

Volume 9, Issue 4 (III)

October - December 2022

ISSN: 2394 – 7780



International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association
www.iaraedu.com



Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane (Arts, Science and Commerce)

Re-Accredited 'B+' Grade (3rd cycle CGPA 2.69) by NAAC

ISO 21001:2018

“Being Me” in association with ICSSR

organizes

ONE DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

**Being Me-Understanding different
dimensions of LGBTQIA+ Community
Blended Mode (Online/Offline)**

Date: 20th September 2022

Time: 10:00 am onwards

Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane

Off Eastern Express Highway, Dnyanasadhana Marg Thane-400604 Maharashtra, India.

Tel-022-25821615/25830722 <https://www.dnyanasadhanacollege.org>

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

The aim of the college is to encourage and promote education to all sections of the society, especially the socially and economically backward and weaker sections. This premier education institute is spread over a plot of 2.2 acres.

The College has faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce on aided basis and B.Sc. CS, B.Sc. IT, BAMMC, BMS, BAF, BBI and BAFTNMP on unaided basis. The college has fully qualified and competent teaching staff. It offers all modern amenities needed for all-round development of the students' personality, such as library, reading room, internet club, auditorium, well-equipped computer labs with digital overhead projectors, gymkhana, gymnasium and Audio-Visual room to mention a few.

The students can also pursue their M. Com in Management, Advanced Accountancy, Banking and Finance and M.Sc. in Chemistry and Botany M.Sc.IT. The college also has a research centre for Ph.D. in Chemistry and Commerce. The college is also a centre for Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Acceptance is the first step to move forward and taking measures is the final step.

Human beings are one of the most beautiful creations of the creator. There are variations in terms of biological and socio-cultural identities among them. Acceptance of different genders and making them respectful members of the society is the greatest need of present society.

Gender has diversified itself. As we all are aware of the fact that LGBTQIA+ community face increased discrimination due to their sexually minority identity hence this conference aims and supports gender quality and would like to bring about a change in the attitude of all the stakeholders towards sexuality stereotypes.

At Dnyanasadhana, we are trying to spread awareness about LGBTQIA+ community among different stakeholders. We have taken "BEING ME" as a 5 years project with same objective since 2020-21.

This conference will be used to champion equality at National Level.

This is a call to all the representatives of different NGOs, organisations and research scholars who are involved in this particular field. Our attempt will be to understand the needs and problems of LGBTQIA+ communities and to know their expectations from educational institution like us.

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Crossing edges to be a better me...

FROM THE DESK OF HON. PRESIDENT & FOUNDER, TRUSTEE



ज्ञानसाधना ठाणे सोसायटीची जी गेली ४२ वर्षे प्रगती होत आहे त्याचा मला आनंद आणि अभिमान आहे. ज्ञानाचे उत्तम साधन म्हणून ठाणे आणि मुंबई परिसरात ज्ञानसाधना महाविद्यालयाचे नाव सर्वज्ञात आहे.

“Being Me” या महाविद्यालयाच्या उपक्रमांतर्गत एक आंतरराष्ट्रीय परिषद समर्थपणे आयोजित केली याबद्दल मी “Being Me” समिती सभासदांचे अभिनंदन करतो. LGBTQIA + समुदायाच्या समस्यांकडे समाजाने माणुसकीने बघावे व विविध देशांमध्ये या विषयाच्या अनुषंगाने काय कार्य सुरु आहे याचा आढावा घेण्यासाठी ही परिषद आयोजित केली गेली. या परिषदेत LGBTQIA + समुदायाच्या ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ, या समुदायाने अनुभवलेली आव्हाने व त्यांच्या समाजाकडून असलेल्या अपेक्षा या विविध मुद्द्यांवर शोधनिबंध सादर झाले तसेच या क्षेत्रात कार्य करणाऱ्या संस्थांची चर्चासत्रे झाली. काही यशोगाथाही सादर केल्या गेल्या. मला खात्री आहे की या परिषदेतून सदर विषयावर पुढील वाटचाल करण्यासाठी विविध मार्ग आमच्या संस्थेला उमगले आहेत.

संस्थेची ही वाटचाल नक्कीच अभिमानास्पद असून येणाऱ्या काळात अशीच प्रगती होईल याची मला खात्री आहे. ज्ञानसाधनाच्या पुढील वाटचालीसाठी माझ्या शुभेच्छा आणि आशीर्वाद.

जय महाराष्ट्र !

श्री. सतीश रामचंद्र प्रधान
अध्यक्ष व संस्थापक विश्वस्त

FROM THE DESK OF HON. SECRETARY SHRI KAMLESH S. PRADHAN



Acceptance is the first step to move forward and taking measures is the final step.

Human beings are one of the most beautiful creations of the Creator. There are variations in terms of biological and socio-cultural identities among them. Acceptance of different genders and making them respectful members of the society is the greatest need of present world. As we all are aware of the fact that LGBTQIA+ community face increased discrimination due to their sexually minority identity.

Hence Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College is organising a one day International Conference in association with ICSSR on the topic “Being Me- understanding different dimensions of LGBTQIA+ community”.The conference aims at supporting gender equality and would like to bring about a change in the attitude of all the stakeholders towards sexuality stereotypes.

This conference is under the “BEING ME” initiative, a 5 year project of the college from the year 2020-21. “Being Me initiative” aims towards sensitizing our students, teaching and non- teaching staff about different social issues experienced by LGBTQIA+ , Divyangjans, Unskilled workers, old age citizens and gender specific health issues.

We, the Management, feel very proud to take a step ahead in achieving the objective of Being Me and wish the committee members all the best!

Shri Kamlesh Pradhan

Hon. General Secretary & Trustee

Dnyanasadhana Thane (society)

FROM THE DESK OF PRINCIPAL DR. GANESH BHAGURE



It is indeed a great pleasure that Being me is organizing a one day International Conference in association with ICSSR on the topic “Being Me- understanding different dimensions of LGBTQIA+ community” on 20th September, 2022 in Blended mode(offline/online).

This conference would focus on the discrimination faced by LGBTQIA+ community and enhance shared understanding of diversity. It would help in sensitizing and empowering our youth to welcome diversity.

Formerly known as Dnyanasadhana college , this magnanimous college had started in 1983 by our visionary founder , President Shri Satish Pradhan. This institute was started to cater to the need of higher education and provide affordable education for low income groups. Because of such foresight, today our college is much sought after for traditional courses as well as self-finance courses. The institute now has a large spectrum of courses ranging between UG to PG and PhD courses.

We have invited NGOs, corporate professionals, members from the LGBTQIA+ community, academicians , researchers, policy makers working for the rights of LGBTQIA+ to share their experiences, learnings and insights in this conference. We have invited research papers from across India on the theme “Historical context of LGBTQIA+ community” and “Problems and challenges experienced by LGBTQIA+ community and need for setting up of new norms in the field of education, health, employment etc”.

I am looking forward to productive and healthy discussion among all the participants including both speakers and the audience.I would like to place on record my sincere gratitude and appreciation towards management of Dnyanasadhana society, resource persons, participants, faculty members and the organisers for putting in their untiring efforts.

I am sure their efforts will bear the fruits of hard work. I hope this conference would go a long way in enlightening one and all.

Dr. Ganesh Bhagure

Principal

FROM THE DESK OF CONFERENCE SECRETARIES



Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College has organised a one day International Conference in association with ICSSR on the topic “Being Me- understanding different dimensions of LGBTQIA+ community” on 20th September, 2022.

This conference was a part of our project "Being me" which has been initiated by Mrs. Manasi Pradhan, jt. secretary Dnyanasadhana, Thane which aims at sensitizing all the stakeholders on different issues related with LGBTQIA+ community, senior citizens, unskilled workers, Divyangjans and gender specific health problems.

The Institution has organised approximately 25 programmes in the year 2021-22 to sensitise the stakeholders towards all the objectives. We received good responses from research scholars and students irrespective of the topic being diverse.

This conference has witnessed array of speakers from across the globe such as Geneva, London, Chicago, Turkey, New York who spoke about the status of LGBTQIA+ community in their own country and challenges faced by them.

Thanks to NGOs and support groups such as Tweet Foundation, Humsafar Trust, Sweekar, Desi Parents who readily offered us a helping hand in all the matters relating to the conference.

We owe much to Dr. Nilakshi Roy, Maya Awasthi, Urmi Jadhav, Dr Neeta Sane, Mario da Penha, to name a few, who helped us in connecting to resource persons and NGOs.

Dr. Sanjyot Deuskar and Dr. Anita Dakshina

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International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research

Volume 9, Issue 4 (III): October - December 2022

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CERTIFICATE OF INDEXING (SJIF 2018)

This certificate is awarded to

International Journal of Advance & Innovative Research
(ISSN: 2394-7780)

The Journal has been positively evaluated in the SJIF Journals Master List evaluation process
SJIF 2018 = 7.363

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY ARE DIFFERENT: THE RESEARCH PAPER STATING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COMPLICATED TERMS WITH MIXED METHOD ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

How many people know the difference between sexualities and gender identities? Not many, so in this research review, we're going to glance at what exactly these terms mean, how could we differ the terms, and how this misunderstanding affects queer people. There are different types of sexualities and gender labels used by millions of people, which may stress out the people who want to understand their queer friend or a family member or are just curious. So to start with sexual orientation is a term used to describe your romantic or intimate partner preference, you may be attracted to the opposite sex (Straight), same-sex (Gay, Lesbian), both (Bisexual), or even more than just two genders (Pansexual, Omnisexual, etc.) and might not even feel a romantic or sexual attraction (Asexual) or less attraction (Demisexual, Demiromantic). While gender identity is a term used to describe who you are from within, what you feel from inside, and how you would like other people to identify you as, you may be transgender, non-binary, genderfluid, or genderqueer, these are some labels from the 78 identified genders as per 2019 research excluding the birth-assigned genders. When people often misinterpret those terms, closeted queers couldn't point out their negligence without getting an eye. It inflicts mental health issues on the discriminated queer people who are just being themselves. In conclusion, sexual orientation & gender identities are both varied terms consisting of several diverse labels.

Keywords: Sexual orientation, gender identity, non-binary, genderqueer, closeted, omnisexual, diverse labels.

INTRODUCTION

We use an acronym (LGBT). Which is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. Gender Identity is who you are like man, women, or transgender. Sexual orientation differs from gender identity which means who you are attracted to physically, emotionally, romantically. Further information about sexual orientation and gender identity: Since ancient time people accepted that it is a proper way for man and woman to be together but development of globalization and impact of western culture people value the sexuality specially among college students, because they are our future. They are receiving higher education and follow the new trend.

Sexual orientation is divided into four major classes which is as follows:

Heterosexual: They are known as "Straight" people. Heterosexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behavior between people of the opposite sex or gender.

Homosexual: Homosexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction, or sexual behavior between members of the same sex or gender. As a sexual orientation, homosexuality is "an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions" to people of the same sex.

Asexual: Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity. It may be considered a sexual orientation or the lack thereof. It may also be categorized more widely, to include a broad spectrum of asexual sub-identities.

Bisexual: Bisexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction, or sexual behavior toward both males and females, or to more than one gender. It may also be defined to include romantic or sexual attraction to people regardless of their sex or gender identity, which is also known as pansexuality.

In gender identity people who are transgender, or who otherwise don't confirm to gender stereotype come from all walks of life. Trans people are one of the most disadvantageous groups in society. They routinely experience prejudice, discrimination, hatred, harassment and even violence.

In 2010 the Trans Plus project conducted a detailed survey with 433 people across Ontario. Trans people reported barriers and discrimination in accessing employment and medical care. Two Third said that they had avoided public spaces such as malls, clothing stores, and gyms because of fear of harassment. the trans and non-confirming gender individuals to legal protection in the same way that people are protected from discrimination, harassment based on race, age, disability and all other prohibit grounds.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A greater tolerance for people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities has been observed in several parts of the world. They are forced to live in cloistered groups, on the fringes of society and in extreme poverty. Literature and Cinema have beautifully depicted the sociological, sexual, psychological, cultural violence faced by this community. These people have their own way of style, language, expression, feeling and behavior.

All of them are neglected by the society and thus they create their own society in which they make themselves comfortable but even then, they are tortured and disturbed by the outer world. The two great Sanskrit epic poems, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, indicate the existence of a third gender in ancient India society. Homosexuality seems to be alien to Indian culture and is a source of moral corruption. Homosexual love and its representations are not new in India.

Homosexual love has its echoes, explicit or incipient in Indian religious scriptures, paintings and literatures, ancient and modern. Critics such as Ruth Vanita, Saleem Kidwai, who have written extensively on the history and traditions of same-sex love argue that “many believe that the idea and practice of same-sex love were imported into India by ‘foreigners’- Muslim invaders, European conquerors, or American capitalists” (Vanita and Kidwai 2008, xxxv) who did not approve of non-procreative sex.

The situation was severely worsened when the British Government being influenced by the principles of Victorian Puritanism introduced a penal code that considered homosexual love a crime of severe punishment which continued to be part of the Indian Penal Code. Earlier than that in Indian culture, lesbianism and gayism were acceptable forms of sexuality – the most ancient sculptural art of Khajuraho caves and the architecture of some of the Hindu temples in Orissa bear a burning testimony. Influenced by colonial thinking, the non-heteronormative sexual identities came to be objected and outlawed in India.

The consequence can be seen in India, where the Gay Pride Marches in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai include lesbians, gays, transgenders and others who come together as ‘Queer’ to forge coalitional politics against the homophobic Indian society. The word ‘lesbianism’ is derived from the Greek word ‘Lesbos,’ a Greek island in the Aegean Sea which was the native place of Sappho, the 7th Century B.C. lyric poetess who addressed her love poems to women. In the Kamasutra, the famous classic of Hindu erotica, there is a clear mention of lesbianism.

Today lesbianism is a universal phenomenon where women find sexual fulfilment among themselves. It has been increasing in the conservative Indian society despite the society’s lack of recognition of this practice. Reason being a woman can work up another woman better than a man; whereas a man performs and after doing it he becomes indifferent to his female partner or shows lack of care for her. Indian women are controlled during their pre and post marital stages of life. They are either under the clutches of their parents or husbands. They are subjected to social bias and issues from which many of them fail to find a way out.

R. Raj Rao is one of India’s leading gay-rights activists. His novel *The Boyfriend* (2003) is one of the first gay novels to come from India. He also published the non-fiction work *Whistling in the Dark* (2009), and the novel *Hostel Room 131* (2010). Poems from Rao’s BOMGAY collection served as the basis for Riyad Vinci Wadia’s film *Bomgay* (1996), said to be India’s first gay film. Following the success of *The Boyfriend*, Rao founded the Queer Studies Circle at Pune University. Rao was one of the first to offer a course on LGBT literature at the university level in India. Rao’s novel *The Boyfriend* deconstructs received understandings of sexuality, sex, and gender in India and inscribes the queer subculture of Bombay as a legitimate part of Indian culture, thus counterbalancing homophobic nationalist discourses that reproduce normative sexualities. However, Rao’s texts extend in order to redefine the cultural norm of what constitutes Indian culture.

Transgenders/Hijras (Eunuchs) were granted voting rights in 1994 in India. Shabnam ‘Mausi’ Bano - is the first transgender Indian or Hijra to be elected to public office. Padmini Prakash has become India’s first transgender to anchor a daily television news show. Further research may be carried out to explore the different seminal texts or literary representations of Indian writings in English related to the LGBTQIA community-- that are still seem to be uncovered or unexplored vistas of Queer space i.e., present in it.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Though many studies are done based on the LGBTQ+ community, not all have a particular article regarding the differences in the definition of some complex terms. This study explicitly counters the problem of inadequacy of the study on the terms in the community.

As the study of the LGBTQ+ community is conducted in very few education systems or media, there is a lack of understanding among people, on what specifically is the difference between various terms and what they mean. might want to get some help or want to support someone else.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to state the distinct difference between the term's sexual orientation and gender identity and how it affects people.

Defining Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Sexual orientation has three distinct components -- identity (I'm gay), behavior (I have sex with the same gender) and attraction (I'm sexually attracted to the same gender). Research focusing on sexual orientation uses these components to identify who belongs to which group. However, it is difficult to use these assessment scale due to ambiguity of the definition of sexual orientation. The variability in defining sexual orientation may produce inconsistent findings across studies. Thus, researches should carefully appraise the appropriateness of their definitions on sexual orientation in the light of research. Similar variant definition is observed in the studies of 'transgender' because some people do not use transgender to define themselves or some who are engage in same sex behavior would not define themselves as LGB regardless of researcher's definition. So, simply asking people whether they transgender may led to false reports.

Reluctance to Identify as LGBT to Researchers

Researchers studying such sensitive topics have to face the reluctance of some participants to disclose information about themselves. Questions on sensitive topics such as sexual practices can be seen as intruding their privacy, thus, the respondents may refuse to answer, intentionally give inaccurate response or may decline to participate in research. Sexual minority is highly stigmatized. Despite improvements in the social environment of LGBTs, LGBTs have much to lose, face discrimination and may become subject to violence from having disclosed their sexual status. LGBTs may not be willing to disclose their identity to researchers. Such sensitive topics face challenges of non-participation or false response. Participants may be more willing to disclose their sensitive information anonymously.

Obtaining High Quality Samples

Even if the issue of definition is solved, researchers cannot find high quality/ statistical data about the characteristics of this population. Numerous studies of sexual minority have given us an insight in the life and health of LGBTs. If the goal of the study is to provide an approximation that can be generalized with the entire LGBT population, Statistical samples are required. Obtaining such samples of LGBT population is difficult as these group of people are hard to reach due to definition ambiguity, discrimination and fear of isolation. Random samples of the LGBT population are impossible to obtain because no conceivable samples exist while it is hard to obtain representative samples because of no proper definition and another reason being the fact that many LGBT people may choose not to identify themselves as such.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research staff, including 1 member of the study team (K.D.), conducted 27 semi structured, individual interviews, using verbal probing cognitive interviewing techniques. We recruited patients in person in clinic waiting rooms, shortly after they had completed the survey, between May 2016 and July 2016; these patients represent a convenience sample. We interviewed patients to understand their thought processes about, reactions to and experience of the survey questions. We conducted the interviews, which lasted on average 29 minutes, in a private space. We collected patient demographics to ensure variability in the participants interviewed. We conducted the interviews in English, and patients were required to have sufficient fluency to complete the consent process and understand all questions. We audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews verbatim.

Comparison between self-reported gender identity disclosed in the sociodemographic survey versus information from the patient chart[†]

Self-reported gender identity disclosed in the survey	Information from the patient chart			
	Female, n (%)	Male, n (%)	Transgender or genderdiverse, [†] n (%)	Total, n (%)
Female	7759 (95.7)	72 (1.2)	40 (22.9)	7871 (55.2)
Male	31 (0.4)	5629 (94.3)	27 (15.4)	5687 (39.9)
Transgender, intersex or other [‡]	23 (0.3)	10 (0.2)	95 (54.3)	128 (0.9)
Prefer not to answer, don't know or no answer [§]	292 (3.6)	256 (4.3)	13 (7.4)	561 (3.9)
Total	8105	5967	175	14 247

Self-reported sexual orientation disclosed in the sociodemographic survey

Self-reported sexual orientation	Responses, n (%)
Heterosexual (straight)	10 784 (75.7)
Gay	1325 (9.3)
Lesbian	231 (1.6)
Bisexual	334 (2.3)
2-spirited	28 (0.2)
Queer	157 (1.1)
Other	47 (0.3)
Don't know	178 (1.2)
Prefer not to answer	521 (3.7)
No answer [*]	642 (4.5)
Total	14 247

Twenty-seven patients were interviewed during the study. They were diverse in age, gender identity, education level, preferred language, immigration status and self-rated health. Several key themes emerged through the analysis. First, many patients said they appreciated the variety of options available for both the sexual orientation and gender identity questions. Unprompted, several patients reported that having diverse options created a positive impression of the health organization, which was perceived as an inclusive organization welcoming of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and 2-spirited (LGBTQ2S) individuals. Many patients with a variety of sexual orientations and gender identities wanted to know more about the meaning of the various options provided, and the questions sparked curiosity about sexual and gender diversity.

Second, some patients felt uncomfortable answering these questions. Some LGBTQ2S patients reported that answering the questions on sexual orientation and gender identity made them uncomfortable because these questions brought previous experiences of discrimination to the surface. Regarding the question on sexual orientation, 1 participant noted, *“I’m trying to break free from what I’ve dealt with my whole life from my family ... the persecution of gays, and that whole history ... so it was difficult just for me personally to answer it. I made it through it, and answered it as honestly [as] I could. But [it was] still difficult, just because of what I’ve gone through and what I’ve had to hide in a sense.”* A small number of cisgender and heterosexual patients interviewed expressed discomfort with the response options provided, often relating their feelings to having been raised in environments not tolerant of diversity in gender identity and sexual orientation. One patient noted, *“[The sexual orientation question —] it’s just uncomfortable for me. (...) I grew up in a family that ... you’re heterosexual and that’s it.”*

Third, despite the variety of responses provided, some patients did not see their identities reflected in the options. The term “bi-flexible” was suggested as a response option for the sexual orientation question. Patients suggested adding a broader term, such as “gender nonbinary” as a gender identity response option. The gender identity question also did not include “2-spirited,” although it was included in the question on sexual orientation. Adding an open-ended field as a way to capture specificity instead of trying to label all identities and orientations was also suggested for both questions.

Fitting themselves into a specific category was difficult for patients who had recently come out as trans or were currently transitioning. *“I’m a trans woman, so I just don’t know where I fall in there. Most of my life I went the way I was supposed to go, but now I’m coming out as my trans woman self. I left [the question] blank.”* Some patients were uncertain of the definition of the term “trans” and whether it referred to individuals who had socially or medically transitioned, or neither, or who had a gender identity that differed from the sex they were assigned at birth. One participant noted that since the data were being collected in a medical setting, she assumed a more clinical definition of the term. *“I realized after I had put ‘trans’ that within a medical setting, it tends to see trans identity as a, as a very medical phenomena. In terms of the physical attributes of like and the sexual reproduction aspects and that’s not like really my kind of association with terms.”*

ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

The most active generation in the LGBTQ+ community is the youth. And when it comes to society, they are often mistreated for being who they are. Despite the lack of research in this sector and the society's interpretation of this as a trend of a new generation, people are influenced to believe in the facts put forward by the homophobic people without doing an exploration themselves.

Since the 1990’s the word transgender has been used primarily as an umbrella term to describe those people who defy societal expectations and assumptions regarding gender. The establishment of gender identity is a complex phenomenon and the diversity of gender expression argues against a simple or unitary explanation. For this reason, the extent to which it is determined by social vs biological (i.e., genes and hormones) factors continues to be debated vigorously.

The biological basis of gender identity cannot be modelled in animals and is best studied in people who identify with a gender that is different from the sex of their genitals, in particular transsexual people. Several extensive reviews by Dick Swaab and coworkers elaborate on the current evidence for an array of prenatal factors that influence gender identity, including genes and hormones.

Research over several decades has demonstrated that sexual orientation ranges along a continuum, from exclusive attraction to the opposite sex to exclusive attraction to the same sex. However, sexual orientation is usually discussed in terms of 3 categories: heterosexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to members of the other sex), homosexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to members of one’s sex) and bisexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to both men and women). Most people experience little or no sense of choice about their sexual orientation. There is no scientifically convincing research to show that therapy aimed at changing sexual orientation (i.e., reparative or conversion therapy) is safe or effective.

The origin of sexual orientation is far from being understood, although there is no indication that it is affected by social aspects after birth. On the other hand, a large amount of empirical data suggests that genes and hormones are important regulators of sexual orientation. Useful animal models and experimental paradigms in animals have helped frame questions and propose hypotheses related to human sexual orientation.

LIMITATIONS IN THE STUDY OF LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Researchers are faced with many social, cultural or behavioral challenges during the research study.

CONCLUSION

Following our research goal of improving the quality-of-life LGBTQI through breaking the silence that exist about violence, harassment, and discrimination. Although much of evidence on norm change towards greater acceptance of support for LGBTQI people comes from the global North, there is growing body of evidence from southern countries which suggests that discourses of equality have taken hold in many palaces.

Since 1990 the word transgender has been used primarily as an umbrella term to describe for who defies assumptions regarding gender. Many surveys have been done for people to understand the LGBTQI term. In 2010 Trans Plus Project conducted a survey for trans people in which they show how people harass them and humiliate them that even fear to go outside. In 2001, The UK Gay and Lesbian Census had done survey in that time it’s the largest survey one face to face or through phone or internet but because of low literacy level, the people don’t understand the term. Just like that, many surveys had been done regarding LGBTQI for people to understand them and treat them equally. But because of people judging ability and low literacy it has become a sensitive topic.

According to literature reviewed in this paper showing increasing attention to the challenges facing the LGBTQI people in developing countries mostly focusing on the human rights-based approach. Usually, interventions, approaches and campaigns draw on a discourse of human rights that advocates for inclusion of

LGBTQI people into existing structures rather than a systemic change that might challenge the gender binary. While this is an important first step, a queer approach would also push to deconstruct heteronormativity by challenging an identity-based approach and allowing for wider expression of sexual orientation and gender identity.

