

Topic- Gender and Sex Unit-1

Programme- B.Ed.

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- Main Points
- Gender meaning and definition
- Sex meaning and definition
- Sexuality
- Difference between gender and sex

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Gender

- Gender means 'type'
- This word commonly used for a person sex-male or female.
- Before 1950 ,this term was used in the field of grammar to distinguish only category of word masculine from feminine noun.
- In 1955 , the meaning of the word 'Gender' began to change.

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Concept of Gender

- Gender refers to the socially constructed roles , behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.
- WHO states that Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics and defines men and women.

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1. Sociological view point:

- **Gender is a concept** that describes how societies determine and manage sex categories , the cultural meaning ,meaning attached to men and women roles and how individual understand their identities.
- Gender involves social norms, attitude and activities that society deems more appropriate for one sex over another.

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Psychological point of view

- Psychologically , gender is conceived as a set of characteristics or traits that are associated with a certain biological sex (male or female).
- The characteristics that generally define gender are referred to a masculine or feminine.

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Cultural point of view

- Cultural construction of gender refers to the way in which culture takes up the framework set by biology and add meaning and value to gender.
- Culture contribute to what one perceived to as traits of a man and traits of a woman.

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- Most culture perceive a woman to be caring , gentle, patient physically delicate and family oriented
- Man perceived to be physically strong, aggressive and more rational than emotional.

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Definition

- WHO- “Gender refers to the socially constructed roles , behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.”
- Unger- “ The term gender may be used to describe those non- physiological components of sex that are culturally regarded as appropriate to males and females.”

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- In this way gender may be defined as socially constructed roles and behaviours that society typically associates with males and females.

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Characteristics

- 1. Socially Constructed
- 2. Dynamic Concept
- 3. A set of traits
- 4. Different from physical characteristics
- 5. Learnt behaviour or acquired identity
- 6. Expected behaviour
- 7. shapes the personality
- 8. Power relationship –influenced by gender
- 9. Access to resources

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Sex and gender

- Sex refers to a set of biological attributes in human and animals.
- It is associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, genes expression, hormones level and function and reproductive anatomy.

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- According to WHO “ Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics and defines men and women”.
- It classifies people as male or female , typically assigned at birth based on the appearance of external anatomy.

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- In sociology Sex refers to the biological traits that societies use to assign people into the category of either male or female, whether it be through a focus on chromosomes or hormones, some other physical ascription.

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- Gender roles are the functions that societies sees as feminine and masculine.
- These roles are encouraged in children from very early age.

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Difference

Sex

- 1. Biological difference
- 2. It is biological identity with which one born.
- 3. Sex cannot be change without medical intervention
- 4. Biological – primary and secondary characteristics

Gender

1. Sociological difference
2. Gender is masculinity and femininity. differs in cultures
3. It can be change since gender identity is determined by society
4. Socially constructed roles, responsibilities and behaviour

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Difference

Sex

- Universal
- Born with- generally unchanging
- Do not vary , does not change across
- Categorized as male or female
- Natural and biological concept of human being.

Gender

- Cultural
- Learned behaviour- changes overtime
- Varies within and between cultures, overtime and space also
- Categorized as masculinity and femininity.
- Man made concept

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Sexuality

- Sexuality refers to the people's orientation about their experience and expression of themselves as sexual beings.
- Sexual orientation means the established pattern of sexual attraction to the same , opposite or both sexes.
- The recent concepts of sexuality can be termed as heterosexual (straight), homosexual (gay or lesbian) , bisexual. These terms have been coined by Karl –Maria Kerthbeny in late 19th Centaury.

Characteristics

- Sexuality refers to sexual orientation of an organism.
- It includes the feelings of attraction , desire and lust which define our sexual orientation.
- A person would be termed as homosexual if he/ she attracted toward his /her own sex.
- If attraction is toward opposite sex it is termed as heterosexual.
- If person likes both sexes ,he would be called as bisexual.

Factors affecting

- Concept of sexuality is strongly influenced by gender norms prevalent in society.
- Sex has nothing to do with sexuality as it is genetically decided.
- Gender norms have (defining the socially accepted masculine and feminine behaviour) do have a strong impact on the sexuality.
- To be heterosexual is considered normal in society.
- Concept of homosexuality is still opposed by traditional gender norm prevalent society.
- Social norms , political condition and religion have strong influence

Conclusion

- In conclusion we can say that Sex is a biological trait of an organism which is determined by the reproductive organs.
- While Gender is socially describe form for characterisation as male and female or transgender.
- Sexuality is associated with desire of an individual which differs from persons to persons and is guided by the social restrictions.

Self check

- 1..... refers to the socially constructed roles , behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.
- According to Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics and defines men and women.

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References

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