



Cover Page



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DISCOURSE ON SEXUALITY: THE QUESTION OF INDIVIDUAL REPRESSION AND SOCIAL STIGMA

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Abstract

This study aims to deal with the nature of discourse on sexuality in present times. Formation of modern civilized society makes nature of sexuality sophisticated. Most often sexual activity is viewed as a sin, a source of shame, and a source of embarrassment as civilised society has formed code of conduct to govern the sexual behaviour. Through Norms, value, rule-regulations it tries to stabilize the social structure. It establishes a condition in which natural instincts of human beings in general and sex is particular are balanced. Second, this also tries to explore the democratic nature of sexuality in ancient Indian society. With the passage of time, world wide spread to the concept of ‘civilized society’ has change the democratic nature of sexuality and has imposed restrictions, attached shame and taboo on sex. Third, this study examines how spirituality is taken as positive aspect of human behaviour whereas sexuality is heavily criticised. Fourth, this paper aims to locate the attitude of women towards sexuality. lastly, it examines how and why people grow hysterical over talk about sex and how does this become a source of human repression and sickness. This is helpful in deciphering the causes behind the stigmatisation of sexuality.

Keywords: Sexuality, Civilized Society, Sexual Alternatives, Sickness and Mental Health, Social Stigma.

Introduction

Discourse means a way of talking, dialoguing, and communicating about a specific topic during a specific time period. Sexuality is the term used to describe sex related activities. Sexuality isn't determined by who you have sex with or how frequently you have sex, but it is all about your desire, feel, thought, attractions, attachment and behaviour towards other people. Discourse on sexuality is simply defined as the activity relating to sex in particular time. Sexuality needs mention as it is the most important aspect of a human existence. Sex is the fundamental reality of all creatures that have ever lived on this planet. All species have sex in their own unique way. When it comes to sex, only plants and animals escape from this modern civilization. Civilization has brought about significant changes in human life. In modern time, sex expression has gotten more sophisticated for human.

Although sex is a simple idea, it only pertains to be simple for other species, not for humans. The Formation of modern civilized society has confined it to home in specific room. Talk about sex is restricted in family, school and public sphere. Do we think why this restriction is imposed on human? Why the issue of sex become so complex? Why sex is in form of construction? What is the consequence of modern civilized society on human sexual life?

To begin with discourse on sexuality begin in western world. Sigmund Freud was a well-known psychoanalyst who pioneered the sexuality theory. He believed that life was designed to be a combination of tension and pleasure. All tension, he felt, stemmed from the accumulation of libido (sexual energy) and all pleasure resulted from its release. From childhood to old age, Sigmund Freud identified the stages of human growth. He talks about the erogenous zone, which is a sensitive portion of the body to stimulation. Each stage of erogenous zone is pleasurable. The oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital¹ are the five psychosexual stages. If one is satisfied at any given stage, it might lead to a healthy personality. Unhappiness, on the other hand, is the result of fixation². (Freud,1905, p.7). Sexual repression has a long history in Western countries, dating back to the Victorian era in England. Due to the rise of capitalism and bourgeois culture, it is the first time in the history of Western countries that sexuality is regulated, tabooed, and stigmatised. The act of sex limited to the household and impose silence on this topic. (Foucault,1998, p.3).

1 The erogenous stage of oral in which the mouth – sucking, swallowing, Anal shows the anus- withholding or expelling faeces, Phallic; the penis or clitoris masturbation, Latent; little or no sexual motivation present, Genital; is the stage when penis or vagina in sexual intercourse.

2 Fixation is a concept of human psychology that defined the persistence of anachronistic sexual traits. This term defined the relationship with attachments to people or things in general persisting from childhood into adult life.