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A LEGACY OF LGBTQ PIONEERS IN MEDICINE

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THE PROBLEM AND SCOPE

LGBTQ History Month runs from October 1-31.

“Race, gender, religion, sexuality, we are all people and that’s it. We’re all people. We’re all equal.” That is according to Conor Franta. Whatever your gender, race, religion, and sexuality is, you’re still the person which you are now. Your sexual preference doesn’t define you, it is your personality that aspire you to be who you are in the society where you belong. But there are still people who do not yet accept the third sex in the community. Attitude is determined as “a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively to a certain idea, object, person, or situation” [1]. A person have two angles in viewing a certain person or peers that is involve in a society, its either positive or negative. On the other hand, an attitude is “a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols”. We all know that we live in a society with a group of different people that has different perceptions. Like, the negative stereotypical thoughts arise from proximity and social knowledge of out groups; and in the case of heterosexual-homosexual dynamics, they may also serve as a safety mechanism used to enforce group superiority and normalcy. That means that society still exhibit ambivalence of the inclusive acceptance of homosexuality today.

The widespread of LGBT community has awakening the social perspectives of the society towards them. This study could not only benefits to the researchers but also for the whole community. It may change their views, perceptions, and beliefs in the LGBT community. Nowadays the researchers have seen a lot of changes towards the LGBT community. On how they interact, and build their self in the society just for them to be accepted. The purpose of the study is to know what heterosexual people sees homosexual as their friends and how do they interact with them and also to acknowledge the society about how homosexuality approach the heterosexuality in the 21st century. This present study was intended to achieve the views and perceptions of heterosexuality towards the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender in the society. The study beset 3 main objectives: To explore current views and perceptions of heterosexuality towards homosexuality. To discover how people deal and how they interact with homosexuality. To examine their basis on how they come up with such an attitude towards homosexuality.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

It’s well established that June is LGBTQ Pride Month in recognition of the Stonewall Riots of June 1969, so why do we celebrate LGBTQ History Month in October? According to the observance’s official homepage, in 1994, Rodney Wilson, a Missouri high school teacher, believed a month should be dedicated to the celebration and teaching of gay and lesbian history, and gathered other teachers and community leaders in support of the cause. They selected October because American public schools are in session and existing traditions such as today, Coming Out Day (October 11), occur during this month. National Coming Out Day marks the anniversary of the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights on October 11, 1987.

Legacy honors the observance each year not only to uplift the LGBTQ community, but to honor our own history. The Montrose Clinic, which grew to become Legacy Community Health, was originally founded as a health clinic by and for gay men where the community could go for judgement-free care. Though the early volunteers at the Montrose Clinic were pioneers in the field of LGBTQ health care here in Houston, they weren’t the first. Let’s get to know some of the other innovators in queer medicine and some who still work alongside.

Homosexuals and transgender people have not been treated fairly by the healthcare system historically. Until the 1970s, homosexuality was considered a psychiatric illness. Various treatments were used to change sexual orientation — with little success. In 1992, homosexuality was removed from the International Classification of Diseases. Some would argue that the AIDS crisis became an epidemic because the larger medical community viewed it as a gay disease and thus not worth aggressively researching and treating. Even President Reagan tried to prevent his Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, from speaking out about the AIDS epidemic publicly and joked about AIDS as being the “gay plague.”

Despite this discriminatory history, the LGBTQ community has made meaningful contributions to the larger medical field.

In 2018, when the Supreme Court unanimously struck down India's colonial-era criminal prohibition on same-sex relations, Justice Indu Malhotra stated that, "an apology [is owed] to members of the LGBT community ... for the ostracization and persecution they faced because of society's ignorance." In the case's early stages, the Indian Medical Association made clear: "We are seriously concerned that homosexuality is looked upon as a disorder and in our joint petition appealed to the Supreme Court that it was not an illness."

In January 2021, the Delhi Child Rights Commission recommended a ban on medically unnecessary "normalizing" surgeries on children born with intersex variations. This follows the southern state of Tamil Nadu banning such operations in 2019 after a court upheld the informed consent rights for intersex children. The commission's recommendation received support from the Delhi Medical Council, which wrote that, "[s]urgical interventions ... that are not deemed medically necessary should be delayed until the patient can provide meaningful informed consent."

The medical commission's advisory this week, Dr. L. Ramakrishnan, vice president of SAATHII, an LGBT advocacy group, said: "The issue is not only one of misrepresentation but also one of absence. For instance, standard Indian textbooks in Pediatrics do not mention same-gender attraction or transgender identity in a non-pathologizing manner while addressing child and adolescent development."

The National Medical Commission's announcement further indicates the widespread support for reform among Indian legal and medical experts. It is a good precedent for what is needed across the education sector – a comprehensive update of outdated curricula.

Statement- about LGBTQIA pioneers in Medicine field.

Solution- This study will determine the knowledge of students from Thane city towards LGBTQIA pioneers in medicine field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Phill Wilson (he/him) is a prominent Black HIV/AIDS activist. After the death of his partner from HIV, he founded the Black AIDS Institute in 1999. Wilson was later appointed to President Obama's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and served as a World AIDS Summit delegate advocating for the CDC. Despite this discriminatory history, the LGBTQ community has made meaningful contributions to the larger medical community. Somewhat interestingly, this article was quite difficult to research, as gay history is still being written and not widely studied. In honor of Pride month, celebrates these heroes to provide additional funding to Black-led HIV/AIDS advocacy groups. He was a forerunner in the creation of the "Let's Stop HIV Together" campaign, which promotes HIV testing, prevention and treatment.

Dr. Alan L. Hart (October 4, 1890 – July 1, 1962)

Dr. Hart was an American physician, radiologist, tuberculosis researcher, writer and novelist. In 1918, he was one of the first trans men to undergo hysterectomy and gonadectomy in the United States and lived the rest of his life as a man. Somewhat interestingly, this was quite difficult to research, as gay history is still being written and not widely studied. In honor of Pride month, celebrates these heroes. He pioneered the use of X-Ray photography in tuberculosis detection. Dr. Hart was instrumental in developing tuberculosis screening programs at the time that TB was the largest disease killer in the US. Dr. Hart's efforts with screening programs saved thousands of lives. Utilizing an X-Ray system Dr. Hart developed, doctors managed to cut the tuberculosis death toll down to one-fiftieth from previous levels.

Dr. Louise Pearce (March 5, 1885 – August 10, 1959)

Louise Pearce, a physician and pathologist, was one of the foremost female scientists of the early 20th century. Her research led to a cure for trypanosomiasis (African Sleeping sickness) in 1919.

In 1920, when a severe outbreak of the disease broke out in the Belgian Congo, (modern day Zaire), Dr. Pearce, then 35 years old and attracted by the adventures of field research, volunteered to go alone to Leopoldville to test the new drug. The Rockefeller Institute sent Pearce, "trusting her vigorous personality to carry out an assignment none too easy for a woman physician and not without its dangers." Studying the effect of each dose of trypanamide on more than seventy patients, Pearce saw the parasites were completely eradicated within a few weeks of the treatment. Belgian officials, impressed and grateful for her results, awarded her the Ancient Order of the Crown and elected her a member of the Belgian Society of Tropical Medicine. For many years, Louise Pearce lived with physician Sara Josephine Baker and author Ida A. R. Wylie and is even buried alongside them. All were members of Heterodoxy, a feminist biweekly luncheon discussion club, of which many members were lesbian or bisexual.

Michael Dillon**1st May 1915-15th May 1952**

Michael Dillon was the second child of an Irish baronet. Assigned female at birth, he took an early interest in masculinity. At Oxford University he became President of the Women's Boat Club and was already presenting in a masculine fashion.

After graduation, Dillon got work near Bristol. A local GP, George Foss, was experimenting with a new drug, testosterone, but it had unfortunate side-effects for women patients. He wrote up the trial for *The Lancet*. Dillon thought those side-effects were just what he needed. Dr. Foss was initially happy to help, but asked Dillon to see a psychiatrist. This did not go well. The psychiatrist told Foss not to help Dillon. He also gossiped to people at Dillon's workplace, forcing him to seek alternative employment. Foss gave Dillon a supply of testosterone but declined to continue treatment.

WW2 created opportunities for people who were legally female. Dillon obtained work at a car dealership in Bristol. Meanwhile, testosterone began to change his body. In 1942 Dillon collapsed in the street and was taken to the Bristol Royal Infirmary. There he met a doctor who agreed to perform breast removal surgery. Dillon also obtained a letter explaining that his sex had been incorrectly recorded at birth. This allowed him to change his legal name and gender. Able to live freely as a man, he enrolled in a local college to study medicine. Dillon was introduced to the leading plastic surgeon, Sir Harold Gillies. He spent his free time working at Gillies' hospital in Basingstoke. In return, Gillies experimented with surgery to give Dillon a penis. Thirteen operations later, Dillon had the body he wanted.

As the war ended, Dillon completed his studies in Bristol. He wrote *Self: A Study in Ethics and Endocrinology*, which even today is leading edge in its patient-centred approach to trans medicine. Dillon qualified as a doctor through Trinity College, Dublin. Roberta Cowell, a racing driver and former Spitfire pilot, read *Self* and contacted Dillon who introduced her to Gillies. At the time, removing someone's testicles was a crime. Cowell said that a friend performed that operation secretly so that Gillies could proceed with her vaginoplasty legally. The friend was probably Dillon. He also introduced Cowell to Arthur Milbourn, the Canon of Bristol Cathedral, who wrote the introduction to her autobiography.

Dillon hoped that he and Cowell might marry, but she turned him down. Distraught, he joined the merchant navy, serving as a ship's doctor until 1958 when he was outed by the *Daily Express*. Unable to work, Dillon headed to India to explore his interest in Buddhism.

The Buddhist leaders were reluctant to accept Dillon as they normally only admitted men. However, with patience and devotion he finally became the first Western European to be ordained as a Buddhist monk. Unfortunately, India did not agree with Dillon. He became sick and died in 1962.

Bruce Voeller, PhD (May 12, 1934 – February 13, 1994)

Bruce Voeller was an American biologist and AIDS researcher who pioneered the use of nonoxynol-9 as a spermicide and topical virus-transmission preventative. He won a five-year fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute to complete his doctoral studies in biochemistry, developmental biology and genetics, before becoming an associate professor there. Before the 1980s, AIDS was known by various names, including GRIDD (Gay Related Immune Defense Disorder). Because this term was inaccurate, Voeller coined the term "Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome." He established the Mariposa Foundation to conduct research in the field of human sexuality and to find ways to reduce the risks of diseases related to it. At the time of his death, Voeller's research centered on the reliability of various brands of condoms in preventing the spread of diseases and on viral leakage studies for the then-recently approved female condom.

Dr. John Ercel Fryer (November 7, 1937 – February 21, 2003)

Dr. Fryer was an American psychiatrist and gay rights activist best known for his anonymous speech at the 1972 American Psychiatric Association (APA) annual conference where he appeared in disguise and under the name Dr. Henry Anonymous.

This event has been cited as a key factor in the decision to de-list homosexuality as a mental illness from the APA's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Fryer was the first gay American psychiatrist to speak publicly about his sexuality. Phill Wilson (he/him) is a prominent Black HIV/AIDS activist. After the death of his partner from HIV, he founded the Black AIDS Institute in 1999. Wilson was later appointed to President Obama's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and served as a World AIDS Summit delegate advocating for the CDC to provide additional funding to Black-led HIV/AIDS advocacy groups. He was a forerunner in the creation of the "Let's Stop HIV Together" campaign, which promotes HIV testing, prevention and treatment.

Dr. Colt St. Amand (he/they) is a Texas Licensed Psychologist with expertise in gender and sexuality as well as a Family Medicine resident. St. Amand is an openly transgender Two Spirit man who works with gender and sexual minorities, their loved ones, and those seeking to learn more about gender and sexuality. He provides consultation and WPATH GEI certification mentoring for clinicians working with transgender and gender expansive clients. St. Amand also co-founded Gender Infinity, which offers gender-affirming support in the forms of an annual conference, camps, and family gatherings.

Dr. Sophia Jex-Blake (1840-1912) wanted to earn a medical degree, but was prevented from studying for one because she was a woman. She took the matter into her own hands, founding the London School of Medicine for Women. The university became the only place a woman could earn a medical degree in the UK for many years. Between its opening and 1911, the number of women doctors in the country skyrocketed from two to 495. She became the first woman M.D. to practice in Scotland. While many medical historians are familiar with Jex-Blake's legacy as a medical pioneer, one aspect of her personal biography is commonly left out—her romantic partners were women.

Dr. Emily Blackwell (1826-1910) was among the first women in the United States to earn an M.D. Blackwell helped establish a women's hospital in New York, later adding a women's medical college to the experiment. Blackwell met **Dr. Elizabeth Cushman (1837-1931)** when Cushman became a student at Blackwell's college. Later, Cushman began working alongside Blackwell at the hospital. Blackwell and Cushman raised an adopted daughter together. In 1981, Blackwell's hospital relocated and merged with another institution. It's now known as the New York-Presbyterian Lower Manhattan Hospital.

India's National Medical Commission has ordered publishers and medical schools to edit their textbooks and curricula to exclude discriminatory and unscientific portrayals of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people.

The order from the country's highest medical regulator follows a June 2021 Madras High Court ruling instructing institutions across the country to roll back prejudicial and inaccurate portrayals of sexual and gender minorities. In the judgment, Judge Anand Venkatesh said, "Ignorance is no justification for normalizing any form of discrimination." His language echoes previous court rulings and commission reports in India.

METHODOLOGY

Research design -This present study is aim to unleash the current attitudes from the sample group and to enable to use the data to broaden the view about a bigger population of similar students in the campus. This study is best described as cross-sectional study design because it was used to capture knowledge or attitudes one point at a time of LGBTQ pioneers in the Medicine field. The study used a nonprobability sampling because the researchers needed to gather data from the specific respondents. The questionnaire consisted mostly of close-ended question whereas close-ended questions had options which were determined by the researcher. Students were approached who are willingly and potentially had the information that they could share and so purposive sampling was used. Finally the data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. Close-ended questions were included because they are easier to administer and to analyze. They are more efficient in the sense that a respondent is able to complete more close-ended items than open-ended items in a given period of time. This present study use a mixed methods and at the same time using correlational design.

DATA INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The study was engaged with quantitative data analysis procedure where descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were used. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, version 17) was used in order to run the descriptive statistics. The following data was derived from the chosen respondents which are teachers and students' questionnaires. The data were gathered about the attitudes of the respondents that shape their perceptions towards LGBTQ pioneers in Medicine field . The Table 2 discussed the respondents percentage on how many respondents does each group have. After the data was collected, . In accordance to the data, an attitude was discovered based on the answers of the following respondents. It is understood that majority of the respondents have already aware the LGBT pioneers in Medicine field in the Thane city, to be specific, in Satish Pradhan Dnyansadhana College(Table 3). The Table 2 above shows the percentage of the respondents in terms of different attitudes that indicated in each statement. 45.11% out of the 100 respondents have already made up their perceptions towards LGBT people based on the given attitudes in each number. While 54.89% of the respondents are still on the state of confusion whether they should interact more with LGBT people or make themselves distant from the LGBT community. In questions number 1-4, 7.05% of the respondents have personal feelings that may be preventing them from being accepting and supportive of LGBT people while 4.88% of the respondents don't have personal feelings and that makes them accept and support the

LGBT people [13]. In number 5-8, 8.31% of the respondents are somewhat accepting and supporting LGBT people but still have areas in which to grow in order to be an effective ally. In number 9-12, 7.9% of the respondents are ready to be an effective ally. Only 2% respondents were aware about medico's who belongs to LGBTQ.

In this study it will elude opinions and elicit numerical data from the respondents through survey or questionnaire. It is a closed-ended question. Questionnaires were personally distributed by the researchers to the selected degree college students from First year to Third year and to the teachers. The data was collected over a period of 5 days. The researchers roam from room to room in order to distribute the questionnaire to the chosen respondents. The papers are separated by gender. When a questionnaire is used as a data gathering instrument, it is necessary to determine whether questions and directions are clear to subjects and whether they understand what is required from them.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research addressed the attitudes of people towards LGBTQ that it differs on how they see. The answer of a respondents have a big impact in comes of rating. Based on the findings and conclusion presented, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. The researchers recommend no matter what is the gender of an individual it should be respected and views equally.
2. The researchers recommend that gender equality should be addressed in the society.
3. The researchers recommend that People should continue supporting LGBTQ inspite of any field they belongs.
4. The researchers recommend that rights and protection should be implemented among the individuals of LGBTQ for the fact that there is still discrimination among the third sex community.
5. People should be open-minded about LGBTQ.
6. Uplift LGBTQ community, to honor our own history.

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LGBTQIA COMMUNITY IN INDIA: A STRUGGLE FOR THIRD GENDER RIGHTS

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ABSTRACT

One of the most discriminated, marginalized and vulnerable section of the Indian society is the LGBTQIA community. Due to their sexual orientation and gender identity issues, they face a negative behaviour and attitude from their family as well as the society and are the victims of hate crime, physical and domestic violence and mental torture. The Part III of the Constitution of India guarantees fundamental rights to all citizens of India and prohibits discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, gender, sex etc. The LGBTQ community in India received recognition as 'Third Gender', just in recent years, after the Navtej Singh Johar v Union of India, 2018 judgement which repealed the draconian Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. The Constitution of India and the Honourable court has been instrumental for enactment of Transgender Person (Protection of Rights Bill) 2018 for safe guarding their rights. However, even after 48 months the LGBTQI community does not enjoy its fundamental rights to the full extent. The present paper focusses on the violation of the third gender rights and their struggle for equality in view of the basic framework of the Constitution and Human rights.

Keywords: Constitution of India, gender identity, Human rights, LGBTQIA, Transgender,

INTRODUCTION

The term LGBTQIA is an umbrella term that comprises of the following sects of people:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexes and Asexual. The LGBTQIA community have been discriminated for years in every sphere: social, economical, cultural etc. The Yogyakarta Principles affirm binding International legal standards with which all States must comply. Today also the community does not enjoy the basic fundamental rights provided by our Constitution. The present paper is a literature review that focusses on the status of LGBTQ community in India, their struggle for their gender identity. This paper also reports the various legislations and a brief analysis of Transgender Person (Protection of Rights) Bill 2018.

PREVALENCE OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY IN INDIA

Transgenders and Homosexuality has been prevalent in India dating back around 1500 BC Ancient texts like Rig Veda, Kamasutra, the Harems of young boys kept by Muslim Nawabs and Hindu Aristocrats. The male homosexuality in the Medieval Muslim history like Malik Kafur and the scriptures of Khajurao, Madhya Pradesh also depict their existence. References are sought from the Hindu epic Mahabharata, Ramayana, Arthashastra and the stories of Ardhnareeshwara (Shiva as half-man, half woman) and Lord Ayyappa who was born to Shiva and Mohini (female Avatar of Lord Vishnu) (Sharma, P., 2012). They all were treated with respect and judged by their abilities, were never discriminated on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. were socially accepted in the society in those periods (Sharma, R., 2021).

But with the advent of Vedic Brahminism and later on of British Colonialism homosexuality began to suppress and was considered unnatural and a social stigma. In the Hindu text Manusmriti there are references of imposing punishments like loss of caste, heavy monetary fines and strokes of the whip for gay and lesbian behaviour. The Indian Penal Code was enacted in 1860. Sec 377 of the IPC, 1860 criminalized the act of homosexuality, violated the right to privacy and discriminated them socially.

CHALLENGES FACED BY LGBTQIA COMMUNITY

Studies have reported that the transgender community face a variety of issues and are excluded from participation in social and cultural life, economy and politics and decision-making. Some major challenges are as follows:

Family Rejection Marginalization and Social Exclusion

Most of the LGBTQ youngsters are ill-treated and considered as a social stigma in their families. To protect their social status, some parents also ask their children to leave their homes. Many remain lonely and isolate themselves from social gatherings and festivals (Ryan *et al.*, 2009; Chatterjee, S., 2014).

Discrimination at School

Constant bullying in schools, physical and mental harassment by their own classmates in classrooms, on play grounds, toilets etc creates terror and fear in the mind of the child and the child tends to remain away from going to school. There is a drop out at school at a higher rate, only a few complete their higher studies (UNESCO Report, 2018).

Discrimination at Workplace

The transgenders are denied work at various places. Due to less or no education the community does not get highly paid jobs. Many a times they have to beg for their survival. If they get a job, then due to their sexual orientation they are discriminated by their peers.

Physical and Mental health

The LGBTQ community face lot of health challenges. While most of them suffer from physical and domestic violence, encounter communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases; mental stress, transphobia, anxiety, depression, addiction to psychotropic substances and drug use, suicidal attempts, are very common. In Tamil Nadu alone, there have been 16 LGBT suicide cases reported in 18 months in October, 2015. (The New Indian Express, Oct 2015). Most government hospitals do not have proper modern medical facilities and the infrastructure for sex reassignment surgeries. Moreover the staff is untrained to handle their psychological problems.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are the rights inherent to all human beings. The principles of human rights follows that all are equally entitled to human rights irrespective of nationality, place of residence, sex, national origin, colour, religion, language or any other status. and all have the right to live with dignity without discrimination. Our Constitution is the supreme law that enshrines the basic human rights to all citizens of India without any discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, etc. It is the duty of the government and our courts to protect the dignity of every individual and ensure the fundamental rights are not violated.

According to Vyjayanti Vasanta Mogli, a transwoman LGBT activist and public policy scholar at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad the transmen and lesbian women in rural areas are discriminated and their basic human rights are denied within the family and village. In some parts of the country secret honour killings are planned. The lesbian women are subjected to family- sanctioned corrective rapes which are often perpetrated by their own family members.

Devoid of any education, family acceptance, occupation and financial assistance the transgenders are left with no alternative than to resort to beggary and prostitution and fall prey to crimes such as human trafficking. Any kind of discrimination on the basis of one's sexual orientation would entail a violation of the fundamental rights. The evils of inequality and injustice are prevalent still today and is largely seen among the LGBTQI community, especially the Transgender and Queer.

THE CHANGING PHASE: RECOGNITION FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

A pioneer step towards Third Gender Jurisprudence was taken up by Naz Foundation by filing a petition before the Delhi High Court challenging the constitutional validity of Sec 377 (Naz foundation v NCT of Delhi, 2001). The petitioner argued that there was violation of their fundamental right to life and liberty, right to privacy and dignity, right to health, right to equality and freedom of expression. The writ petition and the review petition were dismissed. Thereafter a Special leave petition was filed which was then converted into a Civil Appeal by the Supreme Court by directing that Sec 377 was unconstitutional and then the matter was remitted to Delhi High Court for fresh disposal. The Hon'ble Court in Naz foundation v NCT of Delhi, (2009) pointed out that Sec 377 violated the basic fundamental rights enshrined under Articles 14, 15, 19 and 21 of the constitution of India and therefore was unconstitutional. The decision of Hon'ble court was highly appreciated by the sexual minorities across the nation, but condemned by religious and faith based individual (Nirnimesh Kumar, 2009) who appealed before the Supreme Court of India in 2013 to reconsider the Sec 377.

In Suresh Kumar Koushal v Naz Foundation, (2013) the Honourable Court vehemently ignored the basic fundamental rights under Article 14, 15, 19 and 21 and upheld Section 377 IPC on the ground that LGBT community comprises only a minuscule fraction of the total population and that the said Section is being misused does not prove that the Section is ultra vires. This decision was immensely criticized since it also violated the basic human rights. And led to a massive movement for the LGBT rights in India.

The various issues of LGBT community were taken up by the National Legal Services Authority (NLSA) in Supreme Court through a writ petition (Civil) No. 400/2012. The Supreme Court judgement in NALSA v Union of India (2014) brought recognition to the Transgender community as they received a separate identity and status as the 'The Third Gender'. Relying on the principle of transformative constitutionalism, the Apex Court for the first time, gave due recognition to gender identity based on the reassigned sex after undergoing Sex Reassignment Surgery. The SC further directed the Government of India to treat the 'Third Gender' members as an economically and socially back ward class in terms of giving them reservation and make proper policies to ensure right to equality in education and employment (Article 15(2) and 16 (4)). Subsequently the Transgender

Person (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2018 was enacted with an objective to safeguard their rights under Part III of our Constitution. In view of this, various state governments took small steps to benefit the transgender population by making policies of health and housing. Yet, there are cases of violation of fundamental right to live with dignity (Article 21) and Fundamental Right to freedom to express (Article 19(1) (a) among many other fundamental rights. (*Fazal Rab v State of Bihar*, 1983 SC). However, a major blow to this judgement came after the passing of Transgender Persons Bill, 2018.

The Bill prohibits discrimination against the transgender community and secures fundamental rights: such as Right to equality, Right to identity, right to life with dignity, right to education, right to occupation, and also health, right to access to government of private establishment. Following are the major gaps that expose them to institutional oppression. (Pathak, S., 2020)

1. Gender identity in documents can only be done only after submission of proof of sex reassignment surgery which is to be certified by the District Magistrate. This violates the right to privacy, and bodily autonomy of trans people

2. The Bill is silent on right to marriage (*Arun Kumar v Inspector General of Registration*, 2018), adoption and social security.

