

Gender, Sexuality and Values

Session, 2 hours

This session asks each student to explore and articulate their feelings and values around gender and sexuality. They reflect on how attitudes to these concepts evolve and change over time and how their own values may affect their research.

Download the [curriculum](#) for this session.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can:

- Articulate what it means to be male or female in their particular culture/s and how this has changed over time.
- Clarify and articulate their feelings, values and attitudes on gender and sexuality.
- Discuss their thinking around power, social status, and discrimination against certain people or groups.
- Illustrate, with examples, how gender and sexuality intersect.
- Express how personal perspectives on gender and sexuality affect their work.
- Explain why and how they can integrate concepts of gender and sexuality into their research.

Preparation

Consult these resources and share with your students, as appropriate:

- Hall, K., Levon, E., & Milani, T. M. (2019). [Navigating normativities](#): Gender and sexuality in text and talk. *Language in Society*, 48(4), 481-489.
- Ferfolja, T., & Ullman, J. (2017). [Gender and sexuality in education and health](#): Voices advocating for equity and social justice.
- Seidu, A. A., Darteh, E. K. M., Kumi-Kyereme, A., Dickson, K. S., & Ahinkorah, B. O. (2020). [Paid sex among men in sub-Saharan Africa](#): Analysis of the demographic and health survey. *SSM-population health*, 11, 100459.
- Sani, A. S., Abraham, C., Denford, S., & Mathews, C. (2018). [Design, implementation and evaluation of school-based sexual health education in sub-Saharan Africa](#): a qualitative study of researchers' perspectives. *Sex Education*, 18(2), 172-190.
- Finlay, J. E., Assefa, N., Mwanyika-Sando, M., Dessie, Y., Harling, G., Njau, T., ... & Bukenya, J. (2020). [Sexual and reproductive health knowledge among adolescents in eight sites across sub-Saharan Africa](#). *Tropical Medicine & International Health*, 25(1), 44-53.

Drawing on these papers, prepare a short lecture to introduce concepts of gender and sexuality (Step 1).

Provide cards and flipchart sheets, or online boards, for word associations and grouping (Step 2).

Make enough copies of the [Values Exercise](#) (Step 3) or share it online.

Steps

Time	Step	Who
10 minutes	1. Introduce gender and sexuality	Facilitator
30 minutes	2. Explore gender, culture, sexuality and stereotypes	Groups
10 minutes	3. Clarify values around gender and sexuality	Individuals
10 minutes	4. Describe and discuss values	Groups of 4
10 minutes	5. Summarise how values shape research	Facilitator
	6. Self-assessment	Individuals

Step 1. Introduce gender and sexuality

10 minutes

Give a short lecture to introduce the concepts of sexuality and sexual orientation.

Step 2. Explore gender, culture, sexuality and stereotypes

30 minutes

In groups, students brainstorm words that they associate with sexuality and write them on cards. Then ask them to place each word in the most appropriate “circle of sexuality” on flipcharts or virtual boards. Include these among the circles:

- Sensuality.
- Intimacy.
- Sexual identity.
- Sexual health and reproduction.
- Sexual power over others.

Step 3. Clarify values around gender and sexuality

10 minutes

Students read the 10 statements of the [Values Exercise](#) and use them to reflect on and clarify their personal attitudes and values around gender and sexuality. They complete the questionnaire, indicating whether they ‘agree’, ‘disagree’ or ‘don’t know’.

Step 4. Describe and discuss values

10 minutes

In groups, students discuss some or all of these questions:

- How does it feel to confront values that you do not share?
- What did you learn from this experience?
- Did you change your opinion about any of the issues?

Step 5. Summarise how values shape research

10 minutes

Summarise how personal values on gender and sexuality shape every researcher’s theoretical perspectives and methodological choices. Discuss how clarifying values is an ongoing process: it is normal to re-evaluate our attitudes as we grow and mature, and as we gather new knowledge and experiences.

Step 6. Self-assessment

Ask students to reflect on the exercise to clarify [values](#) (Step 3). Each student writes a short piece in response to this question:

- How will the value clarification exercise contribute to your work and to your own personal growth?