Literature Review

For preparing this study, researcher used some books, articles, Journals, NGO reports and internet websites were accessed. (Freud, 1905) in the book, ‘Three essays on the theory of sexuality’ in author defined the human being relationship with sex. He examines the stages of human sexuality from childhood to old age. (Foucault, 1983) in this book, ‘The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality,’



Cover Page



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author explain how the concept of sex came in the connect of morality. The natural instinct of human being or sexual behaviour not confined or accepted by morality. (Foucault,1998) in this book, 'The Will of Knowledge: The History of Sexuality volume-1' he explains that how social mechanism of power regulated our sexuality. In the early 19th and 20th century nature of sex degraded and became rigid. This system of power only creates the urge for desire rather than pleasure. (Freud, 2016) in the book, 'Civilization and its Discontents' Freud explain the relationship between civilization and human happiness. He defined that how development of civilization creates our nature aggression and how we became unhappy.

Methodology

To conduct this study, researcher used secondary sources. Methodology also comprised with observation which help research to generated some ideas. For this study research observed various relationship in different society of the world. In which social norms and value system play important role in regulating social structure. Passage of time, degraded the nature of sex and reached in the stage of value and sex. All essential material is collected from different books, e-books, article, journal, internet website and some reports etc.

Modern Civilizes Society and the Discourse of Sexuality

The nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. The nature of human is to seek more and more pleasure and to avoid pain. The purpose of life is actually the program of the pleasure principle (Burns & Hart,1970, p.11). On one hand human nature is based on the notion of gaining pleasure, on the other civilization is founded on the pursuit of human values of control, beauty, hygiene, and order, as well as ensuring the existence of humanity's highest intellectual function. Love is vital for bringing people together in a society. Individual's happiness based on the gratification of instincts. However, society enacts laws, restriction to suppress the individual instinct of gratification. Sexual processes and feelings, as well as natural human libidinal growth, are inhibited. As a result of this annoyance, violent instincts evolve to combat the propensity. (Freud,2016, p.13).

Evolution of the concept of society creates the civilization. Civilization creates rule- regulation, norms- value for the establishment of stable social structure. Marriage was considered 'the best possible framework for sexual pleasure. Mutual understanding, love, attachment all can be nourished by the decision of keeping sex within the bound of marriage (Foucault,1986, pp.150-151). Restriction on the family members is not allowed to have sex with their relatives. According to Freud (2013) society restricts intercourse or other sexual act between member of a close kinship group such as between parents and children or between brothers and sisters and so on. To maintain this social structure; establish the institution of marriage and make purity or strength on family relations. Because result of these intercourses not only create imbalance within family and society but also generate anarchy within the society. So, the modern civilization derives its strength from family institutions. As a result of this sex has grown extremely sophisticated, and individuals who engage in this behaviour in public are penalised by authority. What is the point of enquiry is that whether by doing this, civilised society is good or bad for humans? So, we have to analyses both aspect of civilization because we can't totally reject the idea of civilization.

Why this Civilization is better for Human being?

We all know that without rule, flora-fauna, animal even jungles, are unregulated; So why do we think that humans can be governed without rules and restrictions? Without rules and regulations, the family, society and state cannot function systematically. If the concept of civilised society appears, it implies that it has its own worth or acceptance. In beginning, society was not formed, and there were no rules to govern the people. Karl Marx's observed that there is no mode of production in a primitive period. In this stage every resource was available for everyone. Similarly in the primitive period, there was no concept of sex partner, family, and community. In this stage all got sexual pleasure from all. We can imagine that how chaotic this stage was? What is the outcome of this sexual pleasure? Production from this pleasure was also anarchical. Political philosopher Plato's concept of 'communism of wives and property' was such unregulated conditions no one knew who is one's husband, wife, father, mother and children.