In *Shafin Jahan v Asokan K.M and others* (2018) the Hon'ble Court upheld same -sex relationship and declared that the choice of a partner is a person's fundamental right and it can be a same -sex partner. However, the Delhi High Court in February 2021 opposed same- sex marriage stating that a marriage in India can be recognized only if it is between a "biological man" and a "biological woman" capable of producing children.

3. Punishment for sexual abuse against Transgender is only two years of imprisonment whereas such an offence against woman punishment under IPC extends upto 7 years of imprisonment.

4. There are no provisions for reservation or quota in education, employment etc., although the Bill mentions them to be treated as economically and socially backward class.

WAY FORWARD:

After a long struggle, the LGBTQ community has received recognition as a Third Gender, still the community is battling for their rights. The various measures that can be adopted to empower the LGBTQ community:

1. Sensitization of public organizations and government bodies by organizing seminars, workshops and training programmes
2. Need to orient students regarding sexual orientation and gender equality by amending the education curriculum.
3. Reservation in schools and government jobs can be a progressive step.
4. Need for anti-discrimination laws and their implementation and social inclusion for LGBTQ community.
5. Involvement of social media and NGOs for mass awareness and campaigns

CONCLUSION

The Gay Pride Parades held in Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore in July 2008 have set an example for self-confidence and determination, but still freedom to express openly their gender identity and acceptance by the society remains a struggle for LGBTQ community (*The Hindu*, Sept 6, 2020). The evils of inequality and injustice cannot be removed just by enacting laws and regulations; the mindset of the people has to be changed through awareness programmes and positive approach. Adequate opportunities and provisions should be made available for developing socially, economically and politically.

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TRANSGENDER PERSONS (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS) ACT, 2019: AN UNFINISHED AGENDA**Dr. Ketan Bhosale**

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INTRODUCTION

For centuries transgenders are part of Indian society. During the colonial period, the laws of the British government were unable to understand the rights of transgendered persons. Victorian concept of morality suppressed the rights of transgendered persons. Even after the enactment of the Constitution of India, the sexual minority has waited long enough for recognition of their identity and rights. These people are treated as second-class citizens and have been subjected to discrimination, and harassment. In the recent past, some events which took place at the national level regenerated hopes for the recognition of transgender in society.

The Supreme Court recognized transgender people as the "third gender" in the case of *NALSA Union of India*¹. Further, part of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code 1860 was decriminalized which prohibited consensual sex between homosexual couples in the case of *Navtej Singh Johar. v. Union of India*². These events lead to the passing of the Transgender Act, of 2020.

This paper aims to analyze the Act critically. The paper also tries to identify the areas in the act which unable to solve the problems of the community. Various secondary sources such as books and e-resources are referred to for the article.

Legislations for Transgender Rights in India

As per the 2011 census, 4,87,803 persons do not identify themselves as male or female³. Tiruchi Siva, Member of Parliament from the Dravida Munnetra Kazagham party made the first move to recognize the rights of transgender through legislation when she introduced a private member bill in the Lok Sabha⁴.

Following were the key highlights of the Transgender Persons Bill 2014

- Offered remedies against violence and harassment;
- Provided for rights such as equality, the right to live in society, and freedom of speech;
- Provision for equipping transgender with skill development and providing them jobs for their rehabilitation and social security;
- Establishments of transgender commission at National and State levels and transgender rights courts.

This bill was unanimously passed in the Rajya Sabha but was not discussed in the Lok Sabha. Thaawar Chand Gehlot then Minister of Social Justice and empowerment introduced the Transgender Person Bill (Protection & Rights) in the light of the aforesaid NALSA judgment, where the Supreme Court of India recognized transgenders as *the third gender*. The bill was strongly opposed by the opposition was referred to the Standing Committee and was passed on 17th December 2018 in the Lok Sabha.

The salient features of the *Transgender Person Bill 2016* are enumerated below⁵ -

- The bill defined transgender as a person who is partly male or female, neither male nor female. Further, the person's gender should not match the gender assigned at birth including trans-women, trans-men, genderqueers, and people with intersex variations;
- The transgender will have to obtain a certificate of proof of identity as transgender to enjoy rights under this bill;
- The District Magistrate will be conferred with the power to grant the certificate of proof of identity on the recommendation of the Screening Committee which consisted of a medical officer, and psychologist. District welfare officer, and transgender person.
- The bill prohibited discrimination against transgenders in institutions such as healthcare, education, and employment. It further directed the state government to make welfare schemes for the community.
- It also provided for two years imprisonment and a fine for offenses like compelling transgender to beg and denying them access to public places.

The transgender community strongly protested against the Transgender person Bill 2016, violating their right to self-identity. The right to self-identity is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India.

The Transgender person Bill 2016 was vehemently opposed by the transgender community as it violated their right to self-identity which is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India. After the Navtej Singh Johar judgment in 2018, the Minister of Social Justice and welfare another *Transgender Persons Bill (Protection & Rights) Bill, 2019* which later became an Act as it received president assent on 5th December 2019. The key highlights of the Act are listed below⁶-

- It defines transgenders as ones who do not match the gender assigned to them at birth. It includes persons with an intersex variation, genderqueers, trans-men, trans- women, and persons with intersex variations;
- The district magistrate is empowered to give a certificate of identification to identify the person as transgender;
- Prohibits discrimination against transgender and unfair treatment in an institution like healthcare, employment, education, and access to public facilities;
- Recognizes the right to residence of a transgender person;
- Provides for the formulation of schemes by the government like vocational training programs and self-employment for their social welfare;
- It states that the government must take steps to provide health care facilities to transgenders which includes HIV surveillance centers and sex reassignment surgeries;
- It also recognizes offenses such as bonded labor, and physical and sexual abuse and provides for a minimum penalty of six months imprisonment and a maximum of two years with a fine; and
- The Act also provides for the establishment of the National Council for Transgender to monitor the impact of policies and legislation on transgender.

The Act passed to address the community's needs has left many problems unanswered. It had led to a nationwide outcry by the transgender community criticizing the Act⁷.

Problem Areas In Transgender Person Act, 2019

Government has to address several issues related to the legislation. Rajya Sabha passed the said act in just three days without detailed discussion and did not suggest any amendments, additions, or deletions in the act. The major issue with the act is that it ignores the major point of the Right of self-determination of identity as stated in the NALSA judgment⁸. Contrary to the rule of law laid down in the judgment it stated that a person has a right to self-identify himself as transgender. Under this act to claim the benefits the power to issue the Certificate confers upon the District Magistrate. The mechanism for redressal of grievances is not provided in case of District Magistrate denies the certificate. To prevent any misuse of authority in there was a provision for a screening committee in Transgender Bill, 2016, surprisingly this provision is missing in Transgender Bill, 2019.

Acknowledgment of Transgender under Existing Laws

Only two types of gender i. e man and woman are recognized by Civil as well as Criminal laws. Whether this act will recognize transgenders or not is kept ambiguous.

No Affirmative Policy for Transgender Persons

There is a lack of affirmative policy for transgenders in this act i.e reservation. There was a provision of 2% reservation for transgender in government and government-aided schools for primary, secondary, and higher education in The Transgender Persons Bill, 2014. It further provided for a 2% reservation for transgender in government establishments. As per the NALSA judgment the transgender community should be treated as socially and economically backward and reservations should be provided to them under the category.

With the demand for the implementation of the reservation scheme, various petitions were filed across different High Courts in the country. The High Court of Madras in the case of *Swapna*

.v. *Chief Secretary directed* the State government to form a scheme for reservation of transgender within 6 months, which is yet to be implemented.

No Recognition of Same-Sex Marriages

It was expected that the discrimination against homosexual couples would end with the decriminalization of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code 1860 but that did not happen. This is quite frustrating. The act is silent about same-sex marriage. Legal recognition needs to be given to same-sex marriage. Once marriage is legalized then the rights which are generally given to married couples can be extended to them. These rights include pension rights, benefits such as maintenance, and succession. Acceptance and recognition of their relationship is the wish of the majority of same-sex couples.

Inadequate Punishment For Sexual Abuse Against Transgender

A report by the National Coalition of Violence Group in 2012 stated that transgender people are two times more likely to get harassed and abused in an intimate relationship⁹. The Act provides only 6 months minimum and a maximum of 2 years with a fine. In the Indian Penal Code 1860, the minimum punishment for assault or criminal force used against women with an intent to disrobe woman is a minimum of three years¹⁰. To maintain minimum security keeping into consideration the history of sexual abuse and suffering against transgenders. The punishment should be increased to a minimum of three years and 7 years of maximum imprisonment with a fine.

The rule of law prescribes that the law should not place undue cognitive or behavioral command on people. It should be stable and according to the demands of society. The law should be consistent and solve the contradiction legally which may arise¹¹. The law proposed for the rights of transgender ignores their needs and places undue command as it is not according to the needs and demands of the community.

Unfinished Agenda

A detailed analysis of the Indian Transgender Person Act 2019 indicates that there are various shortcomings in the Act and the government needs to rework the entire legal framework for transgender rights. The various recommendation which is required to be kept in mind by the Indian government are listed below –

1. Employment

To help the community move to the formal workplace is introduced by some companies by introducing new policies in that direction. To set up employment for the community some start-ups have extended their helping hand. Although for more representation of the community there is a need for an affirmative policy for transgenders. The appropriate solution is to provide a reservation for transgender in both government and private corporations. The first step towards the welfare of this community is to secure financial stability.

2. Housing

Transgendered are singled out and getting discriminated treatment by landlords. It is extremely difficult for them to get a respectful shelter. They are forced to stay on the streets. To prohibit the landlord from discriminating separate provision in the act is required.

3. Reforms in Educational Curriculum

To create sensitivity regarding transgenders and to make them aware of the problems faced by them topics like gender identity and sexuality should be made compulsory at schools. This will remove transphobia from the root levels of the country. Thus, the government should recommend the inclusion of gender identity education in both government and private schools.

4. Recognizing Same-Sex Marriage

There is discrimination between heterosexual and homosexual couples concerning rights available to them. In the year 2018, Consensual intercourse between the same gender was decriminalized. But yet there is no legal recognition of same-sex marriage, leading to the discrimination of transgender couples on various fronts such as inheritance of property, adoption, and tax planning¹².

5. Simple Administrative Steps to Change Gender in Official Documents

Transgenders have to deal with a lot of harassment to change their gender in official documents. Their right to self-identification is getting violated because they must submit proof of their sex reassignment surgery. It should be necessary to show some sensitivity towards this issue. The government should take some steps to make the procedure simple and free of red-tapism.

6. Enabling Ways for Transgender to Live According To Their Genders

According to some studies, social stigma regarding gender nonconformity affects the health and well-being of transgender persons¹³. The individual choice regarding lifestyle must be left to a transgender person.

7. State Subsidies for Sex- Reassignment Surgeries

The cost to get sex reassignment usually costs lakhs, especially in private hospitals¹⁴. Thus, most transgender lives claustrophobic life and desire to convert themselves to the gender they feel that they conform to. The state should provide subsidies for sex reassignment surgeries which will also become a path for transgenders to achieve self-actualization.

8. Increase In Punishment For Discrimination Against Transgenders

There is a need for a law that imposes strict punishment for discrimination against transgenders. The punishment should set an example for others. The transgender community in India has suffered more than 100 years of discrimination thus, this is a crucial step for the welfare of the community.

Apart from these recommendations, there are a lot of steps that are required to be taken by the government like *differential treatment of transgenders in prisons* and sensitization of police personnel to deal with transgenders. The state's responsibility is much higher to recognize the rights and identity of transgenders. These recommendations may not lead to an absolute recognition of rights and freedom, but these recommendations are necessarily the first step to removing the social stigma against the trans - community.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the Transgender Person Act, of 2019, it can be concluded that Transgender Act suffers from a lot of maladies and there is an urgent need to redesign the entire legislation. Regardless of their sex and identity equal rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The Transgender Person Act, of 2019 fails to uphold constitutional values. The community had struggled for their freedom for centuries. If the State does not fulfill its responsibility toward the community, it will continue to struggle for years to come. It will be one of the biggest stains on the Right to freedom and life, which is guaranteed by the Constitution. While writing this research paper one positive news came for transgender rights.¹⁵ Directorate General of Civil Aviation on August 10 issued guidelines for aeromedical evaluation of transgender persons for obtaining medical clearance for all categories of pilot's license- private pilot's license, student's pilot license, and commercial pilot license. These say that transgender candidates who have completed their hormone therapy and gender affirmation surgery more than five years back will be declared medically fit provided they clear screening for mental health by World Professional Association for Transgender Health. Like this, India as a country needs to have a sensitive and progressive attitude towards its citizens.

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A STUDY OF DISCRIMINATION OF LGBTQ YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

One method used by society to marginalize particular groups of people is to ignore them and act as though they don't exist. In the past it has happened to Indigenous people and today it is happening to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer LGBTQ. They are not even mentioned in most societies throughout the world where it occurs. When some LGBTQ individuals insist on coming out, the prevailing culture becomes hostile. This ongoing prejudice against the LGBTQ population disrupts people's wellbeing, makes them suffer unfavorable adversities, and has a detrimental impact on society as a whole. Compared to straight students, LGBTQ students are more likely to experience violence and poor health because of negative views toward LGBTQ students at school. Unfortunately, LGBTQ adolescents do not always encounter harassment at school. For many people, it starts at home, frequently as soon as they discuss their sexual orientation in public. Half of LGBTQ youth who come out get a negative reaction from their parents, making it a devastating experience. Through this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the effects of discrimination on LGBTQ Youth as well the level of stress this individual has to go through and what can be possible measures for their acceptance in the society

Keywords: LGBTQ, Discrimination, Youth

INTRODUCTION

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people are more likely than heterosexual people to encounter intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence because of their sexual orientation. It's because of homophobia (the fear or hatred of homosexuality). A dominating group's moral, religious, and political convictions are some of the elements that could further homophobia on a bigger scale. In several nations, homosexuality is illegal and subject to penalties including fines, jail time, life in prison, and even the death penalty. Human sexuality can be fixed or fluid and is experienced in many different ways. The distinction between male and female sexuality is further muddled by the existence of transgender, transsexual, and intersex individuals. It is no longer acceptable to presuppose heterosexism, which is known as heterosexism. Although many nations have made tremendous progress in promoting human rights, LGBTQ rights still face barriers to acceptance on a global scale. Some people feel that LGBTQ rights are controversial because the 1948 Universal Declaration for Human Rights does not directly mention sexual orientation. Eliminating discrimination based on sexual orientation; equal rights and privileges (marriage, common law partnerships, medical decision-making, wills and estates, parenting and adoption); protection from hate crimes and hate propaganda; and working to combat homophobia and heterosexism will be the main issues for LGBTQ rights globally in the years to come. In the above context the researcher thought of studying on the topic discrimination of LGBTQ youths.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aashank Dwivedi (Times of India, 2022) stated in his article "Problems encountered by LGBTQ Youth in India" that LGBTQ individuals has a greater impact of exclusions and discrimination in India because of which they have to face problems like earlier school abandonment, leaving the family and home, lacking access to regular employment and so on. Also from the article it can be inferred that in a nation where strict social and cultural norms regulate the conditions of school, employment, and marriage, lack of family support can be a significant blow to the mental and physical health of LGBT people. Families who accept their identities impose many restrictions on how they can dress and behave around their partners. In the absence of family support, social media and online communities have offered accessible options for building a community outside the family.

Federman and Elias (2016) in their work said that Working in an association is not an easy assignment for LGBTQ persons. Various employees at a few events had varying opinions about LGBTQ employees. President Obama signed the bill into law in 2014, promoting inclusion and diversity in the federal workforce. However, LGBTQ representatives will typically favour creative or media-related careers over those in government or the military, and will tend to favour bureaucratic work environments least.

Subhi & Geelan (2012) in their work said that, it might be difficult for Christian gay individuals to accommodate sexual orientation with rigid and supernatural convictions because many Christian places of worship teach that homosexual behavior is wrong. When we examine the issue of LGBTQ acceptability in

society, it is clear that so-called Christian nations are among the first to see them as a part of variety, and many of them even allow homosexual romance. This type of action speaks to the industrialized nations' mature democracies, which place a higher value on rights than on religion. The majority of individuals, especially those of the Christian religion, do not find it bothersome that there are numerous LGBTQ people in the general population.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- 1) To study the effects of discrimination on LGBTQ Youth
- 2) To examine the stress level among LGBTQ Youth due to discrimination
- 3) To evaluate the measures for acceptance of LGBTQ Youth in the society

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for the paper was selected from secondary sources. Secondary data was collected from different sources like Websites, Research papers, Journals, Newspaper articles, etc.

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Effects of Discrimination on LGBTQ Youth

Any person's health and education can be negatively impacted by exposure to violence and harassment. The effects of youth health can be impacted by a complicated combination of circumstances. LGBTQ youth are more likely to engage in risky behaviours that increase their chance of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, such as substance misuse, despair, and distress. According to the World Health Organization, suicide is the second biggest cause of mortality for those aged 10 to 24 worldwide, and LGBTQ youth are the group at the greatest risk. It is challenging to pinpoint the precise cause of LGBT people's suicide attempts due to the scant available evidence. There is a considerable disparity in mental health between homosexual and heterosexual individuals. Comparatively, international data shows that young individuals who identify as LGBTQ are more likely to commit suicide and self-harm than heterosexuals. According to international research, the influence of social hostility, discrimination, and stigma against LGBTQ persons may be to blame for this disparity in mental health. As per our findings few of the negative effects on LGBTQ Youth are as follows

- Feeling the need to hide a LGBTQ identity
- Being "ousted"/given labels
- Encountering rigid gender roles
- Isolating oneself or feeling isolated because LGBTQ
- Experiencing/fearing rejection by parents
- Having negative feelings about self

Stress Level among LGBTQ Youth Due To Discrimination

As per the studies conducted at the global scenario it is very evident that indeed LGBTQ youth are facing stress at various levels even at home, working place or a place of study. Majority of them agreed that due to high stress level they are having trouble sleeping at night and also they have the feeling of worthlessness and hopelessness. The level of stress is low if they are accepted by their family as they have at least one place of comfort where they can live life with freedom, as it still a distant dream of society accepting them with a wide open arms. So the stress level varies as per the acceptance of the people surrounding them, even if a certain section of people accept them as they are they are bit relieved and are able to face challenges on various fronts, through this research it also being observed if children's are given conducive environment where they are free to express themselves in such a scenario even a LGBTQ Youth would find easier to accept them for whom they are, it kind of sets a tone to face the challenges for their future ahead, so its every evident that stress level for LGBTQ Youth is comparatively low if they are accepted at least by some section of the society or else it very difficult to cope up with the stress on day to day basis

Evaluating the Measures for Acceptance of LGBTQ Youth in the Society

The LGBTQ individuals are intensely aware of the significant shift in public perceptions of homosexuals and lesbians over the past ten or more years. Because of these shifting beliefs, LGBTQ community now feel more accepted by society than they did in the past. They have also sparked a practically unanimous sense of optimism about the community's future. Greater social acceptability, in the opinion of LGBTQ Youth, is the outcome of high-profile public personalities' initiatives as well as the fact that more people know someone who is lesbian,

gay, bisexual, or transgender. The vast majority of respondents claim that just knowing someone who is LGBTQ has made society as a whole far more accepting. Similar-sized majorities claim that both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ well-known public figures have contributed to changing society perceptions. So as per our study few measures which can be taken for acceptance are as follows

-Social Acceptance : Comparatively from past there is more acceptance for LGBTQ population in today's scenario, but there is differentiation in accepting among LGBTQ as well like bisexuals have a slightly more pessimistic opinion of the current state of social acceptability, perceptions are generally constant across different groups. The judgments of how much society welcomes homosexual men and lesbians differ significantly. Lesbians are widely accepted in society, according to one in four LGBTQ persons, but homosexual males are only widely accepted in society by few % of LGBTQ adults

- Most See Progress and Expect More to Come: When asked how the level of overall social acceptance of LGBTQ individuals has changed over the previous ten years, poll participants' responses were overwhelmingly positive. Bisexuals rate the changes over the previous ten years less favorably than gay men and lesbians do. Numerous important demographic groupings have quite different assessments of progress. Once more, age is a factor; LGBTQ persons who are middle-aged and older are far more likely to observe growth than LGBTQ adults who are younger. The clear majority of LGBTQ individuals anticipate that society will continue to tolerate them in the coming ten years.

- Societal Views are changing: Most individuals agree that prominent public personalities who are open about being LGBTQ contribute to society becoming more accepting. LGBTQ adults believe that promoting the acceptance of public personalities who support LGBTQ causes but are not LGBTQ themselves is just as important. A smaller share of LGBTQ adults think that LGBTQ characters in TV shows and movies have a positive impact on societal acceptance.

CONCLUSION

LGBTQ youth must feel emotionally, physically, and socially safe in order to thrive in their schools and communities. They feel safer to live in a positive atmosphere that fosters a supportive learning environment. An individual's natural and innate sexual orientation is a form of biological phenomenon that is influenced by neurological and biological elements. Any discrimination would be a violation of the fundamental right to freedom of expression if it were done on the basis of someone's sexual orientation. Science has established that sexual orientation is a complex interplay of hormonal, genetic, and environmental factors rather than a choice or an illness. The LGBTQ group is nevertheless frequently the object of mockery, hostility, and even just plain ignorance or disinterest. So we can conclude that LGBTQ youth requires fair treatment and support, factors that would contribute for the better welfare of this community are acceptance by family, having a supportive social network made up of LGBTQ friends, allies, and family of choice, Access to and use of LGBTQ inclusive medical and mental health and normalize the negative effects of homosexuality, promote emotional literacy, acceptance, and assertive communication

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A DETAILED STUDY OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION PROSPECTIVE IS VARIED FROM GENDER IDENTITY WITH RESPECT TO THANE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The communities of LGBTQIA are often left behind or we walk out on. These people can have a different gender identity and sexual orientation. Sexual orientation means to whom you get attracted physically and mentally, a person may get attracted to a male or to a female or both. However, the sexual orientation may be different from gender from which they are identified and that is known to own self that too after attaining certain age. They go through a lot of societal pressure after a transition of sexual orientation in their life. This research paper will study the basic difference between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation of an individual from LGBTQIA+ community and will find out the correlation between them. The research is based on primary and secondary data collection methods wherein the researcher has used interview and observation techniques. It can be concluded that there is no relation between Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation and Biological Sex but they are connected. The gender identity is what individuals feel from inside which ultimately is the reflection of ourselves in the society.

Keywords: LGBTQIA, biological sex, gender identity, Sexual orientation, birth-gender, own self, transition, puberty, reflection.

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, the maximum people in India came to know about a term called LGBTQIA+ Community, after the Indian Penal Code Decriminalizing some parts of Section 377. This Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was brought by the British Raj (British Rule) in the year 1861 saying "Sexual intercourse against the order of the nature" is illegal. But this act was taken back by the Delhi court in the year 2009 and then again criminalized in year 2012 by the same. Now after 6 years this act was decriminalized and made "Homosexuality" legal in the year 2018.

Before the British Raj Homosexuality in India was very prevalent across the Indian subcontinent. After many years of the criminalization of homosexuality, this culture of discriminating against the community of LGBTQIA did not go.

In these past years of accepting and not discriminating the homosexuals and the people belonging to this community, there is a change. But the change is only in the mindset of the youth in this country. The maximum number of youths in this country are ready to accept that these, people belonging to this community. However, the people of these communities are still struggling with the acceptance of society, family, school, and freedom to express their sexual choices.

According to the survey of YouGov in collaboration with the Mint, they found out the parts of the country is more supportive of homosexuality by taking a survey in some major metro's cities. The finding of the survey was the southern part has the lowest support and highest support is from Delhi followed by Mumbai.

Everyone needs to know one thing that the birth-sex cannot decide the Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation (GISO). We cannot expect gender identity and sexual orientation to be same as the birth-sex. Not only Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are different but Sex and Gender are also different concepts.

Let us, get familiarize with these terms more clearly.

- 1. Biological Sex:** It is known and labeled at birth by doctor based on genes, hormones and body parts.
- 2. Gender:** This is what the society think, look, and act like should be. For example, A person is look like a male so he should only act, think and look like a man.
- 3. Gender Identity:** It means the gender from which the person is been identifying themselves by their inner side. Gender Identity cannot be always known from their birth-sex by seeing the genetic features. This may also differ at a certain age (puberty) from their birth-sex. Mostly the birth sex and gender identity differ in case of transgender.

For example, an individual may be born as male or female. However, may identify themselves after certain age as female or male respectively.

4. Sexual Orientation: It means to whom is the person attracted romantically or sexually. This may also differ from their birth-sex as well as gender identity. He /she may get attracted to the same gender or any other.

For Example,

1. A genetically male is attracted to a male then he is known as gay and if a female is attracted to a female, then this is termed as Lesbian, in both of these cases both are attracted to their gender so they are termed as homosexual.
2. In another case if he /she is attracted to both a male and female person then they are termed as Bi-Sexual and if he /she is attracted to any person regardless of their gender then this is known as Pansexual.
3. If he /she are neither interested in sex nor get sexually attracted to any then they are known as Asexual.

