and more broadly gender, in comparative politics has been flourished, becoming an important area of research. This field of study has focussed on gender regimes and the welfare state, state feminism and ^{their} impacts on policies of state.

Biology to find out anatomical differences between different sexes:-

The study of living organism is based upon their anatomy, physiology, behavior origin and distribution. This field determines the biological factors that exist between males and females. The biological diversity underlying gender identity development is relevant to social, medical and neuroscience research of reducing health disparities.

Gender history: -

Gender history is a subfield of gender and history. Initially, women were absent from the society. They were generally considered in child-rearing and home running. This field looks at the past from the gender perspective and events in the history that impact women differently from men.

Conclusion: -

Gender studies and women studies are two different disciplines dealing with various subjects. Women studies is primarily concerned with rights and lives of women and a narrow field. On the other hand, Gender studies is more diverse and it focus on all genders. Additionally, it is multidisciplinary in nature. The disciplines of sociology, psychology, economics, biology and gender history have their roots in gender studies and it is impossible to deal with these subjects comprehensively while ignoring the perspective of gender.