As a result, ideals, norms and value are formed for societal regulation. The society defined good and bad thinking and try to make its member civilized. To establish authority for surveillance on human action that who is doing wrong or right, the authority will punish someone who acts or behaves in a way that violates the norms of society. It is society that has its own set of rules and limitations in order to sustain social structure. So, in case of sex, taboo and silence served for avoiding anarchy and balancing social system. Modern civilized society thus strengthens the family units and strives for purity in these relationships. For the sake of preserving the society's ideal notion and giving strength to the concept of 'value', these values are fed through continuous socialization (on the subjects like sex; fear, check of God, sin etc.) from generation to generation. They (generation) can't understand what is these values and what are the motive of these (in the name of Value). And they are following these without understanding why they are doing so? In the same way as Karl Marx's (1844) give idea that 'religion is opium to the people'. People, he claims, have no understanding why they participate in



Cover Page



DOI: <http://ijmer.in.doi./2022/11.04.212>

religious activities, but they continue to do so. It provides the necessary strength to keep the social system intact. All ideals are formed for maintaining the social structure.

Now to take another view of the Discourse

The perception of sex has shifted as a result of modern civilization. In simple words it, is a natural and pleasurable activity that takes places between two people. Social system tells you when sex is suitable. For having sex in modern time become rigid and what should we do;

- Wait for right age
- Find partner
- To follow the institution of marriage
- Became trustable or responsible
- Law abiding sex

Science and logics are used in the matter of sexual satisfaction rather than intercourse between two. Sexual alternatives are helpful in generating economy for the system (Foucault: 1983). The civilized society also gives you sex alternatives if you do not agree to finish these levels. These are following as:

- Do masturbate
- Do unnatural sex (Use artificial instrument like Doll, Didlo, vibrator etc.)
- Phone sex
- Use of Pornography
- Establishment of prostitution and go for it.

This civilization provides ideas, actions and sex alternatives. Without a doubt every civilization has loopholes but it doesn't indicate that the civilization as a whole is doomed. Nobody is perfect and this system, rule, restriction has also its own advantage or disadvantage.

If society has created this system of restriction so it is also the responsibility of the society to create healthy environment for human sexual life. Because this creates various types of psychological, mental, physical problems for human. If human is sick, frustrated and not happy how can society run? But the major questions to be answered is, what is the solution of these types of problem related to sexual needs. Can we say that one should have sex in a very sensational age of childhood? what we should do? Give them sex education to control their body changes and desire or to give permission for having sex?

Indian attitude towards Sexual Activity in its Literature and Art

India is a country of religions and full of culture. Indian spiritual philosophy run from the concept of Shunya (zero) means emptiness. It is considered a cosmic world, where all existence emerges from Shunya, coming out of nothing and dissolving back into nothing. (Kumar, 2013 May 25). In case of India, history is full of sexual activity. The concept of sex is as old as human being came into existence. Ancient India was the symbol of openness and free attitudes in the matter of sex. According to Burton (2012) ancient text of Hinduism and Buddhism particularly the Vedas script provide righteous perspective on sexuality, wedlock and rituals for increasing productivity. Vedas reveals about moral perspective on sexuality, marriage and fertility prayers. The practice of polygamy was also allowed. Ancient history of India shows that polyandry and polygamy as a way of preserving dynastic succession. On the other side, 'Dasi' (sex workers) also accepted by the ancient society. Homosexual behaviour fin in the Khajuraho and Sun temple of Konark depict same sex behaviour including mutual filiation and orgiastic scenes. Adultery also happened in those ancient time and was accepted by the society. In the Indian art nudity accepted in the southern part of India. We can see this in the paintings at Ajanta and in the caves of Allora. Indian literature on the topic of sex can be traced out in text of 'Kama Sutra' by Indian Philosopher Vatsyayana from 400 BCE -200 BCE. This is renowned ancient texts which provides the information about ancient time sexual practices. This text explains the pleasure and erotism during sexual activities. Kama sutra is the text actually that gives sex education. It is the expression of Indian attitudes towards sex as a central and natural component of Indian psyche and life. Konark, Linga raj, Khajuraho, Ellora, Markandeswar, Udaipur Jagadish Mandir, Hampi etc have erotic sculpture in stones. (Sal Writes, 2020 November 24).



Figure 1. Ajanta and Ellora Caves. Repository of art and culture of ancient India. Accessed on 10 Dec. 21 from Indian luxurytrains.com



Figure 2. Erotic sculptures at Sun Temple, Konark. Accessed on 10 Dec. from 123rf.com.