Though we study the LGBTQIA+ is a community still the research found, it has several sub communities. Wherein each community prefers to live differently and liking to be with one of like them.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the basic difference between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.
2. To find out the Gender identity and Sexual Orientation of an individuals from LGBTQIA+ community of Thane City.
3. To find out the correlation between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.
4. To find significance of gender or gender identity.

LIMITATIONS

1. The study of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation is very complex and dynamic.
2. Many of them are not ready to reveal about gender Identity or sexual orientation because of social stigmas.
3. The research's conclusion and suggestions are restricted only to LGBTQIA+ community of thane region.
4. There is no direct access or the existence to converse with LGBTQIA+ community.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no relationship between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation (H0)

There is relationship between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation. (H1)

Hypothesis 2:

There is no change in personality, education, career, lifestyle, preferences after knowing the gender identity. (H0)

There is a change in personality, education, career, lifestyle after knowing the gender identity. (H1)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

BOOKS

(Samons, 2009)

The author talks about gender, that we cannot rely on genitals at birth as it may be difficult in case of intersex individuals whose genitals may not be completely male or female and also in case of person who met with accident or a disease and lost genitals also cannot be called as transgender. Sex designations can be determined by a visual inspection of the genitals at birth. Transgender people do not know where they fit into the spectrum of gender identity and sexual attraction as some desire to live fully as female from the beginning and some may anticipate potential losses and unwilling to risk. The author pointed out the limitations of vocabulary and perceptions related to sex and gender by social expectations.

(Pullen, 2010)

This book gives the details of new connections for LGBT identity. The engagement of transgenders (lesbian, gay, bisexual) using internet reveals their intimacy and diverse sexuality. Which creates opportunities for virtual coming out and identity affirmation. The communication technology helped in construction of new electronic ways of networking, community and identity and allowing LGBTs presence in real physical to online world.

(Healey, 2014)

In a book by Justin Healey published by Spinney Press, the author states that one's life is deeply influenced by their gender identity. However, in our society where the norms are so narrowly and rigidly defined. The individual who crosses those norms have to face many challenges or sometimes straight away reject from the society. The author also states that this scenario is not forever and there will be a change. This change will be a thoughtful change in the mindset of the people that everyone is unique with a different identity. This will not only create a great inclusion for everyone but also let the people explore more of themselves and celebrate their living.

(Antony Palackal, 2021)

The author mentioned the Interventions for LGBT. In which he stated that the Supreme Court of India declared that transgender people as a socially and economically backward class and also kept reservations in education and in employment and also directed the state governments to frame welfare schemes for them and made to recognizes as third gender on April 2014. The author also states that with this kind of facilities also they are still facing many challenges in their life. Also, in the same way hundreds of LGBT are facing the same discrimination that they use to face before the changes in the welfare scheme.

RESEARCH PAPERS AND JOURNAL-ARTICLE

(Andersen, 2019)

The large number of studies proves that there is increased risk of mental health problems with regards to LGBT individuals. Therefore, many governments' public health agencies are addressing needs of LGBT individuals. Wherein this workshop has showcased gender affirmative surgical treatment of LGBT individuals to improve their mental health in Sweden presented by Dr. John Pachankis (Yale University, USA).

(Rastogi, Shilpa Rao, 2018)

This research has focused on discrimination of children on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. When the children exposed their sexual orientation and gender identity parents do not accept this fact and they have to face family exclusions, verbal and physical harassment, bullying, also sometimes parents often force such children to undergo various therapies to altered their sexual orientation and gender identity. Such practices increase their mental and physical stress. These practices where violating their basic human rights. Further, the researcher suggested, establishment of grievances redressal mechanism for sexual minorities, appropriate sex education and information, proper training through medical experts, measures to safeguard the international human rights law to prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

(Rosemaree Kathleen Miller, Daniel O'Neill, et al. 2022)

This research paper proves with the semi structured interview with 20 transgender females that the psychological distress had causing due to social strain and not by gender dysphoria also some of them were undergone with gender changing surgery and others did not express any discomfort with their gender.

NEWSPAPERS

(Hindustan Times, Abhishek Jha 13 September, 2015) The article of Hindustan Times covered the Director of the LGBT Research and Communications Project at the Center for American Progress (Jeff Krehely) stated, lot of people belonging to the community of LGBT are becoming homeless because they are coming out to their families at age 12 to 13 instead of coming out after age 18. The people are ready to come out into society and feel ok to be what they are. But as they are coming out at an earlier age and they cannot independently stay as their families reject them. However, in India people do not come out because of the taboos and do not face this kind of situation and also live in good economic conditions. This differs for transgender as they come out because of the being effeminate and been rejected by the family.

(New York Times Shalini Venugopal Bhagat on 31st July 2020) the writer talked about the prince of a royal family that once ruled the kingdom of the Rajpipla. Manvendra Singh Gohil the prince of the Rajpipla dynasty was brought up to take over a dynasty that was 600 years old. Prince got married to the princess of the royal family of Jhabua. That was the time when he was clear about his sexual orientation as he was not attracted to a female sexually. He started reading books and different magazines from which we gained knowledge about the same. Then he came out as gay in an interview in the year 2006. After which his mother rejected him as a child of her and this also led to protests in his kingdom, where his statues were brunt. He also got many threats and got disinherited by his family. He came out and also posted the interview in a newspaper 14 years ago. Being gay was a crime at that time. People use to threaten him so the governor also provided security to the prince and then he became one of the few Gay rights activists in the world belonging to such a royal family. He said," I

decided that I would continue fighting because I have truth on my side.” This was how difficult to come out with your sexual orientation even years back. Prince Manvendra is also working on a project in which he is making shelter for LGBTQ people on his property in Gujarat.

(TODAY ALL DAY Sarah Lemire on 23rd May 2022) the writer talked about meaning and importance of the Pride month June. In the month of June various programs are held for the Individuals belonging to LGBTQA community to celebrate equality, unity and visibility for them. The writer also talked about the reason behind June being only the pride month and said in the late 1960s, being a gay or any gender queer was illegal in New York. On 28th of June 1969, police raided the Famous bar which was diverse with different individuals belonging to the LGBTQA community. Where after various riots and protests began and this was then known as stonewall uprising. Then in the same month of next year a huge crowd gathered at Manhattan, here after every year the month of June was known as pride month. In year 1999, President bill Clinton officially declared June as the time to recognize LGBTQ community’s achievements.

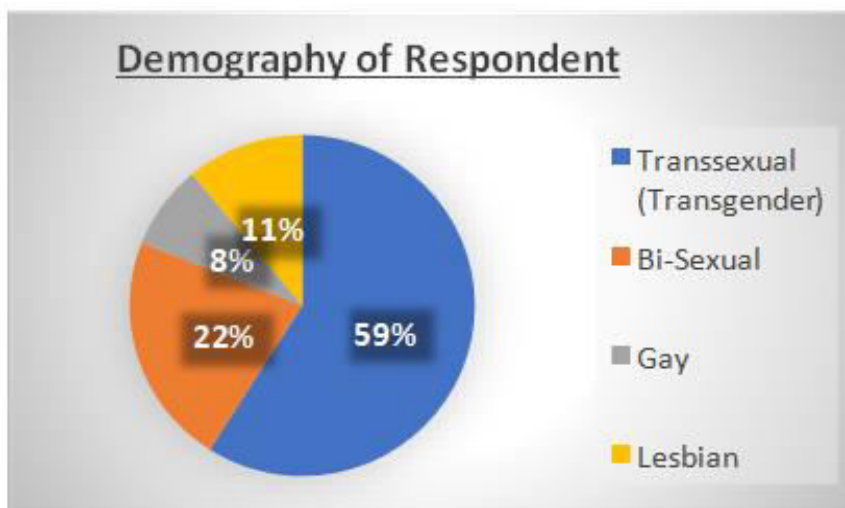
RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Type of Research Method	Basic Research
Research Universe	Individuals from LGBTQIA+ Community.
Sampling Method	Convenience Sampling and Snowball Sampling these two non-probability methods were used.
Research Area	Thane Region
Sample Size	28
Method of data collection	Primary and Secondary
Primary Data collection Methods	Structured questions were design. Personal Interview, Telephonic Interview, and Questionnaire (Survey) via google forms were conducted.
Secondary Data Collection Methods	Books, Research Papers, Magazines, Websites, Newspapers articles and social media sited such as Facebook, Instagram, What's app, Twitter, Quora, Link-in.
Data Analysis Techniques	To analysis and interpret the data percentage and graphs are used.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

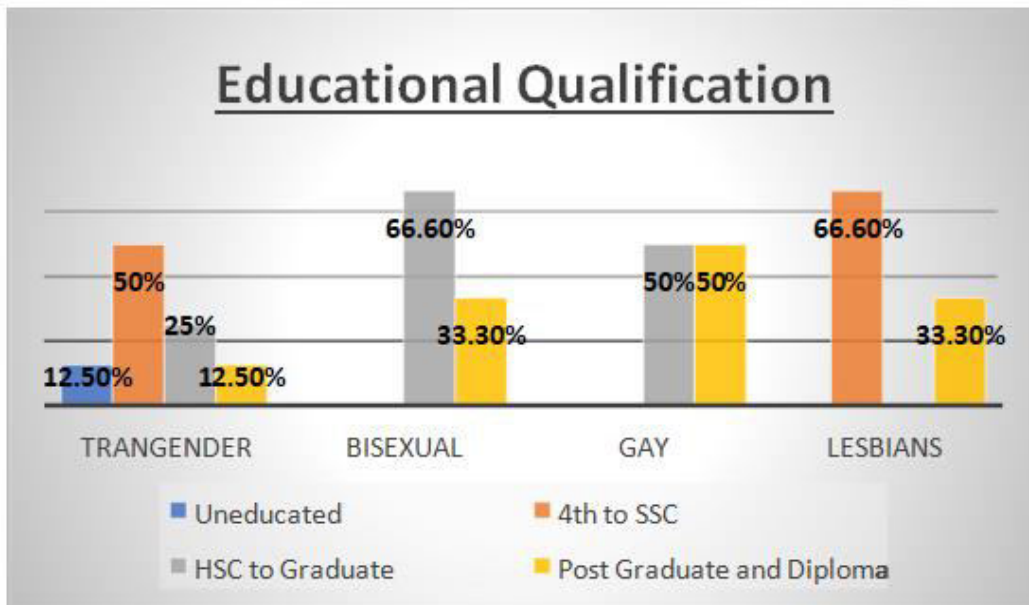
1. Demography of Respondents

Transsexual (Transgender)	16	59%
Bi-Sexual	6	22%
Gay	2	8%
Lesbian	3	11%
Total	28	100%



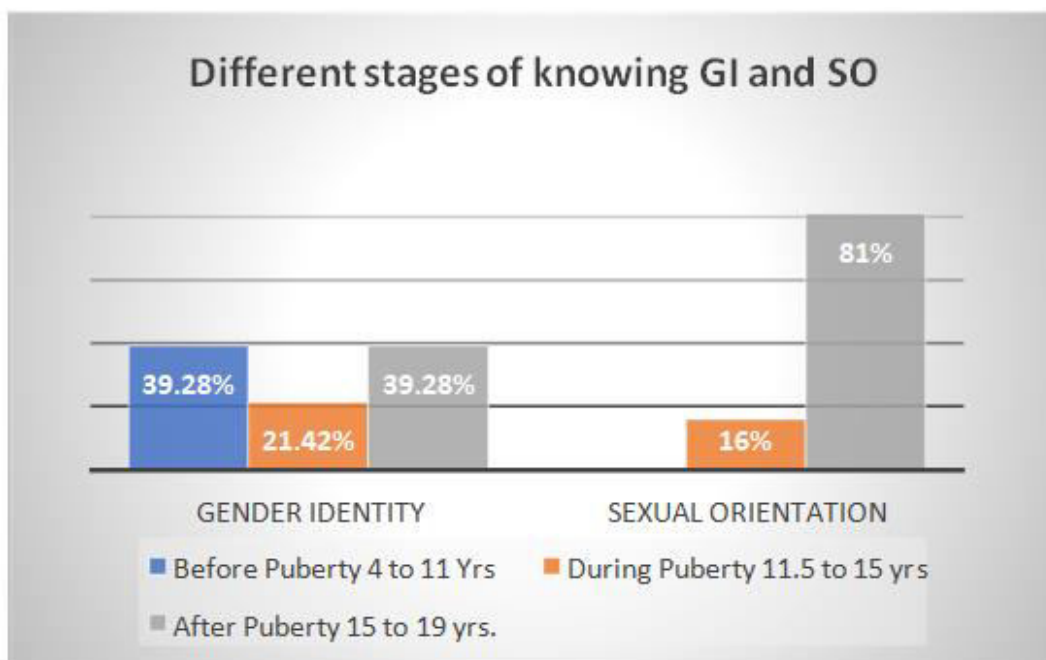
Interpretation: Out of total 28 respondents 16 were transgender, 6 were bisexual, 2 were gay and 3 were lesbians.

Educational Qualification of the Respondents



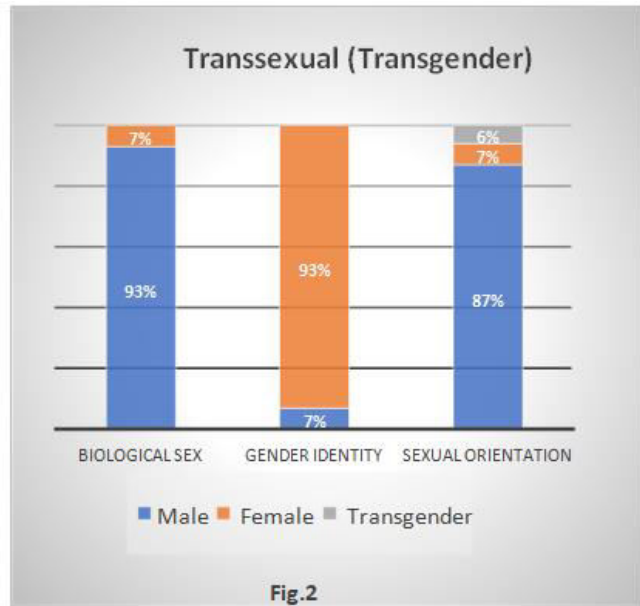
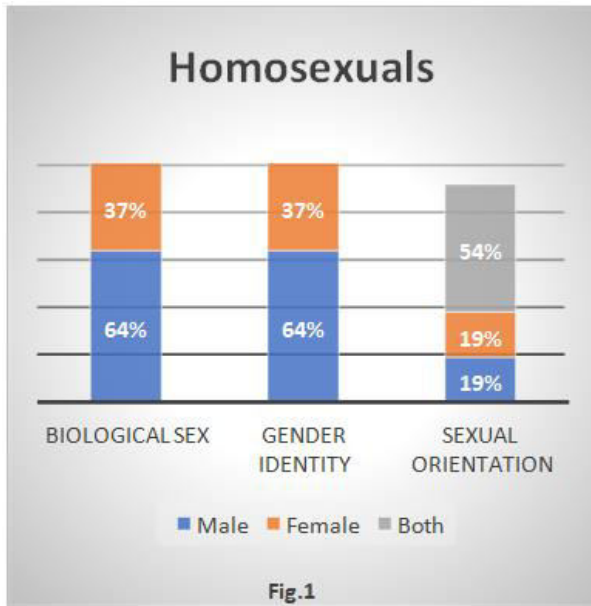
Interpretation: It has been observed, 12.50% uneducated & almost 50% of participants belongs only from Transsexual (Transgender) community because of migration due to societal stigma.

2. When did you get to know about your gender identity and Sexual Orientation?



Interpretation: There are certain stages at which respondents got know their Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation. Most of the respondents got to know about their Sexual Orientation after confirming their Gender Identity. However, 16% respondents got to know their sexual orientation during Puberty and at that stage the respondents accepted themselves with gender Identity that they belong to the LGBTQIA+ community.

3. Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation at this point of time



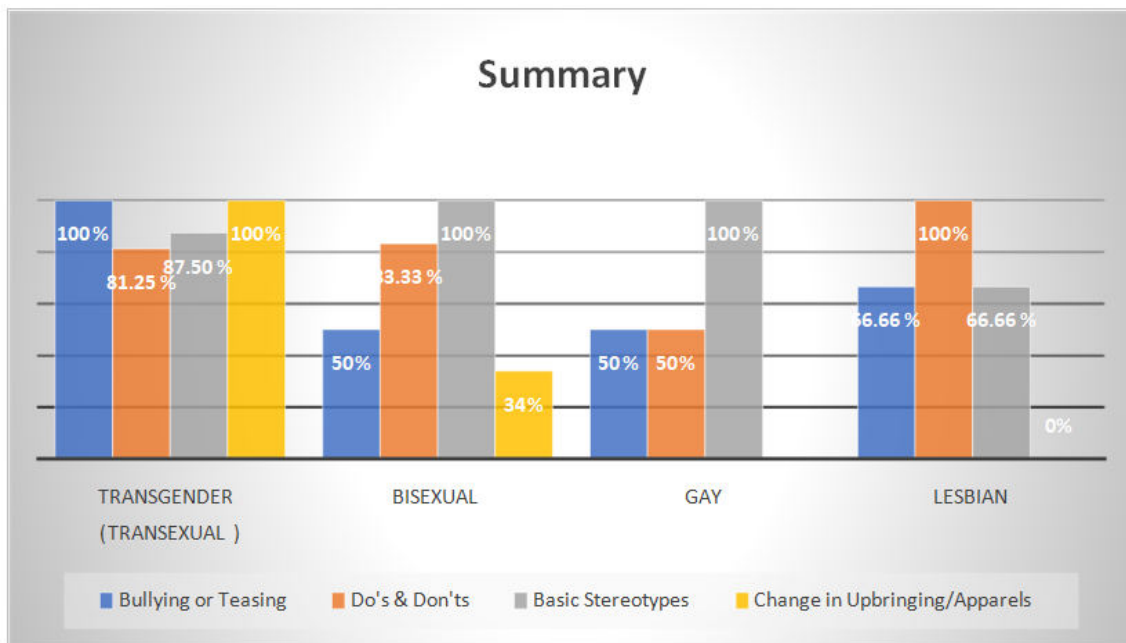
Interpretation: Fig 1 represents (Homosexuals total respondents were 11)

64% respondents have male and 37% respondents have female as their biological sex. However, it can be observed from the graph that their Gender Identity remains same but the sexual orientation is homogeneous or bisexual.

Fig.2 represent (Transsexual/Transgender total respondent were 16)

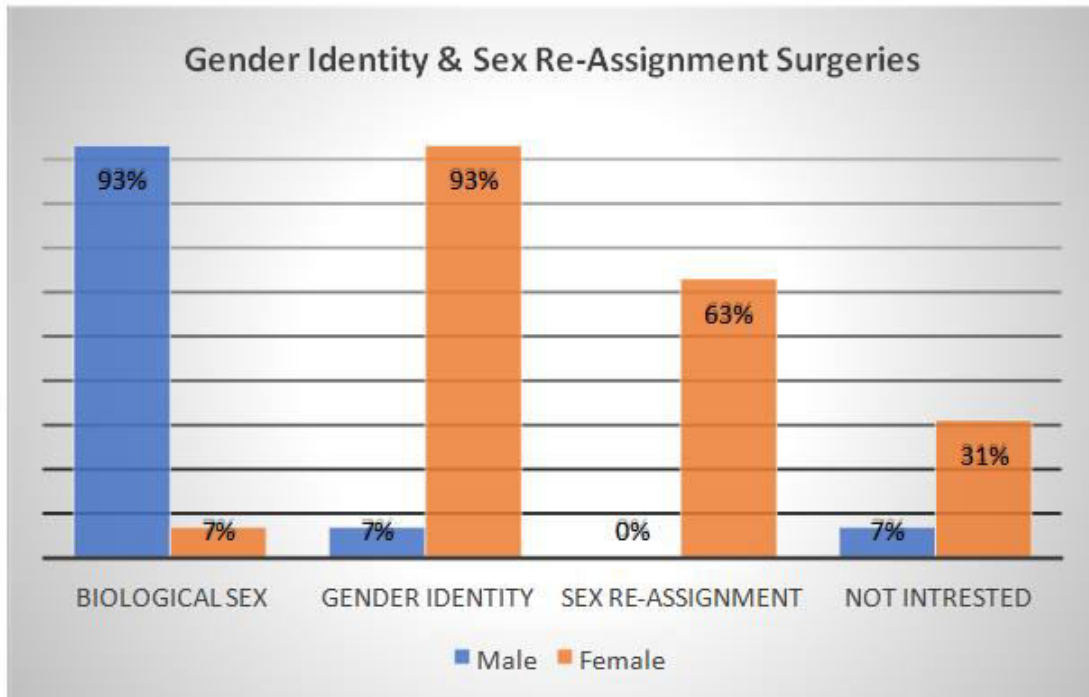
93% respondents have male and 7% have female as biological sex but there is change in Gender Identity in case of transsexual/transgender and sexual orientation is heterogeneous.

4. Summary of dos and don'ts, basic stereotypes, bullying and teasing and change in upbringing/apparels after knowing Gender Identity or Sexual Orientations.



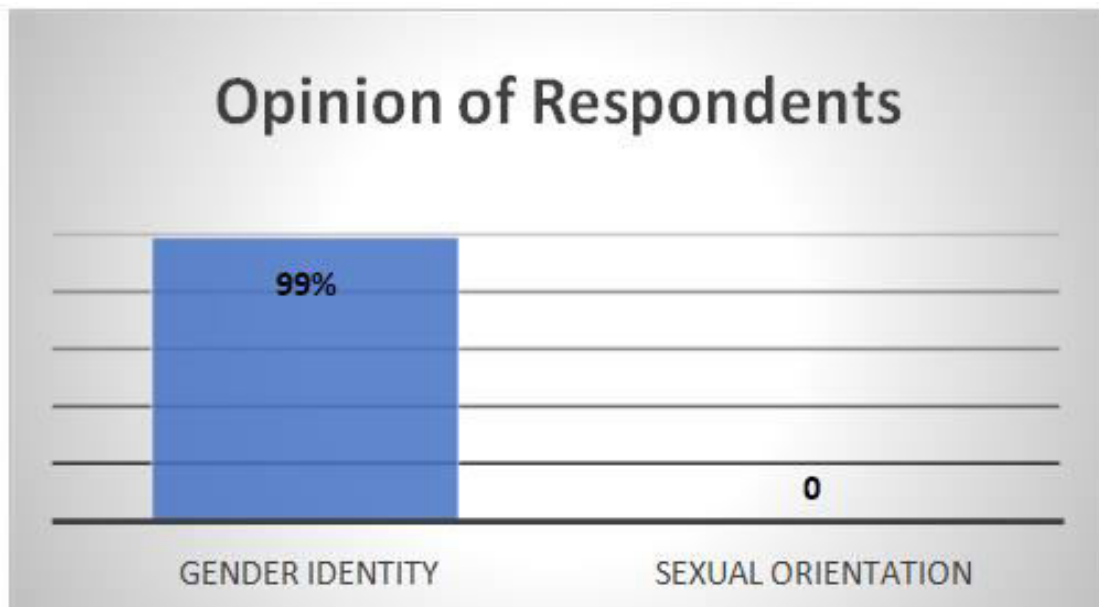
Interpretation: Most of Transsexual (Transgender) suffered from bullying and teasing compared to others. Whereas, the basic stereotypes around were approximately same in each case. This graph also shows that lesbians have the most dos and don'ts. Change in upbringing/apparels was only in the case of Transgender (Transsexual).

5. Correlation between Gender Identity and sex affirming or sex re-assignment surgeries in case of Transsexual (Transgender).



Interpretation: Respondents go for surgeries because of Gender identity. Out of total respondents, 63% respondents performed the sex re-assignment surgeries.

