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Introduction:

This field of Gender Studies represents significant scholarly endeavors that have evolved in response to societal change and the growing understanding of gender dynamics. Women's study emerged as an academic discipline in late 20th century, driven by the feminist movement, with a focus on addressing the historical and contemporary challenges faced by women. It primarily concentrates on women's roles, experiences, and contributions within various societal contexts. Over time, the discipline expanded to what is now known as gender studies, which broadens the focus to include not only women's study but also the complex interplay of gender with other identities such as race, class, and sexuality. The shift from Women's Study to Gender Studies reflects a broader and more inclusive approach to understanding gender and its implications in society. Understanding the fundamental differences between these

two fields is essential for comprehending their unique contributions to the study of gender and their relevance in contemporary society.

Scope and Focus:

Women's Study emerged in late 1960's and early 1970s as an academic response to feminist movements for all recognition and addressing women's issues. The primary focus of women's studies is focus of understanding historical, cultural, social and political experiences of women. e.g.:- A women study course might analyze the suffrage movement in the United States examining the efforts of women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in fighting for women's right to vote.

While gender studies evolved from women's studies takes a broader approach to the study of gender. It only examines women's issues but also considers how

gender intersects with other identities such as race, class, sexuality and abilities.

Gender studies explores the social construction of gender roles, the fluidity of gender identities and the experiences of all genders, including men, transgenders, and non binary individuals. This field recognizes the gender can not be understood in isolation but must be examined in relation to other social categories and power dynamics.

Intersectionality:

Women's Study primarily focused on the experiences of women particularly those of white, middle-class women.

Over time the discipline began to incorporate intersectional approaches, recognizing that women's experiences are not monolithic and can be influenced by other factors such as race, class, and sexual orientation. However the primary focus remains on women's issues and discipline continues to center on the experiences of women as a distinct group.

intersectionality is the ^{component} ~~part~~ of gender studies where the focus is on how the societies various identities and social categories intersect to shape individual experiences. Gender studies emphasizes the importance of understanding how gender intersects with other forms of identity and oppression making it more inclusive and comprehensive field of study.

e.g. A gender studies course might analyze how LGBTQ+ individuals of color face unique challenges due to intersection of their gender, identity, sexual orientation, race, drawing on the concept of intersectionality to explore the complex dynamics.

The Current Status of Women Studies in Pakistan

In Pakistan, women studies as academic discipline has been gradually gaining recognition and importance. However it faces several challenges including societal resistance, limited resources and the lack

of institutional support. Despite these challenges women's study programs have been established in several universities across the country. Where they play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and raising awareness about women's issues.

Women's studies in Pakistan often focuses on issues such as gender based violence, women's health, education, economic empowerment. These programs aim to challenge traditional gender norms and advocate for the rights of women in patriarchal society. However, the scope of women's studies in Pakistan is still limited and there is a need for further development and integration of intersectional approaches that consider the diverse experiences of women across the different regions, classes and ethnicities.

Conclusion:

Women and gender studies though closely related, distinct.

fields with different scope, approaches and understanding gender and its implications in society, while women's study centres on the experiences and the contribution of women. Gender Studies adopt a broader perspective exploring the complex interplay of gender with other identities. In Pakistan, Women's Studies continues to develop, playing a vital role in addressing gender inequalities and promoting women's rights, though it faces significant challenges the need to be addressed for the field to reach its full potential.

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Gender Studies as a Socially Constructed Phenomenon:

Gender as a concept, is often understood as a socially constructed phenomenon, meaning that it is not an innate or biologically determined aspects of individuals but rather a product of societal norms, expectations and cultural practices. theories of social construction of gender emphasizes that

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gender role identities and expressions are created, maintained, and altered through social interactions and cultural narratives.

Theories of Social Construction of Gender:

a. Judith Butler's theory of Performativity:

A prominent gender theorist, argues that gender is not something one is but something one does — a set of repeated performances based on societal expectations. According to Butler gender identity is produced and reinforced through repeated acts, behaviours and performances that align with cultural norms. e.g.: societal

Expectations, ~~according to Butler~~ might dictate that women should behave in nurturing and passive ways, while men should be assertive and strong. These repeated performances solidify their gender identities over time, making them appear natural even though they are socially constructed.

Michel Foucault's Concept of Power and Knowledge:

Foucault's ideas on power and knowledge are also relevant to understanding gender as a social construct. He argued that societal power structures define what is considered normal or natural, including notions of gender. Through institutions like education, medicine and law, society enforces specific gender norms, making them appear as universal truths rather than socially constructed ideas.