Figure 3. Ancient Erotica: The Sexually Explicit temple in Khajuraho, India. Accessed on 10 December 2021 from jonistravelling.com

These temples demonstrate that India's religious past recognises that sex is essential part of human life. India's religious and cultural history has proven that the ancient societies were accepting the sexual behaviour. In Indian epic myths, the character of Kamdev (the God of sex) demonstrate that society believes in sexual reality and its necessity in human life. Hindu philosophy is based on the four cycles of human life, they are Dharma, Artha, Kaam and Moksha. The Panchatantra of Vishnu Sharma emphasises the importance of proper and adequate nourishment as a prerequisite for having the right mindset and power for optimum sexual performance. (Burton & Arbuthnot, 1984, p.223).

Spirituality and Sexuality as Two side of Human Life

It is also questionable that why spirituality is viewed in contrast with the concept of sex. In Vivekananda's word 'Unless you are spiritually mature enough, don't read Raslila, because you are going to mis-read and mis-understand it'. There is need to understand that human is both spiritual and sexual creature, we can't reject this truth. For our mental or physical health spirituality and sexuality both are necessary. Spirituality and sexuality both present the two essential aspects of human life (Anderson, & Morgan, 1994, pp.115-121). No doubt, that four pillars (Dharma, Artha, Kaam and Moksha) according to Hinduism is the life circle of human being. These are essential part of human life. So, to experience all these four pillars are necessary for human beings. Hindu philosophy defined balancing of life through system of Ashram. Ashram means a place of spiritual shelter which defined into four stages. Brahmacharya Ashram is the stage represent student life. Celibacy was practised during this stage, which focused on education. Spiritual ideals are nourished at this ashram. The individual married existence is presented by the Grihastha Ashram (household life)). It is a stage of sensual pleasure but according to ethical principles. This stage also includes the most intense physical, sexual, emotional, occupational, social and material attachments that exist in a human being's life. Vanaprastha, in this stage when a person hand over household duties to the next generation took an advisory role and slowly withdrew from the world. It was a transition phase from a householder's life with its



Cover Page



DOI: <http://ijmer.in.doi./2022/11.04.212>

greater emphasis on Artha and Kama to one with greater emphasis on Moksha. Sannyasa is the stage represented the renunciation of material desires and dislikes described by a state of disinterest and detachment from material life, usually without any significant property or home, and focussed on Moksha means spiritual life. This stage is open to anyone who has completed all of the previous stages. Without experiencing one we can't move into next pillar. All the pillar of human cycles (Purushartha) and the system of balancing life (Ashram) both represented the ideal form of individual needs. So why only the concept of 'kaam' badly criticized? Here, we must understand that without experience 'Kaam' one can't move in the stage of Moksha. Moksha is the ultimate stage of human life which comes when one has experienced all the three pillar of life according to Hinduism. This is the stage where individual finds the energy through spirituality. It is necessary to accept the reality and change the behaviour towards sexual practices.

Indian has so many literatures, art on sexual practices. But when religion defined that sex is necessary part of human life, on the other side it imposes taboo on sexual life it become contradictory. It is accepted that to maintain society it (restriction) is important but these restrictions make nature of society very rigid, complex. Presently, in Indian society sex is heavily criticised and is subject of shame, it is done out of wedlock. time. There are lots of norms that govern sexual life of human. Individual natural sexual behaviour, however, is diametrically opposed to sexual conventions. These types of norms only restrict the natural instinct of human sexual behaviour and sometimes make them sick.

Women Nature Toward Sex and Indian Society

Marx's and Durkheim explain that culture influenced the social structure and individual behaviour. In India sexual practices, norms are defined through patriarchy and religion. Women is the symbol of love, sacrifice, emotion, care etc. But if we see women sexual life, it is suppressed by the society, tradition, culture and through socialization. They are socialized in a way that sex is the practice or pleasure of men not for them. Sex is no for them. In the matter of sex women became hysteria that it is the subject of only men pleasure (Foucault,1998, p.104). It is equally acceptable for men and women.