6. Significance of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation from the respondent’s Point of view.



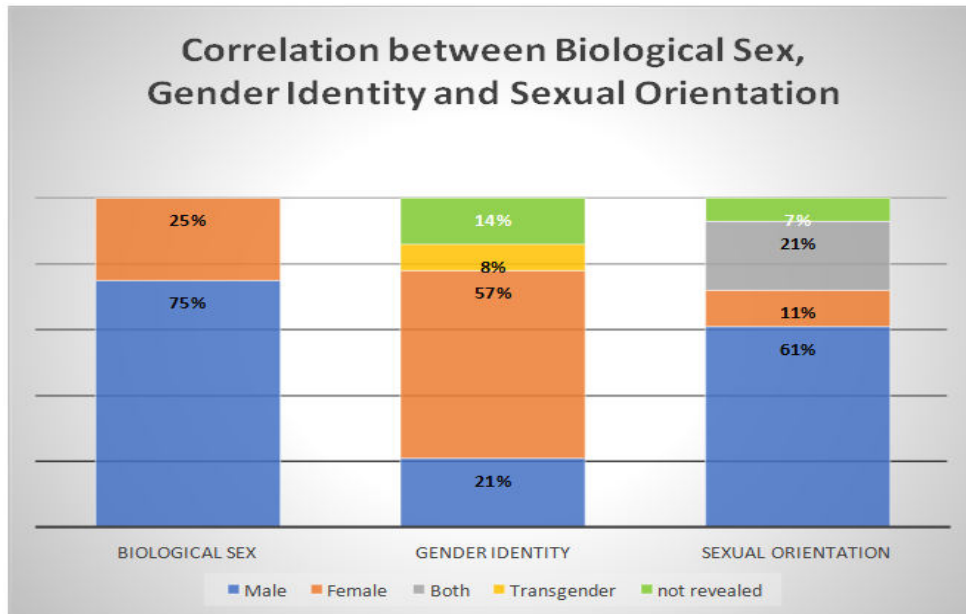
Interpretation: 99% respondents agreed that Gender Identity matters a lot as compared to Sexual Orientation.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1:

There is no relationship between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation (H0)

There is relationship between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation. (H1)

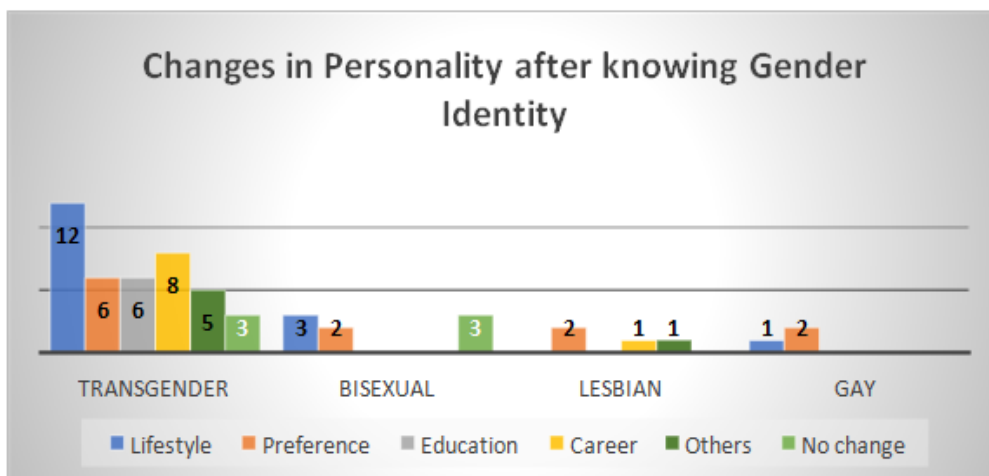


Interpretation: From the above graph it is observed that there is no relationship between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no change in personality, education, career, lifestyle, preferences after knowing the gender identity. (H0)

There is a change in personality, education, career, lifestyle after knowing the gender identity. (H1)



Interpretation: From the above collected data, it is clear that null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted as there is change in personality, education, career, lifestyle, preference after knowing gender identity.

CONCLUSION

Gender identity matters the most in comparison to Biological Sex as in a male body a female feeling cannot survive. It is the distressed between Gender Identity and Biological Sex i.e., termed as “Dysphoria”. It is their own gender identity which is forcing them for the sex affirming or sex re-assignment surgeries. The gender identity is what we feel from inside, which ultimately is the reflection of ourselves in the society.

Even though biological sex was not included in this research, the research clearly states that biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation do not have any relation with each other.

The Gender Identity also matters more in comparison to sexual orientation. As per respondents they can live without sexual orientation but they cannot live without their own identity. In case of sexual orientation what so ever it may be, it is hidden and unknown to others therefore individuals may hide their feelings and can live with society without revealing their Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation.

Unless the gender identity is not confirmed the respondents could not get attached to the community also. So, to be a part of community individuals must be confirmed with their Gender Identity.

Until the time individual's gender identity is unknown to self, the sexual orientation cannot be known. Hence, both are connected but different.

FINDINGS

As gender plays important role in each one of life but still gender identity and sexual orientations are also matter a lot to especially with these communities.

Most of them are unaware about terminologies such as gender identity and sexual orientation. Though they belong from the same community, some are afraid that their benefits will be given to others.

In spite of several institutions, NGO, trusts, organizations are creating awareness regarding LGBTQIA+ community still the individuals from the community does not feel comfortable to reveal their identity because of the societal stigmata and taboo.

The survey conducted on 28 individuals from LGBTQIA+ community. Among 16 were transsexuals (Transgender), 6 were bisexual, 2 were gay, 3 were lesbians. Bisexuals and lesbians are most educated. Most of the respondents got to know their Sexual Orientation after confirming their Gender Identity.

64% respondents have male and 37% respondents have female as their biological sex. However, it can be observed from the graph that their Gender Identity remains same but the sexual orientation is homogeneous or bisexual.

93% respondents have male and 7% have female as biological sex but there is change in Gender Identity in case of transsexual/transgender and sexual orientation is heterogeneous.

Respondents go for surgeries because of Gender identity. Out of total respondents, 63% respondents performed the sex re-assignment surgeries.

99% respondents agreed that Gender Identity matters a lot as compared to Sexual Orientation.

The sex of most of the transsexuals (Transgender) in thane area is male during their birth (assigned male at birth) and in case of bisexual, they get more attracted by the opposite gender. This was the observation part of the study.

SUGGESTIONS

From the LGBTQIA community, majority of individual are belonging from transgender section. Hence, proper care to pronounce them one should take to protect their sentiments. For ex. Calling them respectfully as "They" instead of he/she. Or also asking them for their "pronounce". Being "allies" for them to think about them, we all can be helpful to them and start Pride month at institution too. For ex. my name is Mrugaya Gaikwad, I pronounce myself as she/her.

An Academic institution should conduct the sessions, to acquaint the students with various ways to know their identity. There is certain age generally 9 to 12 years (this research proves before or during puberty) at which the adolescence gets hints of their gender identity and sexual orientation within.

This can be done via conducting seminar through inviting such individuals who belongs from LGBTQIA communities. Therefore, they will feel sense of pride and there will change in perspective of youth of today's generation.

There should be strong support and inclusion of societies which will reduce the burden and ease of adopting to the families. There should be a gender-neutral parenting.

There should be availability of safe places wherein LGBTQIA+ community can talk freely without hesitation.

Maharashtra Government should provide some subsidy to set up some small-scale business, so that they can get the fixed income to run their livelihood.

SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

To study problem of infrastructure faced by LGBTQIA+ community.

To study the perception of people towards LGBTQIA+ community.

To study the mental health of LGBTQIA+ Community.

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AMBIVALENCE IN ANDREW SEAN GREER'S LESS AND SHYAM SELVADURAI'S FUNNY BOY**Piyusha Mhalunkar**

Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane

ABSTRACT

*Having mixed feelings towards a part of one's identity by virtue of constantly being a witness to the heteronormative standards of society seems but an indivisible part of the LGBTQIA+ experience. Heteronormativity can have a lasting impact on the psyche rendering even those falling beyond the bounds of normativity to abide by the unwritten rules inadvertently. The study of this ambivalence within queer narratives and studying the underlying cause of this internal conflict helps understand the root of the problem of the lack of omnipresent acceptance and inclusivity even within queer spheres. The study, thus, attempts to highlight the probable causes of these internalized biases through an analytical reading of Andrew Sean Greer's *Less* (2017) and Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* (1994), both poignant texts put forth by two of the most prominent writers and contemporary representatives of the queer community.*

Keywords: queer, identity, heteronormativity, ambivalence

ANDREW SEAN GREER'S LESS

Originally published in 2017, Andrew Sean Greer's *Less* wasn't always destined to be the humorous, unlikely rendition of the *Odyssey* as it was in its final form. Greer had originally set out to write *Less* as a "very serious" novel but the way it subverts this expectation by the time of publication could not be any more drastic. At first glance, the novel's Pulitzer Prize seems simply like a token of inclusivity as the institute often chooses novels with daunting bodies of texts with topics unseen and unacknowledged inspected under a new light. In contrast, *Less* with its comical narrations initially seems like a romantic comedy that can successfully prompt a couple of laughs here and there. But on closer examination, *Less* stands as a poetic novel with a trope, a staple mocked, satirized and turned inside out that leaves a layered, thematically rich text to examine.

Arthur Less, the protagonist of *Less* this whimsical itinerary is a homosexual, mediocresly successful novelist who dreads his fiftieth birthday that looms imminently on the horizon. This just so happens to be the initial sketch of Less that the reader is supplied with over which the author slowly adds layer after layer to make the character more complex. In a way, *Less* acts like a coming of age story wherein we see the protagonist grow into his age and tackle the identity crisis that comes along with the said age. The text introduces multiple characters that the author explores at a stretch or through fragments of the titular character's flashbacks. By association or through sheer creative choices, most of these characters are representatives of the queer community and thus could be studied under the lens of queer theory.

AMBIVALENCE IN GREER'S LESS

Arthur Less, however, "a person without skin" (Greer 9) spends the first section of his youth in love with Robert Brownburn (a much older, renowned poet) and the next nine years with Freddy. The narrator explicates that Less is a person who finds discomfort in his loneliness. "But: how to live alone and yet not be alone?" (Greer 9) This leads Arthur to inadvertently set himself up for long-lasting relationships despite small failed endeavors that predated Robert and those that he has during his haphazard world-tour.

Arthur is the author of a book, *Kalipso*: after the Calypso myth that originates in *The Odyssey*. This is the very book that has brought the author notoriety and mediocre success. However, when Less lands in a small party in France and falls into a less-than-welcome conversation with Finley, a character that Less is contemptuous towards, Arthur for the first time is criticised about the contents and is called a "bad gay." Finley justifies:

"It is our duty to show something beautiful from our world. The gay world. But in your books, you make the characters suffer without reward. If I didn't know better, I'd think you were Republican. *Kalipso* was beautiful. So full of sorrow. But so incredibly self-hating. A man washes ashore on an island and has a gay affair for years. But then he leaves to go find his wife! You have to do better. For us. Inspire us, Arthur. Aim higher..." (Greer 144)

The above passage candidly discusses one of the other major tenets of Queer theory: queer ambivalence. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines 'ambivalence' as "simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings (such as attraction and repulsion) toward an object, person, or action." (Web) Despite attempting to shun the heterosexual normativity in the society through the means of awareness about identities that deviate from these norms, more often than not, even within the representatives of the Queer community, the normativity and

hegemony are drilled at a level visceral enough that their subconscious projections still adhere to heterosexual norms. This constant fluctuation or bivalency in the opinion about following the prevalent hegemony and those marginalised under the queer community can be defined as queer ambivalence.

While Less' *Kalipso* deviates from the original story by swapping Calypso, the female nymph from the original *Odyssey*, for a man that the protagonist has an affair with for years, by ensuring that the character returns to his wife, Arthur Less unwittingly nullifies the representation and validation that he had offered the Queer community. When questioned about this decision, Less answers: "But... but... but it's Odysseus," Less says. "Returning to Penelope. That's just how the story goes." (Greer 144)

This, while could be considered abiding to the integrity of the rest of the original text, as stated before, it nullifies the queer representation that the male nymph provided the text with. Moreover, the hardships that Less inflicts on the protagonist coupled with the supposed 'happy ending' that comes along with his protagonist searching for and returning to his wife makes Finley's remark of the story being 'self-hating' seem well-placed. It tarnishes the already misunderstood and misrepresented queer community by entailing that a man must return to a woman ultimately.

As Less travels more, he unearths more instances of distaste that the readers have had with *Kalipso* and also understands what could be the shortcomings of his next manuscript- *Swift*. As Zohra points out that it would be difficult for anyone to feel bad for a 'middle-aged, Caucasian man' who just so happens to be the protagonist that Less had chosen for *Swift*, Greer brings in a discourse of race and privilege which stands past the scope of this essay. However, Less soon sets on a journey to correct his manuscript by ridiculing his protagonist and mocking his place of privilege. In a way, this acts as a meta representation of the sojourn that the manuscript for *Less* itself went through.

SHYAM SELVADURAI'S FUNNY BOY

On the flip side, across the pond, Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* (1994), rich in themes and interpretations offers a vastly different insight on ambivalence and its manifestation in an adolescent mind. Shyam Selvadurai brings the story up as Arjie's - the protagonist's bildungsroman as he grapples with the reality of being doubly marginalised - as a Tamil gay boy - in a nation on the verge of a civil war. Selvadurai draws unmistakable parallels between the broken state of the nation at a political level and the haywire state of Arjie's psyche as he comes to realise the societal dislike towards his 'tendencies' which quite early in his life gains him the title of 'funny'.

AMBIVALENCE IN SELVADURAI'S FUNNY BOY

The very introductory chapter of Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* centres itself around the most initial of Arjun's - the protagonist and narrator's - brushes with the heteronormative society. As the narrator is merely a child oblivious to social institutions and cookie-cutter expectations of a male, he finds himself comfortable playing with girls - "bride-bride" as was traditional for them with Arjun playing the 'bride'- as opposed to his other cousins who stick to the gendered groups when visiting their grandparents. Arjie is faced with confrontation only when his cousin from the United States raises an objection that only a girl can be the bride. She then goes to insult Arjie as: "a pansy", "a faggot" and "a sissy" (Selvadurai 11), none of which are actually comprehensible words to Arjun and his siblings. It is when the said cousin's mother draws Arjun in front of the entire family draped in a sari, Arjun is faced with harsh criticism and is called "funny" by his

uncle, hence, the name of the book. However, these very instances along with the confrontation between Arjun's parents once they go back home wherein his father reasserts the epithet of "funny", blaming his mother for enabling his 'behaviour' by allowing him to watch her as she dresses up ensure that Arjie feels dubious about the way he views himself. The following day Arjie is banished from his mother's room while she readied herself which plants the very first seeds of doubt in Arjie's mind and his exile. Selvadurai illustrates:

It was clear to me that I had done something wrong, but what it was, I couldn't comprehend. I thought of what my father had said about turning out "funny." The word "funny" as I understood it meant either humorous or strange, as in the expression, "that's funny." Neither of these fitted the sense in which my father had used the word, for there had been a hint of disgust in his tone. (Selvadurai 17)

The next time Arjie and his cousins are to stay with his grandparents, he is mandated to play only with his male cousins. However, Arjie still manages to sneak the sari with him, culminating in a huge fight between his cousin and himself. He soon finds himself on the verge of being punished by his grandmother from which he escapes temporarily only to be punished later. This series of events cements the - intentional or not - feeling of exile that Arjie begins to feel. The narrator documents:

The future spend-the-days were no longer to be enjoyed, no longer to be looked forward to. And there would be loneliness. I would be caught between the boys' and girls' worlds, not belonging or wanted in either. I would have to think of things with which to amuse myself, find ways to endure the lunches and teas when the cousins would talk to one another about what they had done what they planned to do for the rest of the day (Selvadurai 39-40)

It is clear that under his grandmother's keen eye, Arjie finds himself lonesome and segregated from his kin. Whilst he does find himself sticking to chores handed to him by his grandmother over the course of time, in exile from his cousins and siblings, Arjun forms bonds with equally exiled and troubled characters. His aunty - Radha - allows him the freedom of indulging in her make up like *pottus* and nail polish. She seems to offer Arjie the kinship and support that he needs by trusting him with her own secrets thus rendering them in a symbiotic relationship. The same is true with Daryl uncle, an old flame and a short-lived affair of his mother who enters the story shortly before losing his life in a civil upheaval on account of his lineage as a Bugher. Thus, Arjun constantly finds himself sympathetic with marginalised, troubled characters that he encounters.

Another one of the people, marginalised and fairly considered an outsider, that garners Arjun's respect and admiration briefly is Jegan, the son of one of Arjun's father's childhood friends. While Jegan finds himself employed under Arjun's father, Arjie grows to admire Jegan. There are instances where, at the readers' own volition, one might see traces of Arjie's sexual awakening and inclination in their interaction. However, the author does not confirm the same. Arjun's father grows equally fond of Jegan and opts to share some of his most intimate thoughts with the boy, most of which have Arjie as a clandestine eavesdropper. One of which is documented so:

"I'm glad you take an interest in him," he said. "That boy worries me."

I leaned forward wondering what it was that worried him.

"Why, Uncle?" Jegan asked.

... "From the time he was small he has shown certain tendencies."

"What do you mean, tendencies?" Jegan asked.

"You know... he used to play with dolls, always reading."

My face suddenly became hot at the realisation that he was discussing this with Jegan, for whom I had such high regard. I thought to get up, go into the garden and thus interrupt this mortifying conversation. ... "Anyway, the main point is that I'm glad you're taking an interest in him. Maybe you'll help him outgrow this phase." (Selvadurai 166)

Not only does the preceding excerpt highlight the rigid bounds of gender roles in Arjun's father's mind but it also highlights the distaste that Arjun has towards the conversation being acknowledged with an outsider. This along with the fact that Arjun's father decides for Arjun to change schools and join his brother at Victoria Academy rationalising that "The Academy will force you to become a man," (Selvadurai, 210) solidifies further the fear that Arjun has towards the "tendencies" that his father mentions being a part of his own identity.

While the happenstances so far show no definite evidence of Arjie's sexuality, they form a foreground of a typically heteronormative and rigid surrounding wherein the seed of hidden identities within closets flourishes.

The first instance of Arjie's sexuality being expressed is with one of his classmates Shehan Soyza. Right since the moment he is introduced, Shehan sticks out like a sore thumb to Arjie. Not only is he one of the only people to welcome Arjun - a Tamil boy - in a Sinhalese class but is also introduced as quite a rebel with his hair grown out and hidden with pins. While rumours surround the boy, Arjun still develops quite a deep bond with him. Thus, when they find a way out of the punishment the both of them receive from the principal and Shehan kisses Arjun out of joy, Arjun's first venture into defining his sexuality begins. Selvadurai pens down:

That all I could think about was the sensation of that kiss. I lay across my bed, trying to relive it, but it had happened so fast that I could not remember very much. ... As I lay there, looking up at the mosquito net above me, I had realised I had not only liked that kiss but I was also eager to experience it again in all its detail and sensation. (Selvadurai 251)

At this juncture in the narrative, Arjie has come to terms with him liking the sensation of the kiss. Whilst there is not a label of homosexuality that he puts himself under, he has accepted that he likes the idea of it. His feelings, however, follow a topsy-turvy road as he visits Shehan at his home and seems to miss the cue to initiate intimacy with the other and further complicates things by asking a disproportionate question. The meeting, needless to say, ends early but further stands as evidence for Arjie's strengthening feelings.

Arjie then informs his family that he has a friend and is prompted to invite him home. On hearing the name of the friend, Diggy - Arjie's older brother - who is aware of the rumours that follow Soyza and ensures time and again that Arjie is equally aware of them and their clandestinely homosexual insinuations, threatens Arjun: "... he'll (Arjun's father) definitely know that you're ..." (Selvadurai 255). Not only does this further intimidate Arjie from even the possibility of a homosexual inclination but it also ensures that Diggy forms the second line of rigid heteronormativity that dares not tolerate anything diverging from the norm.

Further, as Shehan does arrive at Arjun's house, Arjun states: "When Shehan finally arrived, I couldn't help studying him, as if I hoped to find my discovery physically manifested in his person." (Selvadurai 257) This can be held as a piece of plausible evidence that Arjun feels bereft of a part of his identity. Especially considering that Arjie has had a short experience of homosexual intimacy rendering him in need for more. At a linguistic level, it could even be considered a Freudian slip, a subconscious giveaway that Arjun finds a piece of his identity still undiscovered and hopes to find the same in Shehan.

Both of the boys venture through the yard, end up in the garage which subsequently culminates in Arjun's first sexual endeavour. The very moment that Soyza and him part, the narrator mentions feeling "helplessly angry" (Selvadurai 260). The narrator also continues to fuss with his clothes, trying to hide any and all evidence of the deed done. However, when confronting his family, albeit devoid of any evidence, the narrator shows clear signs of guilt. He documents:

I looked around at my family and I saw that I had committed a terrible crime against them, against the trust and love they had given me. I glanced at Amma and imagined what her reaction would have been had she discovered us, the profound expression of hurt that would have come over her face. [...] I wanted to cry out what I had done, beg to be absolved of my crime, but the deed was already done and it couldn't be taken back. Now I understood my father's concern, why there had been such a worry in his voice whenever he talked about me. He had been right to try to protect me from what he feared was inside me, but he had failed. (Selvadurai 262)

The secretive nature of his experience ultimately results in the narrator considering it to be a complete betrayal of the trust that his parents placed in him. The narrator also shows the typical fear one has of letting the heteronormative mind-set of those closest to a closeted person down. Not only does this add an increasing pressure but it also marks the very first dissonance in Arjun's psychology thus granting the reader the first evidence of crisis the description of which continues in the following passage, a spy-account of Arjun's psyche:

I watched him, feeling resentful, angry at myself that I had done such awful things with him. I thought of the expression on his face as he had pushed against me, and I felt a sudden contempt and loathing for him. It seemed hard to believe that I longed for his kiss the whole weekend, had waited with such expectancy to discover more. Now I wished I had never invited him, never set eyes on him. (Selvadurai 263)

What Arjun expresses in the preceding excerpt is a typical show of resentment bubbling from regret. The regret, here, only stems from the fact that the heteronormative society around him has been less than supportive of the 'tendencies' Arjun seemingly showcases right since his formative years and his constant belief that they make him less than normal. His ignorance and innocence regarding a topic as sensitive and delicate as sexuality renders him confused and frightful about his sexual venture. Thus, the contempt that Arjun feels towards hails from confusion and somehow dissonance. As Arjun believes that it is abnormal to find pleasure in another man, he seems to blame Shehan for his feelings.

Shehan and Arjun later have a fight when Arjun denies the other boy any sort of intimacy in the privacy of his room leading Shehan to accuse him for feeling guilty for the happenstance in the garage. When Shehan states that he knows what he wants and finds it no reason to be ashamed of the same, Arjun, raised to think the exact opposite, tells Shehan that it is "revolting" (Selvadurai 265). Here, we see Arjun going back on his admitted homosexual awareness but also constantly insulting Shehan - someone who is comfortable with his identity - and ultimately hits him. To quote *The Psychiatric Times*:

There are many gay men who, before they came out, were either "gay-baiters" or "gay-bashers" themselves.

Attacking those perceived to be gay serves several functions. One penile plethysmography study indicated that men with strong antihomosexual beliefs actually had significant homosexual arousal patterns (Adams et al., 1996). Strong anti-homosexual feelings may represent an effort to control perceptions of a gay-basher's own sexual identity. This might translate as, "If I attack gay people, no one will think I am gay." Psychoanalysts call this defence "identification with the aggressor" (Freud, 1966). It may represent intrapsychic efforts to maintain a psychological distance from one's own homoerotic feelings. In other words, it is an effort to strengthen dissociative tendencies. (Drescher Web)

According to the above excerpt, Arjun finds himself in the same mindset of “identification with the aggressor”. Whilst he is aware that a part of him longs for the confidence and comfort that Shehan has with his identity, he is equally aware of the anti-homosexual climate of his home and the exile that Shehan lives in, in the premises of the school with a reputation marred with baseless rumours. Thus, in an effort to remove himself from even the slightest idea of finding comfort in a reprimanded identity, Arjun resorts to ‘gay-bashing’ one of the most typical behaviours of men with a closeted homosexual inclination, often termed under internalised homophobia. This homophobic behaviour only stems from the fact that Arjun feels incompetent for not having the same confidence as Shehan about his own sexuality. This only stands as yet another shred of evidence of a queer ambivalence brewing inside of Arjun’s mind as he tries to tackle this part of his identity.

However, soon Arjun comes to terms with his sexuality and finds it in himself to apologise to Shehan for his comments and the violence he had initiated. As he definitively and purposefully ensures that the poems he recites at an important function are all incorrect and render the present principal’s - the one who had continuously punished Shehan - speech irrelevant, Arjun and Shehan reconcile. It is at this juncture that Arjun narrates the following on seeing his mother:

What happened with Shehan and me over the last few days had changed my relationship with her forever. I was no longer a part of my family in the same way. I now inhabited a world they didn’t understand and into which they couldn’t follow me. (Selvadurai 284-285)

This is a clear indication of Arjun not only accepting his identity as a homosexual boy but also of him being aware of the consequences that might follow considering the conservative views that his family has shared. Arjun, a boy who has grown in an unintentional exile by virtue of

impugning the heteronormative views of his family at a very young age, is a boy aware of his homosexuality readily inflicts upon himself an exile from his family and accepts that where his identity stays now is beyond the reach of his family.

Thus, Arjun carries the naiveté of a teenager and an equally curious and forgiving nature. Whilst he does realise that he has been exiled from his extended family time and again for inadvertently challenging the norm, he forgives them for it and ultimately finds himself sympathising with the other marginalised members of his family. Arjun’s constant exposure to the heteronormative expectations of his family renders him hesitant and thus ambivalent as he finally realises his sexuality. Although initially intrigued and looking forward to his interactions with Shehan, Arjun soon finds himself struggling with guilt and disgust that only arises from the realisation that he is letting his family’s heteronormative values down by accepting this forbidden part of his identity. Gradually, as Arjie comes to terms with his sexuality and realises that simply blaming it on Shehan or finding it in himself to feel contemptuous towards the other for being able to express himself, he not only apologises to Shehan but also pulls a grand gesture to show that his apology is sincere. However, when Arjun finally accepts and acknowledges his homosexuality, he realises that he has now segregated himself from his family and thus has inflicted upon himself an exile anew.

