

Define and discuss the discipline of gender studies and also differentiate between women studies and gender studies. (CSS - 2017)

Gender Studies:-

Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study that explores the roles, experiences, and identities associated with gender and how gender intersects with other social categories such as race, class, sexuality, and disabilities. It examines the social, cultural, historical, and political constructions of gender and seeks to understand how these constructions shape individuals' experiences and societal structures.

Origin of Gender Studies:-

The origin of gender studies as an academic discipline can be traced to the intersection of feminist theory, sociological research, and interdisciplinary scholarship that emerged primarily in the 20th century. Following are key milestones in the development of the discipline:

Second Wave of Feminism:

The roots of gender studies lie in the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which challenged the traditional gender roles and advocated for women's rights. The second wave of feminism focused on how personal relationships and political and economic roles of women in the society were suffering from inequalities. The second wave also focused on how the academic disciplines and sets of knowledge excluded the interests, experiences and identities of women.

Women's Studies:

Gender studies emerged out of women's studies. Women's studies as an academic discipline focused on the roles, experiences and achievements of women in society. An important aspect of women's studies was conscious raising. In 1960s USA designed its first course. In 1970 women's studies was offered in San Diego State University and in 1980 in University of Kent.

Difference between Gender Studies and Women's studies:

Gender Studies

Women's Studies

Definition

Gender studies is an academic field that explores the social, cultural, and historical construction of gender and sexuality. It examines how gender identity and roles are shaped by society and how they influence various aspects of life, including power dynamics, economics, politics and individual experiences.

Women's studies is an academic discipline which primarily focuses on roles, experiences, and achievements of women.

Nature of the Subject

Gender studies is a multidisciplinary academic field as it seeks to

Women's studies is a inter-disciplinary field of study. It is centred

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study different disciplines from the perspective of gender.

around the social sciences, arts and humanities rather than the physical sciences and related disciplines such as ~~biology~~ and medicine and engineering.

Goal

Gender studies demand equity. It explains the position of all genders based on class, religion, ethnicity, and sexual identity.

Goal of women's studies was conscious raising of women and making the lives of women better.

Theoretical Foundations

Gender studies draws on a wider array of theoretical perspectives, including feminist, queer, and postcolonial theories. It involves GAD approach.

Women's studies is grounded in feminist theories. Moreover, it involves WID and WAD approaches.

Origin

Gender studies emerged out of women's studies. It is successor of

Women's studies is an offshoot of second wave of feminism. The first official women's

women's studies.

emerged in 1970 in USA.

Scope

Scope of gender studies is broader. It examines a wide range of gender related topics. It studies the experiences and identities of all genders including men, women, transgender, and non-binary individuals.

Women's studies has a narrow scope. It specifically focuses on the experiences, histories and roles of women. It focus on how patriarchal structures and societal norms affect women.

Focus of Research

Gender studies is more inclusive and focuses on all the genders in society. Its primary focus is on gender identity.

women's studies merely focus on the problems of women and demands rights for women only.

Political Focus

Advocates for rights of all genders identities, challenging rigid gender norms and promoting gender equality in various spheres.

Advocates for women's rights, focusing on issues such as violence against women, reproductive rights, and gender equality.

Curriculum and Course Structure

Courses may include topics like masculinity studies, trans studies, sexuality, and global gender movements.

Focuses on courses related to the history of women, feminist theory, women in literature, and specific issues affecting women.

Relationship to Social Change

Aims to deconstruct the concept of gender itself, advocating for a society where gender identities are fluid and free from societal constraints.

Focuses on improving the position of women in society, striving for gender equality but often within the framework of binary gender roles.

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