Why sex is important or necessary? Can human race run without reproduction? Today technology develop in a way where babies are born in lab. In the year 1978, first test tube baby was born in lab and around 8 million people have been born by IVF². So, why we need sex? We have sex because it fulfils biological drives. Sex is necessary elements in the life of human. But if human not having it into their right age, it makes human psychologically sick and impact on their mental and physical and social life. Lack of fulfilment of sexual need is one of the reasons for crime against men and women. Sex education can provide better guidance about their body changes and behaviour in a healthy atmosphere for human sexual life.

4. IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) a process which fertilizes an egg from a woman outside her baby. The egg is then put inside her uterus to develop.

But even providing sex education is not acceptable to Indian society now, which was once open on this issue. In the year of 2007, Sex education was introduced by the National Council for Education Research and Training in the curriculum as a part of it and not as a separate subject. But this move was widely opposed and removed in States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Goa. Pre-marital sex is still taboo in India. Survey conducted by National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in 2015-16 reported that Men are mostly likely to have had their first sexual intercourse at the age of 20-24.

For women, the peak age at first sex is lower at 15-19. Only about 11% of single men and 2% of single women in the 15-24 age group having had sex. Is this not repression of individual instinct? There is necessity to understand the nature of individual sexual need and striking a balance between conflicting interests of individual and society in the matter.

Individual Repression

Biggest drawbacks of this civilized society are that it has negative impact on human mental health. Simple thing is created so rigidly and the reaching of this pleasure is far from the human being. It reaches the Sex vs. Value stage. If you are not obeying these norms, you will be judged and punished by society. As a result, numerous types of sex have emerged. Human having sex unnaturally from animal and through artificial technology. Sodomy³ and Bestiality⁴ is a practice between a person and non-human means animal. How derogatory this type of sex is when human sex with animal? Do human fall short of finding sexual partner? Sometimes the civilization restricts this natural instinct of pleasure and forces human to get it from unnatural way. So, this type of practices is badly affected human psychology and mental health and organism.

As we know Civilized society control the natural instinct of human being and give sex alternative for sexual need. Low sexual desire is caused by mental illness. Because of lack of sex for an extended period of time, tension is released, which is closely linked to



Cover Page



DOI: <http://ijmer.in.doi./2022/11.04.212>

depression. According to a study conducted at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania, human having sex can boost human body immune system and prepare the body to battle illness by generating endorphins

3. Sodomy is a practice between a human and non-human. Bestiality which is also an activity between human and non-human. It makes no difference whatever animal is involved in. This type of sexual activity is not only illegal but also very harmful.

Although, after long time without having sex can lose interest in sex. And also make human as sexless creature. Rationale of being in this stage, human lose their libido energy. However, sex we have more or regulate according to one's need can boost libido. (Medical News Today 2021 July 21).

Society established instinct based institutions like the institution of prostitution is helpful in giving sexual pleasure to individuals. But on the other side, Sex workers are deeply affected by these institutions. As a profession of selling sex for money and survival, they having sex with multiple partners. Sometime the demand of client of having condom less anal sex deeply impact on their physical health. However, having too much sex also generate numerous types of diseases. The health of sex workers (male as well as female) capture with the sexual transmitted disease like HIV. They are facing major risk of UTI's especially in female sex workers (Bailey et al., 2016).

Rape of individual (male as well as women) is also one expression of sexual unsatisfaction of natural instinct. But on the other side, cause of sexual violence (rape) includes various aspect like; military conquest, anger, power, status, traits, ethical standard, socio economics etc.

