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Q: Define and discuss the Discipline of gender studies and also differentiate between women studies and gender studies.

Introduction:

Both women's studies and gender studies emerged as academic disciplines after the mid 20th century. While their primary focus is on gender inequality, oppression, and the identity question, they differ in scope. One focuses primarily on women's plight while the other also includes other genders.

Women's Studies:

Its primary focus is on women's experiences, perspectives, and contributions in all areas of life. It also examines how the political, social, and economic systems produce and perpetuate women's subordination.

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Historical Development of Women's Studies:

Women's studies originated during the second wave of feminism, which demanded a transformation of women's role in academia and society. The first officially recognized women's studies program was introduced in 1970, in the San Diego University. Master degrees were also soon offered. Such academic growth led to dramatic expansion of feminist literature.

Key Themes and Focus Areas of Women's Studies:

In the early 1970s, women studies aimed at the following areas:

- Understanding patriarchy and inequality in society.
- Analyzing how gender roles are socially constructed.
- Understanding the personality, perspective, and experience of women.

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Gender Studies:

Gender studies emerged in the late 1970s as a broader and holistic discipline of women's studies. Unlike women's studies, it also recognizes the struggles and issues of other genders, such as men and the LGBTQ+.

Nature and scope of Gender Studies:

1- Multi-Disciplinary:

Gender studies draws on concepts from disciplines, including law, political science, and literature to understand and address gender issues from numerous perspectives. For instance, it analyzes literature to examine the status of genders and what is expected of them in a particular society.

2- Inclusive of other Genders:

Unlike women's studies, it

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also addresses the issues faced by genders apart from women. For instance, it studies how men are discouraged from showing their emotions, which often leads to depression and even suicide.

3-Helps with Development and Policy:

The frameworks of Gender studies inform gender-sensitive policies and development programs. It advocates for equal opportunities for all.

4-Solution oriented:

It does not only point out problems but also suggests solutions and reforms. For instance, the zina ordinance by Zia-ul-Haq disproportionately affected women. It was reformed under the heavy influence of Gender studies.

5-Focus on Social Construction

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of Gender:

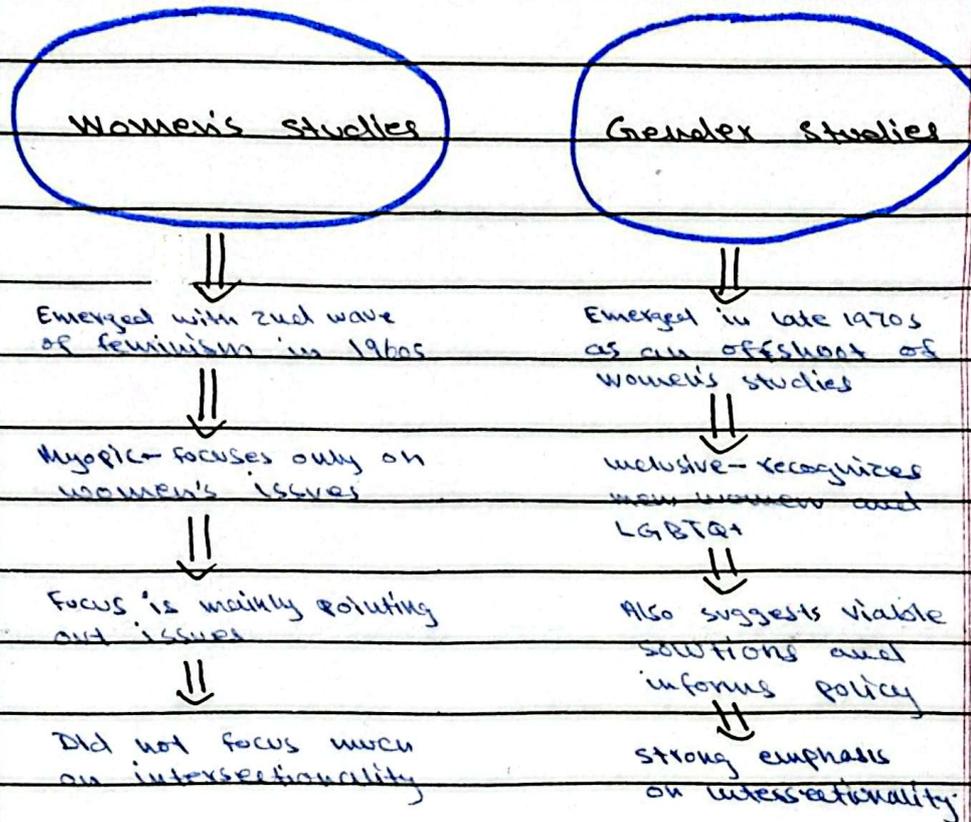
It separates biological sex from the socially constructed gender roles, which shape behaviours. For instance, it asserts that women taking care of the domestic work and men earning outside are socially learned not biologically fixed.

b-Emphasis on Intersectionality:

It emphasizes that not only gender but also other identities such as class, race, and nationality, also shape unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

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Main Difference between Gender and Women's studies:



Conclusion:

Both disciplines highlight marginalization, inequality, and address the question of identity. Nevertheless, they differ in nature and scope. While Women's studies center mainly on the struggles of women, Gender studies also focuses on other genders and suggests workable reforms.