Greer’s novel, on the other hand, is rich in characters, minor and major both, that do not conform to the traditional hegemony of sexuality. Greer explores the world of these multiple manifestations of queer identities as if in an effort to prove their existence and validity irrespective of the gender of the partner and the amount of time spent in association with them. Greer also explores the lasting effects of the heteronormative society on the psyche and how the ambivalence that it brings in its wake might result in the misrepresentation and invalidation of multiple personalities and characters.

CONCLUSION

Despite the cartographical, thematic and cultural differences in the texts, inadvertently or not, both the authors seemingly underline the subliminal and lasting effect that heteronormative society has on the minds of the residents wherein even when exploring one’s identity beyond the normative bounds one may stumble across internalised prejudice against it. Thus, reconstructing language and concepts to be more inclusive of non-normative genders, sexualities and identities is an indivisible part of a healthier and inherently inclusive tomorrow.

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ACCEPTTRANS: ZOYA LOBO

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ABSTRACT

We all are human beings, but I feel like people forget that sometimes. People too often forget that we have a choice in how we want to spend the rest of our life. Humans rights is the belief that everybody should be treated equally and with dignity no matter what their circumstances; which means nobody should be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way. But in case of transgender people, we forget that they are also human and we mistreat them for no reason, we avoid them for no reason, we hate them for no reason.

We want to tell such a story of a transwoman, Zoya Thomas Lobo; India's first transgender photojournalist. Zoya was born in Mumbai and right from the very beginning, she knew that she was different but never had courage to reveal her real identity to her family. For some, success is not equivalent to merely hard work and luck. It takes a tectonic amount of courage, tenacity and determination to beat all the odds and turn around your circumstances. The statement holds true for 28-year-old Zoya Lobo, who, with her unshakeable determination, has not only become India's first trans photojournalist, but has also been featured in a Kay Beauty ad with Katrina Kaif. Once she came to our college Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane, so, we got the chance to know her. Zoya is a very inspiring and hearty, passionate photographer and on top of that, she is a greatly amazing and kind person. She wants to be a famous wildlife photographer one day but who will give her a chance to explore. Even after being featured in a hoard of newspapers and websites, Zoya still has to literally beg to sustain herself. She simultaneously manages a career in photojournalism but hasn't been offered a full-time job yet. Google has launched her as India's first trans photojournalist. Though her photographs have made it to the pages of renowned dailies like the Hindustan Times and the Times of India but she is yet to find permanent employment in this field.

INTRODUCTION

Zoya Thomas Lobo, a rebel who broke the societal norms to become the first transgender photojournalist of India. Zoya is an inspiration for everyone, and she is fighting hard to earn respect for the transgender community of India. Even as she fumbles and stammers when she begins talking about her experience in English, one can only respect her passion for photography and telling stories. Born and brought up in a lower-middle-class family in Mahim, Mumbai, Zoya overcame many obstacles and faced discrimination to gain her own identity as a trans woman.

Zoya has almost seven thousand followers on **Instagram**. People started knowing her as India's first transwoman photojournalist, even though she faces discrimination, and not everyone is comfortable with a transgender photographer but she has not lost hope. She wants to make a better environment for the transgender people in India, so that they get the equal right to live their life respectfully.

Zoya's Childhood: Zoya was born in a lower-middle-class family in, Mumbai. She spent her childhood in Mahime Bhatiya, a Brother's Cooperative Housing Society, where her father worked as a watchman. Zoya Lobo grew up in a Christian community. She went to convent school till class five, but dropped out at an early age. Later, her father passed away due to health complications, and the family was forced to flee society owing to an ongoing disagreement over the flat they had rented. Despite her mother's efforts to secure her rights and ultimately acquire the flat, the family decided to leave and go to the mother's sister's home. Lobo moved to Kapad Bazaar in Mahim West with her widowed mother and sister, where she lived the majority of her life. It was difficult for the mother to raise two children on her alone without any financial assistance. She accepted part-time work at a neighboring bakery to help support the family. The family was also given a monthly grocery supply by the Church they went to. On an interview with MAD4INDIA she told that "My childhood days were very memorable. But sometimes my friends used to bully me, tease me. During that time, whenever my elder sister found out that they were bullying me, she would come to my rescue. She fought and argued with them for me."

Accept Her Inner Calling: At very young age she started feeling that she was different. she didn't identify herself with either the male or female genders, she increasingly found herself out of place. She enjoyed playing girly games and loved hanging out with girls, mostly. After joining the transgender community, Zoya realized that she is one of them. At the age of 18 she joined the transgender community. But before that also, she used to assume herself as a woman. Zoya told MAD4INDIA on a conversation, "It took me a long time to accept that I'm different I'm a transgender, but eventually; I did accept myself the way I'm".

Reaction of Family Knowing Her Real Identity: In the name of family Zoya had her mother and one sister, and she didn't want loose them. She tried hard to hide her identity from her family. But eventually, when she turned 18 she disclosed the fact that she was different, she was queer as it became difficult for her to suppress herself. She was afraid of being punished by her family or, worse, abandoned. But she was lucky, her mother didn't threw her away. It took time, but her mother accepted her real identity and tried to support her. Lobo recalled her mother accompanying her on her first train ride and assisting her in draping the saree every day before she left for work. When her friend came to know that she was trans, they advised her to behave like straight and not otherwise. Lobo told "They always tried correcting me like being me was wrong." They are still friends with her on Instagram and talk to each other. But one of them said that he feels ashamed to talk to her and hang out with her in public. As long as they're talking over the phone, he's okay with it. Even her sister didn't want to talk to her. Zoya's sister once told her that they lose their respect because of Zoya.

Becoming India's First Transgender Photojournalist: By the time she found a community that accepted her, she was already living away from her family and found herself with barely any line of work to pursue. This resulted in her begging in the local trains, however, this was not something she wanted to continue doing and yearned to break away from her circumstances. Zoya was also determined to create a new path that created opportunities for transgender community members. Nonetheless, no matter how much she contemplated other avenues of work she always was met with brick walls and therefore continued begging in trains.

It was her honest reaction and feedback to Vikas Mahajan's short film titled 'Hijara Shap Ki Vardan' that landed her a job in the sequel. The film was well-received and Zoya was awarded the Best Actress and Human Being Award. During the film's success party when Zoya got the opportunity to get on stage, she took advantage of the situation and spoke on behalf of the community and raised important questions. Her fiery speech and self-confidence caught the attention of Mr Shreeneth Singh, Editor of College Times Education Media, who offered her a job as a freelance reporter towards the end of 2019. This got her foot in the door, however, from a financial point of sustenance, it was still a very volatile proposition. She didn't give up hope and continued to collect funds to acquire a camera. Zoya has a proclivity for images and wanted to experiment with photography, but didn't know how to go about with it. She researched and sought the advice of photographers, and eventually learnt her tricks of the trade.

She got recognition when she shot photos of the migrant labourers' protest in Bandra in April 2020. She was the only one who had those photos and these were taken by agencies, newspapers like HT, TOI, Lokmat, Mumbai Mirror and few more publications. This is when she got some recognition, at least among the photographers in Mumbai. Even Lokshahi News wanted her to join them as a fulltime 'Lokshahi News Journalist' but she demanded the tag as 'First Transgender Photojournalist' which they couldn't accept. Zoya has been awarded by the Journalist Union of Maharashtra. Slowly and steadily, people started knowing that Zoya Lobo is India's first trans photojournalist. Her elder sister who shunned her away after she came out as trans, now recognizes her work and is proud of her.

Soon after Zoya's pictures of the migrant labourers' protest at Bandra station went viral and were picked up by major publications, she received her first international assignment. From landing this huge opportunity with the Canadian publication *La Presse*, turning a face model for Kay Beauty, and to being featured on Google India's banners, Zoya Lobo says she still has a long way to go and looks forward to bigger achievements in the future.

Transphobia Hampers Zoya's Dream: Transphobia describes someone who has hate, fear, or disgust for transgender people or anyone who does not fit into the male/female gender binary. For example, a transphobic person may express disgust for a "tomboy" or for a masculine-appearing person wearing a dress. Another example would be someone no longer wanting to continue a friendship after finding out their friend is transgender. These are just a few interpersonal examples of transphobia that do not represent the whole scope of the issue.

There are also overarching societal examples. Transgender people face discrimination in the workplace, healthcare settings, and the housing market, among other areas of daily life. There are endless ways that transphobia can show up, including: **using incorrect pronouns, using a transgender person's "deadname.", bullying, violence, workplace discrimination, medical discrimination, housing discrimination.**

Transphobia can cause depression, anxiety, isolation, and feelings of hopelessness in transgender people. It can also lead to suicide. 82% of transgender people have considered suicide, while 40% of trans people have attempted it at some point in their lives. Just 1.6% of the general population has attempted suicide, showing that the rates for transgender people are exponentially higher.

Internalized transphobia happens when a trans person has absorbed messages of shame they received as a child about gender nonconforming people or their own gender nonconforming behaviors or desires. According to the Office for Victims for Crime, this can lead to transgender people getting into relationships with domestic violence and can also lead transgender survivors of violent crimes to believe they deserved what happened to them.

Zoya says that she was privileged because at least her mother accepted her and supported her. Before gaining recognition, Zoya has faced lots of inhuman treatment from the society that leave her depressed. She used to face discrimination, behavior like she didn't belong to this society. Seeing her, people make faces and told her to stay away from them, not to touch them as she is a transgender. These instances were a little heartbreaking for the photojournalist. She hailed from a humble background and her journey to becoming the first trans photojournalist was not the easiest.

Even after being featured in a hoard of newspapers and websites, Zoya still has to literally beg to sustain herself. Though many national and international media outlets have recognized her work, Lobo is still struggling to secure a full-time job as a photojournalist, turning her passion into employment. This is happened because of the mindset of our society who resist to accept them as a part of this society.

Summary and Conclusions: Zoya, who was born a male biologically, realized gender dysphoria. She started experiencing feminine traits, enjoyed playing with dolls and games said to be meant for girls and was attracted to boys. Zoya had to hide her identity from the family for the fear of being thrashed. But at the age of 18 she gathered the courage to tell her mother. Later she joined the transgender community and used to travel in trains and beg for her bread and butter. This is not what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. During the pandemic she captured some photographs which give her some fame and people started knowing her as India's first trans photojournalist. Zoya, who wishes to be a wildlife photographer, still searching for a fulltime employment.

Her dream is to be able to show the truth like the mirror of society, like true journalists. She wants to raise awareness about her community and the people part of it, she urges parents to be accepting and appreciative of their children unconditionally. "Today when my sister reads my name in the newspapers she sends me encouraging words and that makes me feel accepted. I want to tell families that if you have a trans child in your house please support them. Educate them so they don't have to enter local trains to beg." told Zoya to Mac Cosmetics India.

Our Point of View on Transgender and Transphobia: Educating yourself about transgender rights, gender identity issues, and how to respect transgender people is the best way to fight against transphobia. Here are some small things we can do:

- Never ask a transgender person about their genitals, whether or not they've had surgery, or if they are on hormones.
- Avoid backhanded compliments like "I would never guess you are transgender!"
- Ask people for their pronouns instead of assuming.
- Use gender-inclusive language when talking to a group, like "folks" or "people."
- Use a trans person's correct name and pronouns. Do not ask them about their previous name or pronouns.
- Let the transgender people in your life know you are an ally and that you want to support them.
- If you are an academician, then try to help them completing their education.

NOTES

- Zoya Lobo's Interview with Adityobarna Mukherjee, MAD4INDIA, November 23, 2021.
- Exclusive Conversation with *iDiva*, Jun 22, 2022.
- www.google.com.

LGBTQ SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN THE INDIAN SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

In this study, Researcher examined the social problems of LGBTQ in the places they move to Data were collected using non participating observation. The sample is composed of 20 people, residing in the Nagpur city. The findings demonstrate that LGBTQ individuals are expressed to verbal harassment and physical abuse, humiliation, inferior complex they are not accepted and are not able to perform any social activities in their home and hometowns, social and public places or if they migrated, in the places they move. There they face tremendous problem.

Keywords: Social problems, LGBTQ, Community, Indian Society, Migrated.

INTRODUCTION

LGBTQ is an for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer, plus other sexual and gender identities, describe distinct groups within the culture. Sexual orientation includes the dimensions, sexual attraction, sexual behaviour, sexual fantasies, self – identification, emotional, social and lifestyle preferences.

- **Lasbian** refers to women who are homosexual.
- **Gay** has traditionally been used to represent a diverse group or people who are attracted to people of the same gender.
- **Bisexual** or 'bi' refers to people whose sexual and romantic feelings are for both genders.
- **Transgender** is an umbrella term that encompasses a diversity of gender expression including drag queens and kings, bi-genders, cross dressers, transgenderists, and transsexuals.
- **Queer** A queer is someone whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual or whose gender identity in not traditionally male or female.

The LGBTQ community is a loosely defined grouping of Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other queer individuals united by a common culture and social movements. These communities generally celebrate pride, diversity, individuality and sexuality. LGBTQ activists and sociologist see LGBTQ community building as a counter weight to heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transbobia, sexualism and conformist pressures that exist in the larger society. The LGBTQ community is diverse in polical affiliation.

LGBTQ multiculturalism is the diversity within the LGBTQ community as a representation of different sexual orientations, gender identities as well as different ethnic, language, religious groups within the LGBTQ community. The two movements have much in common politically. Both are concerned with tolerance for real differences, diversity minority, status and the invalidity of value judgments applied to different way of life. Highlighting some major problems faced by them.

- **Statement of the problem :** This Research study at Nagpur to determine discrimination and violence, inequality towards LGBTQ. In the study found that many LGBTQ individuals under the fear, inferior complex, humiliation, verbal and physical harassment. Today there are still psychiatrist, psychologist, sociologist, academician, Researcher describe homosexuality as spiritual and behavioral disorder.
- **Purpose of this study :** In this Research, it is aimed to find out whether LGBTQ individuals residing at Nagpur, encounter social problem related with inferior complex, fear, harrassment problem encounter and when they are not adjust with such social problems and move to other city, whether they are faced with the another kind of social problems and lastly, how such problems affect and influence LGBTQ individuals.
- **Methods of the present study :-** In this Research, Researcher used qualitative research methods to asses perceptions of their home, hometown and the problems they faced in the places they moved later. Data were using non participatory observation that include only 20 people. All record were organised with codes and numbers. Grouping of data was utilized to classify and encode the same reactions and comments and together with Data collection, analysis was conducted with the assistance of this methods.

• DATA ANALYSIS

Table No. 1: Marital Status

Status	Number	Percentage
Married	3	15%
Single	17	85%
Total	20	100%

In this above Analysis show Marital status of LGBTQ. 3 (15%) of the total participants were married and 17 (85%) of them were single. This analysis show that they can't able to marry. Society are not accept their marriage. They can't live happily in the Indian Society. Our society people live with traditional mindset that's why they can't accept. Even family members are not accept in a social, public ground they feel humiliate.

Table 2: Considered from the Indian perspective

Perspective	Number	Percentage
Forbidden	2	10%
Burning in hell	2	10%
Regarding sick and cursed	3	15%
Bad	3	15%
Sin	9	45%
Attacked position	1	5%
Total	20	100%

In this above table shown the Indian perspectives of people consideration. 09 (45%) respondent LGBTQ consider as 'Sin' according with the indian context. Next most of them respondent. Regarding LGBTQ sick and cursed and very bad for the society, their percentage are same. And 5% LGBTQ they are silent when people are murdered to attacked.

Table 3: Family members knew that they are LGBTQ individual

Know	Number	Percentage
Yes	14	70%
No	06	30%
Total	20	100%

In above table show their friends and family members are known in their home town that they are know more than half of the respondent state that they had family friend, kinship members are knew about the individuals sexual orientation.

RESULTS

What am doing to people ? Respondent say they can't go out during the day time. They are beaten by many people and have been hospitalized by many time. But Doctor not admitted them because in the hospital form gender not mentioned as a LGBTQ that's why their health problem are very crucial. Their family member supports them. Some social mindset people were known to be heterosexual by their families and the social, environment and their sexual orientation were unknown to those people. Some of say their family accepted them but it took a long time. When they faced with the problems they can't adjust with, they started using alcohol and arrogancy, smoking, chewing tobacco. Now they don't and try to continue their life ignoring the others society members.

CONCLUSIONS

- LGBTQ people, they will not win their right by staying quietly in our closets. At the heart of their statement is the importance of visibility, the first step toward solving the bigger ills of homophobia and LGBTQ discrimination. It serves us all to remember their words and their bravery, as we build a better world for each others.
- If we can foster an environment at home, public place where everyone feels safe physically and emotionally to bring their whole selves to the public place and be visible, we can each play a small parts in affecting change on a much grander scale.
- In other parts of the world, attitudes also are changing regarding LGBTQ discrimination. WHO organization reclassified 'gender incongruence' so transgender people would no longed be deemed mentally ill. India's Supreme Court unanimously descriminalised gay sex and ruled that gay indians be given all the protection in 27 countries, same sex marriage in now legal. But our Indian mindset are not totally accept this.

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- The dream was of replacing that culture of domination with a world of participatory economics grounded in communalism and social democracy, a world without discrimination based on sex, gender, a world where recognition of mutuality and inter dependency would be the domination ethos, a global ecological vision of how the society can survive and how everyone on it can have access to peace and well-being.
 - It is truly visionary we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality. A primary strength of contemporary society has been the way it has changed shape and direction. Society for social justice that hold on to outmoded ways of thinking.
 - A fundamental goal of society was to create strategies to change the lot of such people and enhance their personal power. To do that, though the society needed to move way beyond equal rights agenda and start with basic issues like literacy campaigns for poorer groups. There has been sustained effort to create these education institutions.
 - A collective door to door effort to spread the message for LGBTQ education, employment, voting, literacy, acceptance, their skills utilization, social good environment, medical facility, inculcator in every form LGBTQ column, Eradication their inferior complex, fear, humiliation. Society accept them by they are also human being.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Protect individuals from homophobic and transphobic violence. Prevent torture and cruel, inhuman and grading treatment, Repel Laws Criminalizing homosexuality, prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, safeguard freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly for all LGBTQ people.
- Police, local authority, policy makers, school, family, education institution accepting gender variant.

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SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ALTERNATIVE SEXUALITY IN INDIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO M2M RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

There are many studies carried out on the issues of Transgenders and LGBTQIA communities. Among those, transgenders are open and are well aware of their different identity and have been struggling for years to have equal human rights and respect like others in society. Several NGOs and government machinery are working for their welfare and fitting them into the social system with due honour and identity. But this paper is exclusively written to understand the socio-psychological perspective on gays and bisexual men. Many of them are open and accept their desire for alternative sexuality but there is one more class of people who prefer to be in closed groups and still engaged in same-sex relationships and activities. They are not adhering to have right as they are in trauma. They do have families and still, they do want to experience or continue to experience M2M relationships. To understand their perspective this study is done using quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

Keywords: homosexuality, LGBTQ and M2M relationship

I) INTRODUCTION**A. ABOUT LGBTQIA COMMUNITY**

LGBTQIA is a community consist lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, and queer individuals who are united to the network by common traits and social movements. They show their particular sexuality or sexual orientation. LGBT takes their issues separately and many of them are in closed groups and do not either wish to prefer to be open and chase human rights. This community does not have a clearly defined population but they have a network through some social media or apps where the same and alike-minded get in contact and share their feelings and relationships.

B. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The issues and concerns related to transgender are already in the social challenges and systems. They are being recognized and honored with their rights like others. Several NGOs are working and trying to accommodate them into the mainstream. But this paper is excluding them and focuses only on Gay and Bi-sexuality, and their social and psychological perspectives. Transgender has been seeking human rights and status in society and are open to their orientation. But many men are into same-sex orientation, including pure gays, and pretend straight and curious. They do get into a network through social media and apps. And do not want to be open but remain close and share commonness. They have fear of getting revealed and the consequences thereafter. But the fact cannot be denied that their number is on the rise.

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Initially, LGBTQIA was considered as a community with the same orientation and attributes but later it is observed that the issues related to transgender and LGB are not the same. Transgenders have a genetic cause behind their behavior and orientation. They do seek human rights and identity in a society like men and women. And many steps have been initiated by the government for their rights. But the closed groups like lesbians, Gays, and bisexuals have different issues and thinking. They are defined unclearly and many are unidentified. But they have been known in society for their preferences and orientation.

D. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To highlight the sociological perspective on the M2M relationship.
2. To highlight the psychological perspective on the M2M relationship
3. To conclude the findings of the study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Moran MR (1992), mainly focused on sexual orientation similarity and experiences of gays and lesbians' perception as a psychological study. **Garnets LD, Kimmel DC (1993)**, studies the psychology of human diversity related to the perspectives on Lesbian and Gay male experiences in Columbia. **Hubbard R, Rossington J (1995)**, focused on the need of supporting gays and lesbians for housing and care. **Keogh P, Reid D, Weather burn P (2006)** carried out a study to narrate the experiences and needs of lesbians, gays and bisexuals, and trans men and women in Lambeth. **Davies P, River, L (2006)** studied promoting challenges for

older gays and lesbians in polar. The purpose was to analyze the partnership project. **Whittle S, Turner L, and Al-Alami M (2007)** discussed engendered penalties related to transgender and transexual people's experiences of inequality and discrimination. The paper was more qualitative. **Elizabeth Price (2011)**, the main objective was to enable researchers working in the field of adult social care, to recognize and acknowledge the difference and diversity in human behavior. The reason is to improve social care practices. **Mishka and Jivitesh (2022)**, In this paper, the issues and possibilities related to same-sex marriage have been discussed. They suggested anti-discrimination laws for such orientation. As it is legalized in many countries, in India, should it be considered within the framework of the law?

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand know more about the alternative sexuality among men, both methods, quantitative and qualitative are used. Data is collected from 100 respondents by using non-probability convenience sampling through a structured questionnaire prepared from the socio-psychological perspective on the M2M relationship. For this, survey methods in quantitative and grounded theory along with narrative essays are used.

IV ANALYSIS OF DATA

A) Awareness of M2M relationship.

Figure 1.1: Awareness about M2M sexuality

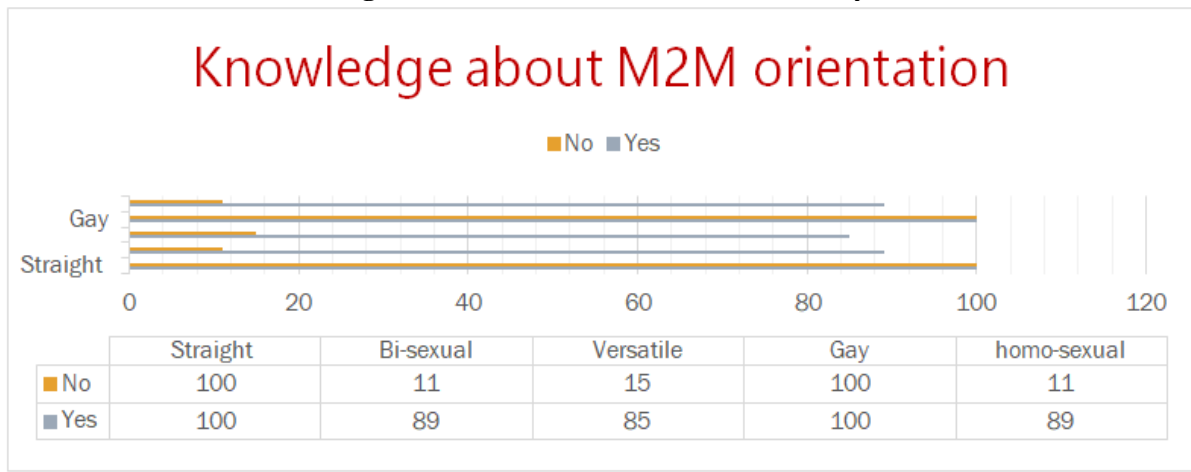


Figure 1.1 shows the awareness among Men regarding the M2M relationship. Almost 100 percent know about what is ‘being straight’, 89 percent know about what is ‘Being Bi-sexual, 85 percent understand what is ‘being versatile’, 100 know what is ‘being Gay’ and 89 percent know about homosexuality. Very few know the exact difference between all of them.

B) M2M relationship is more kind of

Figure 1.2: M2M is more kind of

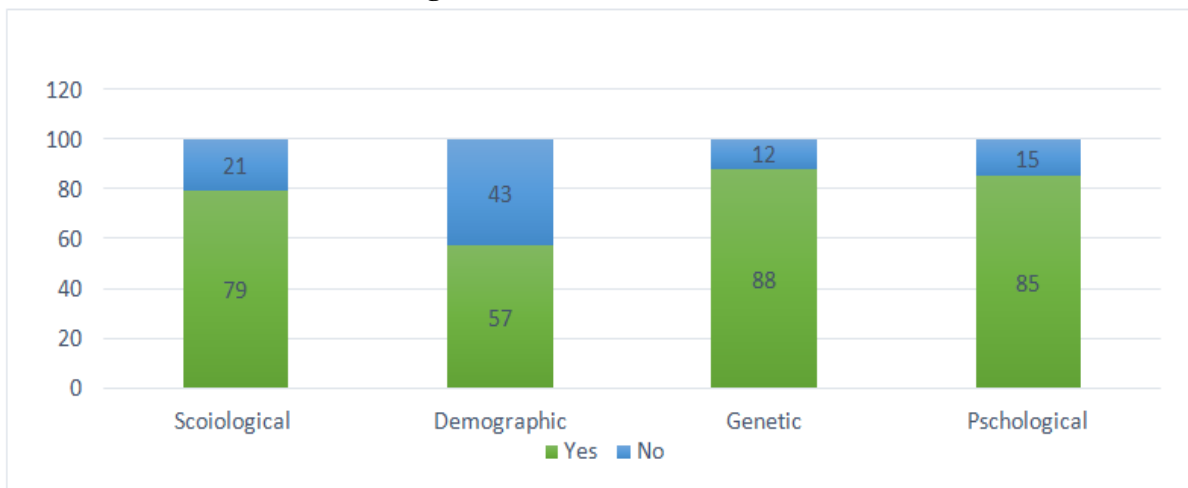


Figure 1.2 shows, what kind of issue the M2M relationship is. Nealy 79 percent shows that it is a sociological issue, 57 percent feels that it is related to demographic features, 88 percent feel that it is genetic whereas 85 percent feel that it is more psychological as it is related to emotions, urge, and tendency formed.