Social Stigma

Sex is not bad thing but it is essential part of human life. If we talk about stigma, it shows that talk and act about sex restricted or stigmatized by society. Boys and girls are tough through socialization that interaction with opposite sex is against norms. When children harmonious changes are in peak stage and they want to disclose their feelings to parents or guardian; they even can't talk about their sexual urges as it is considered as shameful topic. The thought of Sex in the society is very secret or personal issue of one's life and nobody is interested to openly talk about their sexual desires. Sex become the issue where 'veil of ignorance'⁵ is created by society. It is observed that if someone having sex without official stamp (marriage), people of society badly criticised or torture them.

5. 'Veil of ignorance' is the concept given by John Rawls in which he defined that people have no idea about their original position in the society. It is a moral reasoning device designed to promote impartial decision making by denying decision makers access to potentially biasing information about who will benefit most or least from the available option.

Because in the civilized society it is the code of conduct that nobody has right to have sex without marriage. If someone found having sex in old age is not accepted by norms of the society. It is noticeable that sex is not just the activity of young people, but is the life time activity till they are alive.

Results, Discussion and Findings

Sex is very vibrant or sensitive issue in all societies of the world. Sex is regarded as a sham, a vice, and a violation of tradition. Ancient India was the epitome of a democratic society. In India, traditional society explains how social norms are created according to human natural need. In traditional society, the appropriate age for marriage was decided in the early age of childhood. If we follow the scientific rationale, childhood is the age when hormonal changes begin in children. Marriage is the immediate fulfilment of their sexual drive in this case. As a result, in India, notion of marriage in childhood, norms provide sexual satisfaction. However, such an early age, they are unaware of their sexual impulses and feelings. But because the concept of marriage it covers this desire. Marriage become the ultimate source for sexual satisfaction. Modern Indian society change this pattern of marriage in terms of age but has not changed its order that without marriage one can't complete their sexual need. One can't think about sex without marriage because both Marriage and sex are intermingled by society.

New age of 18-21 years has been set for female and male for having direct or legal pleasure through marriage which is under scrutiny and may change to 21-21. It is the tipping point that this norm affects or inhibits individual sexual life and creates a large gap for having pleasure officially.

Sex become rigid when logics is being used in the field of sex. Whenever children or anyone in society is found engage in sexual behaviour, they are advised to consult a doctor or a psychiatrist in urban area, on other side people of rural area are advised to go institution of God to solve their problem rather than educating them about their body changes and desires.



Cover Page



DOI: <http://ijmer.in/doi/2022/11.04.212>

There is earnest need to understand the sexual desire of individual. Give children sex education at a young age so they can grasp what type of feelings and desires they have. Because in this age they are unaware and not mature. So, if society truly wants to stabilise or govern this social order, it must first provide sex education to children.

It is found that Sex is presented as only one side of human's life. It is presented as only physical need of the individual. It is important to understand that human is both sexual and emotion creature. Human being is the combination of mind + Body. If body present the truth of physical need (Sex), on the other side, mind present the emotional need. So, it is important for healthy human life to create balance between body (sex) and mind (emotion).

Suggestions and Conclusion

Modern civilization has created different norms and values and these are helpful in stabilizing the social structure. It is vital to offer a healthy atmosphere for human sexual life in today's civilised society. The sexuality of human starts when a child is born and growth with their in different ages. However, this doesn't mean that to be allowed for unregulated behaviour for having sex in early age of childhood. In this case, sex education can be helpful for them in understanding their sexual urge. When once they attain maturity of body and mind feel comfortable for having sex, give them liberal ways of thinking instead of makes rigid in the name of values or norms. If youngster (without marriage) indulges in intercourse; they are badly criticised. There is need to change thus pattern of thinking about such issues. The idea of marriage is beautifully created, it is the bound between two people physically as well as emotionally. But if someone have no satisfaction (physical or mental) from their partner, do they have any choice. In such cases, there is need to change the orthodox beliefs about rigidity of one permanent partner and no option of next partner. However, the purpose of this study is not against norms and value, but to change the orthodox belief about idea of sex and dogmas that make it complex. Because norms have their own worth and acceptance in the society. Society is created for the happiness of human not for the repression of the individuals. If human is unhappy, stressed or frustrated, society can't run smoothly.

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