UNIT 11 : CONTEMPORARY SEXUALITY MOVEMENTS

UNIT STRUCTURE

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11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to

- know about the contemporary sexuality movements
- understand the impact of LGBT movements
- learn about the issues which LGBT movements deal with
- analyse the challenges faced by LGBT movements
- build your perspectives on the achievements of the LGBT in contemporary times

11.2 INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is a tabooed context in India. Even though the need is felt to address the concerns of assaults, assumptions and ambiguities yet, sexuality debates are relatively sidelined to uphold cultural constructs. Women's movement in India have been very vocal on the issues of sexuality to address violence against women and create more awareness around sexual and reproductive health. Since the 1990s right to reproductive and sexual health became a norm for different social organisations. It was more towards ensuring better services and awareness around HIV and AIDS

which dominated the funding patterns of different agencies. Sexuality issues were intertwined with HIV and AIDS awareness programmes as a health concern. WHO defines sexuality as "…a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors." (WHO, 2006a) Within these contexts, sexuality movement began in India with the assertion of social, legal and human rights groups working with sexual minorities and marginal identities.



WHO defined sexuality is influenced by the interaction of multiple factors

'Sexuality "cannot be understood without its intersections with class, caste, or race. It is about so much more than sex, or sexual identities," she argued. A chorus of voices in the office of a lesbian and bisexual women's support space in Kolkata resoundingly agreed - "sexuality cannot ever be separate from our rights and from the entirety of ourselves." It is this inclusive, intersectional idea of sexuality - as a politics rather than an identity - that is rooted in spheres as diverse as violence, pleasure, desire, reproduction, health, employment, livelihoods, family, education, and freedom of mobility which forms the working definition of sexuality (Crea) There was a need for dialogue, interaction and awareness of people from different age groups to understand the value of sexuality. Without such understanding people develop distorted images of themselves and all others around them. Many incidents of sexual abuse, exploitation, extreme personal dilemmas and even suicides make youths go towards unseen dangers. Some find their space in drugs and alchohol addiction while others abuse sex workers also to come to terms with their repressed sexuality. Homophobia cannot be contained without a movement around making people aware and sensitive towards people with diverse sexuality.