





MODULE -1KEY CONCEPTS AND
TERMINOLOGIES
TOPIC- SEX AND SEXUALITY


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- Academic studies started – 1960's – second wave of feminism(1960-80)
 - For example, prior to the 1970s, the social sciences in general, and sociology in particular, largely ignored gender.
 - The 'people' it studied were mainly men and the topics it focused on were aspects of the social world especially significant for men, such as paid work and politics

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- Women were almost invisible in pre-1970s' gender-blind sociology, only featuring in their traditional roles as wives and mothers within families.
 - Differences and inequalities between women and men at this time were not recognised as an issue of sociological concern and were not seen as problems to be addressed.
 - In the context of second wave feminist critiques, however, a number of disciplines across the social sciences, the arts and humanities began to pay increasing attention to gender.

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- Thus, in sociology during the 1970s, differences and inequalities between women and men came to be regarded, especially by women sociologists, as problems to be examined and explained.
 - Initially, studies were focused on ‘filling in the gaps’ in knowledge about women, gaps left by the prior male bias.
 - Attention gradually moved to those aspects of experiences especially significant to women, including paid work, housework, motherhood and male violence.


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- In disciplines such as English Literature, women had begun to contest the hegemony of a ‘canon’ of great works of literature, which practically excluded women writers altogether and had nothing to say about the material and social conditions that prohibited the emergence of ‘great’ women in this arena.

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- Kate Millett's path finding *Sexual Politics* (1971) moved effortlessly from literary criticism to a critique of Freud and Marx (perspectives that were later to become very much the 'business' of literary studies).
 - At this time in the 1960s and early 1970s, the sheer number of women concentrated in the humanities in comparison to other academic fields made it an area ripe for feminist critique, since women's existence in such numbers here was itself the result of the gendered logic of the workplace

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- It is at this stage, during the late 1960s in the US and from the mid- to late 1970s in the UK, that women's studies as a specialised area of academic interest began to develop, as well as rapidly spreading elsewhere around the globe


- GS provides a frame work for describing how ideas & assumptions about biological sex & gender influence the political, social & cultural construction of gender identities.
- to know how representations of masculine & feminine roles change over time, vary across culture & affect society
- Field of study that looks at the world from the perspective of gender
- Refers to those traits & characteristics that a person is expected to possess by virtue of being male or female, as well as the different roles that a person expected to perform

- Concepts about masculinity & feminity varies across different cultures & societies, as well as different period in history
- Gender & sex are different terms
- Sex- biological & physiological characteristics that define men & women
- Gender- socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, & attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men & women
- Gender-culturally constructed roles that are played by women & men in society


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- Gender- a conceptual tool to analyse the structural relationships of inequality existing between men & women as reflected in various aspects of life such as household, the labour market, education & political institutions

SEX - SEXUALITY


- Sex- biological & physiological characteristics that define men & women
- Biological division into male & female
- Latin word 'Sexus'
- Generally assigned at birth by external genital appearance, due to the common assumption that this represents chromosomal or internal anatomic status
- a person's sex is a primary state of anatomic physiological parameters


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- Sexual identity is in the Perineum; Gender identity in Cerebrum
 - Physiologic sexual devt progresses through distinct stages from neonatal period through infancy, childhood, puberty, adolescence & adulthood
 - Physiologic change is distinguishable from gender related behaviours during each of these stages
 - Sexual identity that emerges beyond childhood is separate identity from gender identity

- Theories of Sigmund Freud are imp in understanding sexuality
- He successfully redefined the term sexuality to make it over any form of pleasure that can be derived from the human body
- British philosopher- John Locke- human sexual behaviour is different from that of other animals, in that it seems to be affected by several factors
- The environment, culture & socail setup- play major role in perception, aptiitude & behaviours of sexuality
- In humans- sexuality generates emotional & psychological responses

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- Sexual behaviour & intimate relationships – influenced by a person's sexual orientation
 - Sexual orientation- your degree of emotional & physical attraction to members of the opposite sex, same sex or both sexes
 - Heterosexual attracted to the members of opposite sex
 - Homosexual- attracted to people of same sex
 - Bisexual- attracted to both men & women

- Gender identity is a person's own sense of identification as female, male, both, neither, or somewhere in between
- Society believes that if a man is masculine- he is heterosexual & if he is feminine he must be homosexual
- No strong evidence that a homosexual or bisexual orientation must be associated with a typical gender role
- Human sexuality- a part of social life, governed by rules of behaviour & status quo

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- This focus narrows the view to groups within a society
 - Society's view on sexuality have many influences from the past & present
 - Impact of religion & philosophy
 - Sexual attraction – imp aspect of sexuality
 - Human sexual activities refers to the manner in which humans expresses & experience their sexuality
 - Human sexuality- biological, physical & emotional aspect
 - Biologically- reproductive mechanism
 - Emotional- intense personal bond & emotions generated b/w sexual partners by a sexual activity

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- Sexuality- vital part of human existence-in societies from hunting & food gathering phases of history to the rise of agriculture-to modern times
 - All civilizations throughout time, there have been a few common, special characteristics of how sexuality was managed through sexual standards, representations & behaviour
 - Art & artifacts from past portray humans perceptions of sexuality through out time