C) Orientation takes place in:

Figure 1.3: Sexual orientation takes place from

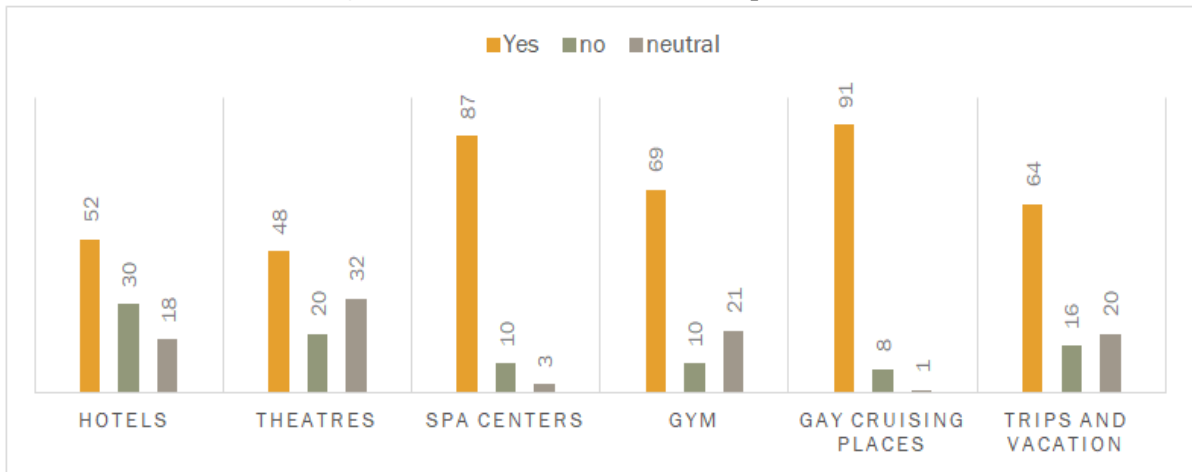


Figure 1.3 shows the origin of developing this orientation. As homo-sex is not always a genetic issue but it can also be developed by coming into a sexual encounter with someone in any place. 52 respondents believe that hotels are the source of such orientation, 48 respondents mentioned theatre, 87 respondents mentioned spa centres, 69 percent mentioned the gym, especially through personal contacts, 91 percent mentioned gay cruising places, and 64 percent mentioned trips and vacations. These all are the places where such orientation may start. Home cannot be excluded including cases of childhood abuse by elders in family relations

D) Reason/cause of this sexual orientation

Figure 1.4: The reason behind this orientation or relationship

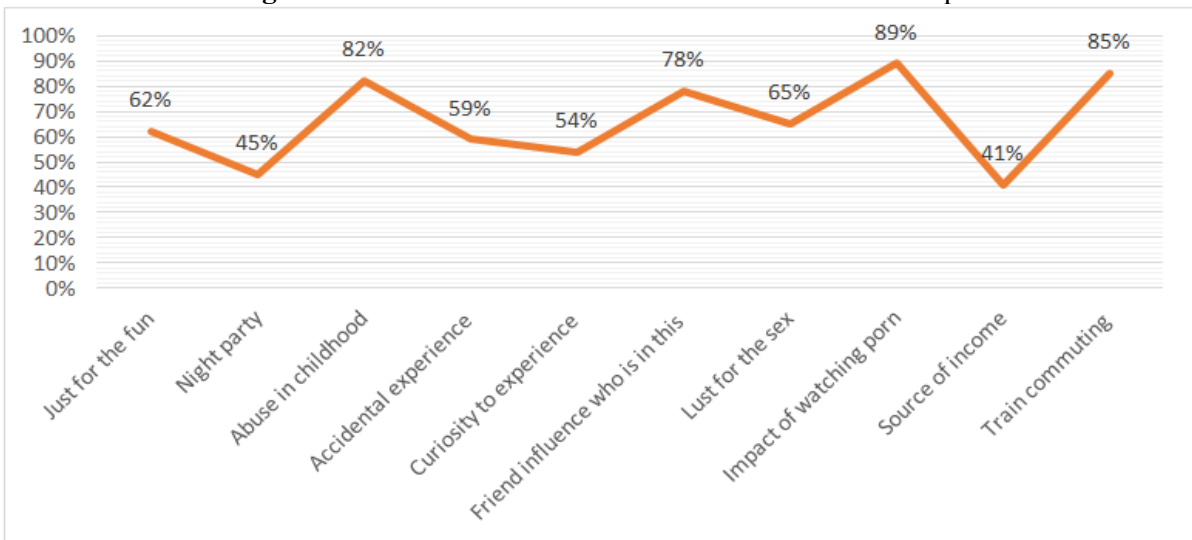


Figure 1.4 shows why the M2M relationship is formed. Genetics is natural but most of the time, it is formed due to many factors. Almost 62 percent mentioned that it is done for fun by many men, and 45 percent mentioned about night ‘Gay parties’ also influence straight. 82 percent agree that abuse in childhood develops such orientation. 89 percent mentioned that watching porn movies and curiosity to experience, such orientation get developed. 85 percent agreed that train commuting in a rush is also one of the responsible factors for developing orientation.

A) SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE.

There are many social factors such as locality, level of urbanization, and access to get contact through social media which increase the chance of developing such orientation among men. Closed groups are formed by people who have the same sexual orientation. There are different apps used to extend contacts and networks such as Planet Romeo, Grinder, Blued app, and many more which are attracting the attention of gays, and bi-sexual according to the nature of the group. This helps them to get into contact and share common feelings and sexual relationships. Some of the respondents were interviewed and they mention having many contacts through these apps. Even on asking about the orientation of this kind, a few mentioned abuses within families and from out in childhood which made them be into such relationships.

B) PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

It was found that after getting into same-sex experience, many of them continued it now as a developed behavior. Some of them took it more emotionally and also mentioned defined and self-accepted relationships. Almost everyone agreed that once they experienced this, they started to think about it and search for the same, which made them comfortable defining their orientation. Even in some cases, they were so close in a relationship that they became possessive of each other.

V) CONCLUSION

In metro and cities, M2M sexuality is on the rise. Though it is not open in many cases, it is sustained as a choice by men who prefer it. The study revealed the knowledge of this kind of sexuality among men. The reason behind developing this kind of sexual orientation and the places where they experience this. The study was only related to gay and bisexual experiences. It did not take into consideration lesbians and transgenders. It showed the new class of closed group who want to be in a sexual relationship without chasing human rights and special identity in society.

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A SCHEMATIC STUDY OF ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PRE AND POST-OPERATIVE GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERIES AND MENTAL WELLNESS OF TRANSGENDER

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ABSTRACT

Sex is one of the main social modules in any society. Gender characteristics as the most essential component of human life. While most people with behaviour and attitudes appropriate to their physiological gender, but among them there are also discrepancy between gender assigned to them during birth does not matches with the gender's identity. We say to this group transsexual people. Transgender is a term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression is different from the sex assigned at birth (Institute of Medicine 2011). Individuals with varied sexual orientation and gender identities have factually experienced the major share of humiliation, bias, discrimination, and ostracism among all the LGBTQ+ communities in India. Transgender, intersex, or queer individuals are run down of their basic rights, self-dignity, bodily autonomy, and healthcare leading to significant negative health status. The aim of this study was to investigate happiness and mental health in transsexual individuals before surgery and after surgery.

Keywords: Gender, transsexual, discrimination, physiological

INTRODUCTION

Transgender is an umbrella term to describe individuals whose gender identity or gender expression is different from the sex assigned at birth. Confused identity, stigma, social discrimination, violence, humiliation, lesser or meagre opportunities in social, economic or political framework and constant fight with system to get social acceptance leads to significant mental and physical health issues. Studies reveal that compared to general individuals, transgender individuals suffers from various ailments and becomes victim of mental illnesses, addiction of substance, and sexual diseases like HIV/AIDS. Due to poor economic conditions and low literacy rate contributes to major health issues to transgender. Non-acceptance by family, physical violence, preventing from wearing clothes in accordance with their gender, always advised to behave in a specific way impacts drastically in adverse way to their self-confidence, self-identity and self-autonomy. Lack of incompetent healthcare, inhuman and insensitive approach and organizational framework also prohibits transgender to take medical advice for their disabilities. And unique challenges.

AIM OF THE STUDY

- To measure physical and mental health status of individuals before and after gender affirming surgeries.
- To measure physical and mental health status of individuals on the basis of social determinants.

METHODOLOGY

Studies reveals that transgender people are more vulnerable for mental disorder. Constant humiliation, neglect from parents and siblings, rejection by society, identity crisis makes them prone for many mental illnesses in which anxiety and depression is common. But the other kind of disorder are prevalent among transgender are:

- Multiple Personality Disorder.
- Bipolar disorder.
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.
- Schizophrenia.
- Phobia

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were done for all data and were reported in terms of mean values standard deviations and confidence intervals were calculated. Continuous variables were analyzed with the unpaired, paired t-test and ANOVA. Categorical variables were analyzed with the one sample z test for proportions, Chi-Square test and Fisher exact test. Statistical significance was taken as p

RESULTS

Totally 52 transgender were interviewed in this study. The structured questionnaire was designed in English language which was translated to hindi and Marathi language as per the convenience of transgender. The snowball sampling method was used to collect the information and transgender were chosen randomly from all over the country who have undergone the surgeries. The questionnaire were distributed using social media due to logistical reasons. Consent was taken orally from each transgenders for interview. Major participants belongs to

Tami Nadu area. The mean age of participants was 23.5 (Table 1). Four patients Three patients had co-morbid conditions like type heart problems, diabetes mellitus and cancer.. Out of 62 patients, 74.1% were from South India predominantly from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, and 25.81% from North India. Our study group, 43 patients are literate (69.35%) and 19 are illiterate (30.65%) (Table 2). Only 31.93% are employed in a socially respectable position, all others fall under low socio-economic status and their primary modes of income are begging and participation in sex work (Table 3). There were no major postoperative complications registered. The most frequently observed complications were wound infection and reactionary bleeding from neourethroplasty. The scores of all the 4 domains were recorded using WHOQOL-BREF instrument pre-operatively and one year after the surgery.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sample comprised 66 individuals (42: before the surgery and 24 after the surgery) in 2016-2017. The individual who was at the pre-surgery stage had completed the necessary steps at the forensic office and had got the permits required for this surgery but had undergone no operation. Moreover, a minimum of one year had passed for the individuals who were at the post-operative stage. Sampling the post-operative individuals was far more difficult because these individuals do not like to get known and try to end their relationships with their friends. Informed consent was taken from all participants before the study and the study was approved by the local university

The method used in this research was quasiexperimental. Statistical Society in the present research comprised transsexual individuals (FTM and MTF) before and after the surgery inside Iran. The sample comprised 66 individuals (42: before the surgery and 24 after the surgery). The individual who was at the pre-surgery stage had completed the necessary steps at the forensic office and had got the permits required for this surgery but had undergone no operation. Moreover, a minimum of one year had passed for the individuals who were at the post-operative stage. Sampling the post-operative individuals was far more difficult because these individuals do not like to get known and try to end their relationships with their friends. Snowball sampling was employed and the transsexual individuals were selected from all over the country due to the limited sample and the sampling was not limited to any provinces. First, one individual was selected by the researcher and s/he was asked for his/her friends who were in the same situation. Investigation of the demographic variables indicated that the mean age of all the transsexual individuals, pre-operative and post-operative individuals were equal to 25.27, 23.76 and 27.92, respectively. No significant between-group difference was observed ($t=-2.73, P=.008$). The numbers of pre-operative men and women were 12 and 30, respectively. Whereas, the numbers of post-operative men and women were 15 and 9, respectively. The educational levels were 5, 9, 4, 21 and 3 for pre-operative individuals in the junior high school degree, Diploma, AD, BA, MA or Ph.D., respectively. The educational levels were 0, 4, 1, 15 and 4 for post-operative individuals in the junior high school degree, Diploma, AD, BA, MA or Ph.D., respectively. The results of Chisquare test showed that there is no significant difference between the educational levels of these two groups ($\chi^2=5.35$).

Table 1.1.1 Demographic Factors

S.No	Characteristics	Surgery	No Surgery
1	Age (in Years)		
	18-35	7	2
	35-50	12	8
	Above 50	15	6
2	Educational Status		
	Primary	4	2
	High School	12	10
	Higher Secondary	14	3
	Graduation	5	2
3	Employment Status		
	Employed	24	34
	Unemployed	28	18
4	Income (Monthly)		
	Below Rs 5000	28	14
	5000-10000	15	26
	Above 10000	9	12
5	Religion		
	Hindu	18	18

	Muslim	34	34
	Christain	Nil	
	Sikh	Nil	
6	Sex Assigned at Birth		
	Male		
	Female		
7	Sexual Orientation		
	Hetrosexual		
	Gay/Lesbian		
	Asexual		

Table 1.1.2 Association between Mental Health and Gender Affirm Surgery

S.No	Particulars	Before Surgery	After Surgery
1	Substance Usage		
	Alcohol	32	21
	Drugs	8	2
	Smoking	12	7
2	Suicidal thoughts in past 2-months		
	Frequent	41	10
	Very Frequent	7	2
	Not at all	4	4
3	Treatment of people?		
	Respectful	2	2
	Humiliating	50	39
4	People are scared of your presence?		
	Yes	44	8
	No	7	45
5	Were called by names?		
6	Received poor services in public places as compared to others	52	44
7	People doubted their honesty	Yes(51)	No(44)

RESPONDENTS REPORTING POSTOPERATIVE DISSATISFACTION

Very few respondents reported minor regret. Four respondents reported minor regrets with the outcomes of vaginoplasty, one shows dissatisfaction with breast augmentation surgery and two were unhappy with mastectomy and three were dissatisfied with hormonal treatment and two were not satisfied with vocal cord surgery. The remaining five reported dissatisfaction with other outcomes, both functional (no. 1: no effect of vocal cord surgery) and aesthetic (nos. 2, 5, 6, and 8). Reporting dissatisfaction and/or regret at follow-up was associated with less positive feelings about life, $\chi^2(2) = 7.47$, $p = .02$, and a higher SCL-90 GSI score at baseline, $r(127) = .24$, $p = .006$, and with reporting complications at follow-up (OR = 6.07, 95% CI: 1.18–31.38). Awareness of the risks and being sure about medical interventions at baseline were not significantly associated with dissatisfaction at follow-up, nor were the wishes for obtaining additional medical interventions at follow-up.

DISCUSSION

Researcher has found that happy and contented transgender have higher level of positive approach towards life and they want to lead a life like any other individuals. They try to attain social and occupational goals. A satisfied and mentally strong individual accepts challenges and responds positively to the stressful situations as compared to stressful or negative individuals. Happiness has significant and positive relationship with different aspects of health and a crucial role in the prevention of physical and psychological disorders.

Cost of treatment, comparison with others, non access to education and other facilities, constant humiliation, lack of support from family members, calling by names, poor guidance and lack of medical support are some significant psychological distressing factors by which every transgender goes through once in his/her lifetime. Therefore, transsexual individuals have lower levels of happiness as compared to the normal population.

Our short term study clearly shows there is a significant improvement in the quality of life after Gender Reassignment surgery in transgenders. However, long term follow up is needed to ascertain the beneficial effect of the surgery. Hence, gender reassignment surgery has an important role in reducing the distress caused by gender dysphoria

GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN SELECT CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN ENGLISH BY INDIAN AUTHORS

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ABSTRACT

The world of queer and queer content in any form was a taboo in the Indian academia, until recently. For instance, although Ismat Chughtai's seminal work, "Lihaaf" or "The Quilt" that challenged homophobia was a part of required reading in the researcher's Masters Program in English Literature, students were left to fend for themselves simply because the educators found it awkward to delineate the curious closure to the short story, recounted by a nine-year old.

It has been two score years and more after "The Quilt" and fortunately enough, times have changed for the better. The narrative is broadening because of which gender diversity is not just a part of the curriculum in higher education; children's literature is also coming up with interesting ways of opening up about gender diversity and socially relevant themes. This paper is an attempt to explore the world of gender diversity as depicted in select children's literature in English by Indian authors. It is also an attempt to lend more agency to gender diversity in children's literature. Shals Mahajan's, Reva and Prisha; Ameya Narvankar's Ritu Weds Chandni; Ashutosh Pathak's Friends Under the Summer Sun; and Harshala Gupte's The Boy in the Cupboard, have been considered for the same.

Keywords: genderqueer, children's literature, inclusiveness, gender diversity

Vicky Greenbaum, in her article, "Literature out of the Closet: Bringing Gay and Lesbian Texts and Subtexts out in High School English." discusses the challenge of bringing queer literature to the classroom, in great detail. Her confession in front of her students; their acceptance of her as a queer instructor and also of their queer peer comes as a great relief for Greenbaum. This is the premise of this paper; to represent and lend agency to the closeted queer and the unfavourable aspect of the community life of many, simply because of the taboo attached to it. This paper also argues the need to consciously bring out such themes in children's literature for a world that quashes prevailing stereotypes, is more inclusive and compassionate towards all, despite their differences.

COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET IN THE BOY IN THE CUPBOARD

For the queer, the "closet" is at times the physical and oftentimes a metaphorical space to escape from the world out of the fear of being recognized as queer. In the picture book, *The Boy in the Cupboard*, Harshala Gupte and Priya Dali paint the picture of a little child, Karan who identifies as a girl. As a result, his cupboard becomes the only space where he feels safe to be himself. His soft weeping noise makes his mother wonder why he is hurt. Upon enquiring, Karan "comes out" to his mother by saying that in the cupboard he does "a little" and "a lot". 'Little', is when he feels protected from the jeering and heckling of his friends because of his pink bat and the twirls that he enjoys after taking a wicket; "lot", is when he gets to drape his mother's saree, wear marigolds in his hair to feel like a queen and play with his kitchen set.

Essentially, gender identity is formed by the age three. (Bukatko D 495). In this case, the closeted behavior of Karan demonstrates that young children understand the stigma attached to commonly understood gender approved behaviour. Moreover, one of the major traumas they are vulnerable to is to be rejected by their peer because of the anomaly in their gender approved behaviour. Consequently, Karan has made a safe space out of his cupboard where he keeps his pink bat; his mother's saree; his crown of marigold flowers to feel like a queen; and his kitchen set away from the gaze of the outside world. He does this to escape judgement and conflict owing to his gender expression. For instance, he explains his awkwardness of being inside the "dark" cupboard by saying,

"So I keep them all safe here,

Where nothing can break

And nobody can say

Who I am is a mistake." (*Gupte and Dali 8*)

Besides, the darkness of the cupboard is more welcoming to him than the "light" of the world because he reveals,

“The cupboard is dark at all times, Ma.

No matter the night no matter the day,

The cupboard stays the same,

Even if I’m away.

I miss the light and I miss my friends,

But it’s far too scary to come out just yet.” (*Gupte and Dali 9-10*)

However, fortunately for Karan, his parents become the silver lining in his “coming out” story. They offer him reassurance by saying, “Will you come out if I tell you that boys too can be queens and anyone who says otherwise is just plain mean?” They appreciate and celebrate him for who he is. Their love conquers his fear when they say,

“Don’t surround yourself with darkness,

Where love can’t enter

Come out because Ma and Pa love you just the same

With your pink bat and glitter

...You have nothing to fear

As long as you are being you!”

The closing of the book is poignant also because their acceptance is not merely empty talk to save them from embarrassment. In fact the book ends with pictures that show his mother teaching him to drape a saree and his father playing with his kitchen set. Harshala Gupte and Priya Dali offer their support also by enlisting online resources and guides for parents to initiate a conversation with children about their sexuality.

ATYPICAL AND INCLUSIVE FAMILY IN *RITU WEDS CHANDNI AND REVA AND PRISHA*

Jean M. Baker in his influential work, *How Homophobia Hurts Children* argues that, “Homosexuality, in and of itself, is not the problem facing gay children. The problem is the reaction of families and of society. We do not need to change gay people. We do not need to “cure” them. What we do need to cure is homophobia.” (Baker, Introduction 14)

All in all, therefore, the first step in accepting a genderqueer begins in the family itself. Children look up to their family for support and if the family is open minded, accepting and inclusive, its strength can surpass almost all kinds of social prejudice. Thus, the family is the indispensable unit in the positive development of a nonbinary person. This positive development, however, must begin in the formative years i.e. in the childhood itself. Moreover, this family itself must be accepting of any diverse elements like, a single parent, genderqueer, divorced or many such varied factors. In fact, family diversity is defined as: “...variations along structural or demographic dimensions (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status), as well as in family processes (e.g., communication and parenting behaviors)” (Eeden-Moorefield & Demo, 2007).

The traditional concept of a family is one of the major contentions in the queer discourse. In this backdrop, the landmark judgement led by Justice DY Chandrachud has been quite reassuring for the diverse family as it challenges the very fundamental hegemony of the parochial institution. It outlines the inadequacy and flaw in the traditional notion by explicitly asserting, “The predominant understanding of the concept of a “family” both in the law and in society is that it consists of a single, unchanging unit with a mother and a father (who remain constant over time) and their children. This assumption ignores both, the many circumstances which may lead to a change in one’s familial structure, and the fact that many families do not conform to this expectation to begin with,” It further reiterates the fluidity and flexibility of the changing familial relationships by adding, “Familial relationships may take the form of domestic, unmarried partnerships or queer relationships.” (www.tribuneindia.com)

Furthering the cause of liberalism and reform which is the fundamental right of every citizen irrespective of their gender, the bench brings out the essence of the judgement by declaring what the queer equally deserve, “These manifestations of love and of families may not be typical but they are as real as their traditional counterparts. Such atypical manifestations of the family unit are equally deserving not only of protection under law but also of the benefits available under social welfare legislation”. (www.tribuneindia.com)

The manifestation of such a diverse family forms the core of both the books, *Ritu Weds Chandni*, and *Reva and Prisha* which depict the role of a family in a same sex relationship. The challenging question about what constitutes a diverse family is implicit throughout the tale of two women in love wanting to get married in the picture book, *Ritu Weds Chandni*. Whereas, *Reva and Prisha* presents the world of twin sisters who have very curious questions for their parents who happen to be two women married to each other.

As revealed in both the works, children have an incredibly curious take on extremely mundane and ordinary things owing to their unbiased worldview. For instance, the little girl, Ayesha, becomes the facilitator in defining the role of a diverse family in *Ritu Weds Chandni*. In fact, she is quite excited and looking forward to her cousin, Ritu didi's wedding to her friend, Chandni. However, there are only a few members in the family and neighborhood who are ready to attend the wedding. This makes Ayesha curious because she does not know why people are against this wedding. Ayesha's mother clarifies that, "The tradition has always been for the groom to bring the baraat to his wedding. I'm not sure if everyone would be pleased to see Ritu leading the procession today." (Narvankar 6)

The book quells traditional concepts at many levels. For instance, Ritu didi's wedding is unique in many ways because of the unconventional manner in which it is arranged. She is the "...first bride in the Kapoor family to lead her own baraat, and Ayesha couldn't wait to be part of it." (Narvankar 5)

Ayesha is conscious of the missing family members in the wedding. She wonders where everyone is as, "there were no familiar faces in the crowd." "She couldn't find her cousins Tanya and Rohan, or her Deepak bhaiya and Tara bhabhi. Even her grandparents weren't there yet." (Narvankar 7)

As any curious child Ayesha asks her Chachi about the missing family. Her Chachi hesitatingly answers, "They are not coming, little one." "Well, they are not happy to see Ritu marry her girlfriend." (Narvankar 9)

Kids are free of prejudice. This is why Ayesha cannot see the logic of such a strange notion. She asks, "But what is wrong with that? Why shouldn't she marry Chandni didi?" (Narvankar 9) The final assurance from her Chachi brings out the elemental essence of the fascinating story. To Ayesha's momentous question she says, "There is nothing wrong with them getting married, little one. Nothing at all. It's just that some people do not understand their love." (Narvankar 9)

Clearly, in both the works, the idea that children can have pertinent questions about close-minded societal norms, offers a ray of hope to the possibility of a bias free world for the queer. *Ritu Weds Chandni* ends on a positive note with the couple being able to get over the bumps in their path toward happiness. Ayesha, the child protagonist, becomes the catalyst in the happy ending to the story when the neighbours hurl abuse and try to drench the couple with ice cold water, it's Ayesha who says that she's here for her didi's marriage and she's "going to dance in her baraat ALL THE WAY!" (Narvankar 23)

The afterword to the book titled, 'Ayesha the Ally' offers an interesting dialogue between her and her Ritu didi. This section in the book offers hope for many kids who may have fundamental questions regarding gender roles and gender diversity in society. Relevant points related to different kinds of love; what true love means; and celebrating diversity, are some of the questions answered by her didi. She concludes by saying, "An ally is a true friend who supports their loved ones. They ask questions when they don't understand their loved ones, instead of dismissing them. This helps them learn and become a better friend, a better ally," (Narvankar 32)

The last part of the book contains a note from the creator, Ameya Narvankar. The author discusses the uphill task of breaching the topic of same sex marriage in his work as it was considered a crime until Section 377 was decriminalised recently. He sums it up by saying "let us not pass on the fear of 'log kya kahenge?' to future generations. Instead, let us inspire our children to stand up for what is compassionate and just." (33)

Similarly, *Reva and Prisha* is a collection of stories with a unique mix of mischievous wit and sagacious insight at the same time. Viewed through the eyes of twin sisters, Reva and Prisha, everyday mundane things take on an intriguing yet vibrant hue. Shantanu Duttgupta, the publisher of *Reva and Prisha* opens with the message, "Reva and Prisha are like you and me." thereby quashing the reader's inhibition, if any, in the opening itself. The twin sisters are a part of the diverse family with two mothers Runu and Pritam as their parents. Their love for each other and their kids is an essential element in the collection.

When it comes to the portrayal of the world of the queer and its absence from mainstream literature, Nancy Garden, the famous queer author of the classic, *Annie on my Mind* discusses her disdain and utter disappointment over her childhood memory of not finding the word "love" in the encyclopaedia when she went to explore the idea of "homosexuality"... "When I was growing up as a young lesbian in the '50s, I looked in vain for books about my people," she said. "There were none for kids, and the few I knew about for adults were

always out of the library, which I later realized was probably a subtle (maybe backhanded would be a better word!) form of censorship.” She continued, “I think kids in every minority need to see people like themselves in books; that’s an acknowledgment of their existence on this planet and in this society.” (www.publishersweekly.com)

It is in this regard also that Shals Mahajan’s work offers fervent hope for the queer. It is in its true depiction of a diverse family that is very much like any other. Reva and Prisha’s parents offer every child reader the wealth of this very essential presence of a queer family filled with the valuable emotion called love, albeit wittily. There is nothing out of the ordinary in the depiction of this diverse family except the endless array of the twins’ curious questions disposed by their parents with admirable wit and patience. Even as the family juggles with these questions, Mahajan critiques the traditional notion of the family as a unit in the poem, ‘The Family Song’. According to Mahajan, the family constitutes a nontraditional, gender-diverse unit not only made up of humans but also disparate species of nature. They argue that if one has a family that loves and cares then the rest doesn’t really matter:

THE FAMILY SONG

A family's a family no matter how mad!

A family's a family who hugs you when you're sad!

A momma and a dada, an amma and a momma, two dadas and a grandma!

A baba, a mamma, a mausi and a friendma, three babies and a cat, a doggy and a rat.

A parakeet who whistles or an elephant who sneezes.

An older sister grumpy brother younger uncle cranky mother.

Plants in the garden or trees in a pot if you're loved and you're cared for the rest can go rot! (*Mahajan 16-17*)

Stories from the collection like, “Why Do People Shout?” articulates in a simple yet profound manner, the reason why people shout. They conclude that maybe people shout because they have no one to listen to them. Their parents reiterate the need to pay more attention to the people around to help them; also hinting at the need to be fair and compassionate. “Fish Curry” gives an account of how both their mothers had met. The twins add their interpretation by adding, “Since there were two of us, we decided we needed two mommas.” (Mahajan 34) Thus, the story normalises the need for two mothers instead of a traditional family model.

Throughout the entire collection, it is obvious that the parents share the family responsibility equally. They are available for both the girls whenever they are needed. “What is Food?” is yet another hilarious account that also hints at how people have defined certain things as edible and otherwise. However, certain things escape definitions. For instance, they find out that flowers, though considered inedible, can be edible at times. This story makes the case for the need to be inclusive and transcend the binaries.

“Stripes are Slimming” and “Questions” too deal with the need for a gender neutral, non judgemental, bias free world by reasserting the idea that people should be allowed to wear what they like, use make-up if they want and choose their life-partners of their choice. Like one of the parents proposes, “...Which is why I say all this is rubbish. Clothes don’t make you look anything. Stripes, dots, checks, lines, flowers, it doesn’t really matter as long as you like it.” (Mahajan 65) Thus, basically reaffirming the perception that people should be free to be what they want to be without being judged.

One thing that is quite noticeable in this collection is that stories about the queer are not always about their “queer” lives. Just by being regular stories, they make their presence felt and also make them an essential part of the society like any other. Moreover, if they posit out of the box questions, they would only encourage free thought and divergent ideas in the process.

INCLUSIVENESS IN FRIENDS UNDER THE SUMMER SUN BY ASHUTOSH PATHAK

Friends Under the Summer Sun by Ashutosh Pathak is about the trans character who loves to bake. Nimmi, the little girl meets a Trans baker, Shri who loves to bake. Shri has beautiful long hair and his fingernails are painted in the colours of summer which Nimmi is enamored by.

Their love for summer and all the wonderful hues of summer bring them together. Nimmi feels that she's about to miss out the beautiful summer which is on its way out. She's unable to go out to play as her mother has a newborn to take care of and she needs to help her with her chores.

Shri quells Nimmi's fear of missing the summer by saying, "The things you love, never go away," he explained. "Just close your eyes and remember the smell, the touch, the colors and the taste. That way, summer will forever stay!" (Pathak 12)

Shri opens the huge window in her living room and lets Nimmi enjoy the view. They bake a cake together that looks like summer. "A heart shaped cake, covered with golden green icing.

Little blades of green grass were lined evenly along the sides. On top, a bunch of bright lilies and petunias nestled amongst golden brown leaves." (Pathak 15)

Nimmi is curious to know who "Akka" is as the nameboard on the door suggests. This leads to a conversation every child must hear. She asks, "Shri, who is Akka, the name on your door?" "Me!" smiled Shri. "So are you a girl or a boy?" asked Nimmi. "Does it matter?" said Shri.

Nimmi thinks about what Shri has asked and replies, "No, not at all." And held out her hand, "It's all the same, as long as I get more cake. Anyway, we are all friends under the summer sun." Shri shook her hand and grinned. (Pathak 16) Shri helps her celebrate her "un-birthday", again a unique concept for which Nimmi's mother had planned a party. *Friends Under the Summer Sun* ends with the favourable message gender inclusiveness, that it does not matter if a person is a boy or a girl.

Towards the end of the book there is a letter from the "real Akka", Pradipta Roy, to all the young readers about the discrimination she had faced as a young boy who identified as a girl,

"When I was growing up, it was almost impossible to come across a children's book that had a trans character in it. Times are changing. As an artist and filmmaker, I have always tried to bring the world of queer folks into the mainstream, through my work. And I'm thrilled to find that this book tries to do the same. The author has sensitively portrayed "Akka", the trans character. And her interactions with Nimmi, the little girl, are both playful as well as informative for young readers. (Pathak 18)

CONCLUSION

What Farhad J Dadyburjor, the finalist of the 34th Lambda literary award for queer writers, says about LGBTQ literature, must be the true objective of queer literature, "empower the reader and bring whatever comfort possible to someone who might be in the same situation." To conclude, one can say that the profound power of literature is in the ability to appreciate the beauty in all things and the cultivation of this aesthetic sense must include the diversity in all things. The power of Children's literature, therefore, is absolute in this regard. It can make the world participate by being more inclusive in all its diversity. To foster the growth of gender diverse and inclusive children's literature, the researcher believes what Vicky Greenbaum, the queer teacher says, "Students, gay and straight will benefit from inclusiveness of all kinds; self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and a literary intelligence cognizant of the many texts lurking in humankind, are fostered through inclusive teaching." (Greenbaum 74) Children's literature of the queer will therefore pave the way for a more compassionate world, diverse and free of prejudice.

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HOMOPHOBIA: A SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

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ABSTRACT

Homophobic verbal victimizing is the most common form. According to some research homophobic name calling as well as bullying can lead to deterioration of mental health which causes issues like depression, stress, anxiety etc. Such bullying can cause complications in our day to day life. Regardless of sexual orientation, a safe environment should be provided by schools and educational institutes to their pupils. There are many victims who are narrated by terms such as 'Faggot', 'Dyke', 'Queer' are used by the bullies. One foremost reason behind such name calling and bullying is traditional masculinity, which values dominance and supremacy. All this takes place because of peer pressure. It is evident through research that a gigantic range of behaviour and attitudes can be influenced by adolescent peers. It is heart wrenching to see how our society has restricted gender identity on two parameters only (male and female). This gender based societal construct plays a pessimistic role departing no credence for the LGBTQ community. The unawareness among the greater share of the society to acknowledge this indifferent community leads to encourage attitude of homophobia and bullying. Children and teens facade challenges specifically in educational sector because of their deprived identity from society. This exceedingly affects their emotional and physical well being. They stumble on pretty hard to open about their sexuality at their workplace, homes, educational institutes, etc. In order to embark upon homophobic bullying many in schools and educational institutes have been taken necessary measures to empathize this LGBTQ youth and extend them emotional support.

Keywords: Bullying, Educational institutes, Schools, Colleges.

INTRODUCTION

In 1868 the word 'Homophobia' is was authored by Karl-Maria Kertbeny and was first distributed in an American obscene magazine named as Screw in the year 1969. He was an understudy pursuing law, alongside he was a secretary of different government workers. The word has got its initial beginning from Greek and Latin. The term in a real sense is a cross breed word. How word 'Sexual' has been utilized as a prefix for the word Homo, the word 'Fear' is likewise utilized which prompts a word called as 'Homophobia'. The word Homophobia alludes to having outrageous plague and having an inclination for LGBTQA people group. Such biased gusto and disposition prompts dread, self-loathing, emotional wellness issues to the individuals who possess a place with the local area.

It is believed that instructive establishments endow with equivalent conduct and secure province for all and sundry ought to be made notwithstanding their position, race, age and so on. However, on the off opportunity that we investigate, these instructive organizations are exposed to spots where the homophobia is seen among the understudies, educators, non-showing staff and so forth. The stereotypes sowed by the general public have been influencing the society adversely, as it makes a boundary to the individuals who call for reflecting their genuine character. Understudies who confronted homophobic language in their school and instructive foundations revealed that they feel less associated and connected with their instructive organizations. They additionally revealed that they sense that their educators invest reduced amount of resources into them in examination in comparison to different understudies, which downhill their buoyancy which influences their scholastic as well as private lives. This regrettable climate is one of the major reasons for the understudies from the LGBTQA youth scoreless. The strange and monotonous approach of the instructors compels the LGBTQA youth to give up education.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the problems faced by the youths of LGBTQ community
- To suggest ideas of creating including culture in schools and educational institutes for LGBTQ youth

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Valerie A., et al, (2017) aimed to highlight adverse impact of bullying on the mental and physical well being of LGBTQ youth at various levels and places. This article provided recommendations for pediatricians to address LGBTQ bullying and LGBTQ sigma. Various efforts to create inclusive and affirming health care environments for LGBTQ youth in order to put them at ease were suggested so as to develop and implement lasting changes to all forms of bullying, including bullying against LGBTQ people.

2. Emalee G., et al, (2008) argued over the relationship between childcare clinicians and investigating agencies. The paper pivots lens on the negligence and ignorance of reporting childcare abuse especially with regards to LGBTQ community. It suggests various strategies for developing capable participants who can build up a strong legal system to abolish child abuse.

3. Malgorzata, W., and Maria M., (2017) aimed to assist secondary school students in investigating issues such as bullying and peer group exclusion as well as intragroup relations in classroom settings. Additionally, it was intended to devise practical strategies to discontinue bullying and ascertain peer sustain groups. Results showed that students can shore up or alter a school's anti bullying policy if they are treated as agents of alteration and carve up responsibility for bullying prevention.

4. Elizabeth, P., and Melissa, S., (2013) argued at educators' accounts of LGBTQ harassment and how bullying discourses influenced educators' perceptions of LGBTQ students' needs. The researchers proposed a new definition of bullying in order to provide a more useful framework for comprehending the social nature of peer-to-peer aggression and developing interventions to address its cultural roots. Finally, the findings revealed that bullying must be redefined to take into account the connections between peer targeting and structural inequalities, and that the majority of peer-to-peer aggression in U.S. public schools was a form of gender policing.

5. Bryan A (2019), argued that the dominant gender in society has marginalized LGBTQ youth, resulting in a wide range of mental health issues, including attempts at suicide and self-harm. The researcher proposed bolstering effects that hide schools' role in creating and maintaining the conditions that lead to bullying. In order to reduce the prevalence of gender- and sexuality-based bullying in schools, the paper concludes by emphasizing the necessity of addressing school-based organizational and cultural practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research paper has been done with the help of secondary data collected from articles, publications and websites.

MEASURES TAKEN TO CREATE HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR LGBTQA COMMUNITY

- **Creating Posters and Safe Signs**

This would help the LGBTQA community feel safe and secured not only in educational institutions but also at common public places.

- **Building an Internal Community**

Encourage students to design a community separately in educational institutes. This will lit the seed of acceptance among the major gender share of the society for LGBTQA community. This also enables the LGBTQA community to express their views, hindrances and dissonances they come across.

- **Stop ahe Bully**

Bullies are those who aren't educated about the LGBTQA community. They are the once who presume them humorous, make them feel ashamed of the indifferent identity, embarrass them. Bullies should be educated to tackle through various seminars, conferences, etc

- **Taking the Help of the Internet**

With the help of social media is has become convenient to establish communication at large distances. Creating rooms for chatting or groups will lend a hand the LGBTQA community to articulate their views and opinions.

STEPS TO ADDRESS HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING IN EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- **Acknowledge the challenges of bullying:** It is evident that bullying takes place in educational missions in various forms such as verbal, vocal, physical, mental, emotional, etc. Bullying is reflective many a times in those forms which are no immediately visible.
- **Frame healthy policies to acknowledge homophobic bullying:** Anti bullying cells and committees should be framed within the educational premises ensuring the fast removal of homophobic graffiti.
- **Creating healthy social environment:** The parents, teachers, caretakers, infact the entire educational community should extent a supporting hand of acceptance towards the LGBTQA community, not considering of their indifferent choices and likings. They should make them sense protected and glad.

- **Outside expertise:** Ensure support to the LGBT youth within and outside the educational institutes with the help of people working in external agencies at local level. Such bodies direct in ways to address homophobic bullying.
- **Reforms to be introduced in curriculum:** Teaching must be ensured at all levels in curriculum which should include homophobic bullying. This will ensure acceptance and appreciation towards diversity in gender among the major part of the society.
- **Encouraging role models:** Organizing seminars or speeches openly by gay staff, parents, and caretakers having a successful career from outside the educational institute. For example: Sports stars can be a strong role model for the students.

CONCLUSION

The major gender of the society should appreciate and respect the LGBTQ community. It is very significant to realize that they are also equally entitled to enjoy Human rights as males and females do. Educational institutes shall promote this acceptance among the students from an early age. This will help to convert the society a better place to live in for this indifferent community. The LGBTQ community should be given the right to be safe, secure and expressive about their indifferent choice of demands. The stereotype about gender leading to social construct should be wiped off giving equal opportunities and identity to the LGBTQ youth.

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LGBTQIA+COMMUNITY, HEALTH ISSUES- NON-ACCEPTANCE BY FAMILY, SOCIETY AND HEALTH CARE CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

This research papers content is LGBTQIA +Community problems such as financial, health issues like acute and chronic diseases. This is an invisible conflict which is secretly kept under cover. This study describes the present scenario of these community and focus light on various aspects such as their social status and family relationships, respect, regard, friendship dignity, love, affection and emotions¹.

This research also attempts the important issues of this community as health problems are also ignored and denied by the close blood relatives, other family members and neighbors.

All these things are responsible to them feel unsafe, because of harassment, sexual violence. They suffer by many more diseases. As they get hateful treatment in society experiences or remarks in school, a college, at working places.

At the health centers, clinics where the treatment of normal people have done by doctors but this community are restricted to look after their health and treatment is not given to them. This is very ridiculous for mankind.

Keywords: LGBTQIA + Community, ignorance, family, society, financial status, diseases, treatment.

INTRODUCTION

The sustainable development is progressing all over the world in all sectors, for community of all religions, literate and illiterate, rich and poor people, male and female. But one Community that has over sighted by all stake holders, rulers, politicians, different organizations, NGO's and education institutions, that is the LGBTQIA +Community.

To improve lifestyle, health, safety wellness of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, queer, intersex, asexual etc is specific group of people²

This term encompasses the entire spectrum of gender fluidity and sexual identity. The plus sign at end of LGBTQIA+ can include member of other community itself.

This research is study to identify the problems, demands of this community. It also includes the information of injustice on these people from close relative, society and health service centre.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The LGBTQIA abbreviation is an adaptation of initialism LGB, which began to replace the term gay or lesbian in reference to the border LGBT community beginning in the middle class family with very low income, having very poor economic situation, they are not financially sound. It impacts directly on these community health problems. These community live in normal society where they suffer from hate, torture, beaten to death and even sometime they have to leave the place.³ This study evaluates present situation of this community. The lack of social support and more harassment⁴

This is the need of hour to give justice to LGBTQIA +community. Many NGO's raised the voice, did campaigns for their rights but government and authorities denied many of the legal and economic privileges for them. The issues of this community are different in urban and rural areas and they are kept isolated from society.

In last few decades the human right of LGBT community have come into focus resulting into published books, articles, reports which deals with rights and demands of this community. In 172nd report of law commission, the committee members recommended deletion of section 377 of IPC and pleaded that it is harmful to public health due to the direct impact on life of homosexual. (Law commission of India, 2000). Among all homeless youth 20 % to 40% youth consist of LGBT's people and the reason behind this is that they are hated by close relatives, it does a negative impact of society towards them and lack of understanding of their sexual orientation (Ray 2006)⁵.



METHODOLOGY

Many more methods are available to study their challenges associated with research with LGBT populations and their issues, demands and their rights. These challenges include accurately defining measuring and sampling respondents.

While survey or sampling is done it should be ethical and trusted. The classification of people is based upon their protection rights⁶.

For Raigad Dist of Maharashtra this survey has been done. In this research survey method of questionnaire relating to numbers is used- that are how many, how much, where and so on- is most appropriately answered qualitatively and quantitatively.

The Questionnaire Was-

Name, Date of birth, Education, Religion, Caste, Marital status, Occupation, Service,

home/ Homeless/ In the group, Clinical support from relative /society, Health Issues viz. B.P. Diabetes, Thyroid, AIDS, Cancers, PCOD f) Ulcer, Insomnia, Anxiety, Parkinson, Mental disorders, Hernia, Any otheretc. Numbers of friend, Living in camps/separately, Any other source of income, Total income or salary, Opinion about government supporting help.

In this survey advocates, NGO's chairperson and members, health workers are also taken into account to get the detail information from this community.

FINDINGS / RESULTS

Being a human ourselves we should take initiative to bring this community in mains stream to get all their rights. As these people have infected by the dieses as – 36% fo LGBTQIA+ community are infected by Sevier diseases like HIV, AIDS & 28% of having anxiety, insomnia, mental disorder 42% people have fear & shame of society in the Raigad District of Maharashtra. To the campaign for their rights the awareness program must be organized by school and colleges and NGO's. These programs and activities assisted by government finance. At United Nation Organization (UNO), Central governments and State governments levels of all countries in the world make the laws, acts, rules and should to protect the fundamental rights of all LGBTQIA+ Community.

Worldwide all stakeholders should organize awareness program unanimously for the equality and fraternity and forupliftment of these people. Where violation of the rules is being observed, the action should be taken for such offence anddiscrimination.

CONCLUSION

This research is an attempt to enable researchers to solve the problems of LGBTQIA+ Community. We must commit to create safer communities for everyone. Our vision and goal must be clear as we are mankind, to empower these people and help to them understand their potential, their skill in different areas and utilize it in needful sectors of the nation. Three following things can be achieved from this research that are-

- i) LGBTQIA+ community will live respectfully in the society.
- ii) They should to get their rights as a human being.
- iii) In every corner of the world a message of love, affection and harmony will spread for this people.

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EVERY CHILD YEARN TO LEARN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Outside the home, schools are the primary vehicles for educating, socializing, and providing services to all children. Regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, many children suffer social pressures at school. But for LGBTQ kids, who frequently struggle to understand their identities, lack family and friend support, and receive negative messaging about LGBTQ people at school and in their community, the experience can be extremely challenging.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students frequently face more obstacles and unfriendly school environments than their heterosexual peers because educational practices, regulations, and curriculum frequently give preference to heteronormative norms. The establishment of zero-tolerance policies, LGBTQ-inclusive curricula, mandatory professional development for teachers, and the creation of safe spaces for LGBTQ kids within schools are just a few examples of the significant work needed to challenge these institutions.

Keywords: LGBTQIA+ Community, Educational discrimination, challenges.

INTRODUCTION

We all feel incredibly proud of India's great cultural legacy. Traditions have been changed without losing their original meaning, and we have welcomed these changes as a reflection of the times. The queer community has significantly contributed to the development of Indian culture, and as Indians, we should come together to celebrate this magnificent history, not just because the queer community contributed to it but also because they deserve the same love and respect as all other groups.

❖ History

In ancient India, all types of love were accepted and celebrated. This can be observed in Indian religious scriptures that featured homosexual

In 1977, Shakuntala Devi published the first study of homosexuality in India, called "The World of Homosexuals". It called for "full and complete acceptance and not tolerance and sympathy".

On August 24, 2017, the Supreme Court granted the LGBTQ people in this country the right to freely express their sexual orientation. The law protecting the right to privacy provided protection for one's sexual orientation.

On November 26th 2019, the Parliament passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill. This bill defined a transperson as someone whose gender doesn't match the one assigned at birth. It prohibited discrimination against them in employment, education, healthcare, and other services.

❖ What is LGBTQ+?

1. **Lesbian:** A lesbian means, a woman who is sexually attracted to a woman.
2. **Gay:** A gay means, a man who is sexually attracted to the man.
3. **Bisexual:** A bisexual person is someone who is sexually attracted to people of both sexes.
4. **Transgender:** It is a term used to define people whose gender identity and gender expression, differs from that usually associated with their birth sex.
5. **Queer:** Queer is a term used to refer to sexual and gender identities who are neither heterosexual nor cisgender (opposite of transgender).

The '+' in 'LGBTQ+' signifies that the above list is not exhaustive it includes other categories as well like Pansexual, asexual, Intersex etc.

Even though we may pride ourselves on being an advanced and sophisticated generation, it is heartbreaking to witness the injustices suffered by members of the LGBTQ Community in various settings. The LGBTQ community continues to face a number of obstacles that must be overcome.

The main issue is the **lack of equality in the educational system.**

❖ Challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ community in education sector

In India, the total population of transgender persons is around 4,87,803 with a literacy rate of 57.06% according to the 2011 Census. In 2011, there were 54,854 transgender children below the age of six. These children are now between the ages of 10 and 16 and should currently be in schools.

The pass percentage of transgender persons of class 10 has decreased by 15.79% and those of class 12 has decreased by 16.66 %. As per CBSE press release 2020.

This prompts a few important questions:

- Why is there a slide in the academic performance of transgender persons?
- Why are they being constantly neglected by our education system?

It is a sad fact that lecturers and professors do not publicly support LGBT students and frequently advise them to keep their sexuality a secret. As a result, students who follow their teachers' lead tend to avoid LGBT students. The children are thus frequently targeted by their own classmates or peers for harassment and bullying at schools and colleges. If the bullying from peers wasn't enough, teachers too added to this discomfort at school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Researcher has reviewed many journals, articles, thesis based on LGBTQIA+ community and their challenges. Here are some of them.

1. Hoanglan Cardinal (2021)

It takes an approach that encompasses the entire school as well as a commitment to making good changes for LGBTQ children to be able to attend schools that are secure, welcoming, and free from acts of violence and harassment. The fact that kids who identify as LGBTQ often face unfriendly and unsupportive environments at school draws attention to the urgent requirement that educational institutions undergo fundamental change. Reforming rules on a systemic level using zero-tolerance standards and teaching curricula that are inclusive of LGBTQ topics encourages acceptance of diversity and does not tolerate harassment or discrimination. Curriculum that are LGBTQ-inclusive not only enhance knowledge among all students but also validate the LGBTQ community, which is sometimes ignored or unseen in traditional curricula and encourage inclusivity. Educators have the chance to acquire the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary to serve LGBTQ kids through the participation in required professional development activities.

2. Tiffany Wright, Nancy J Smith, Erin Whitney (2019)

This study aims to obtain an awareness of the atmosphere of LGBT educators so that administrators may apply best practices related to the adoption of policy, advocacy, and enforcement, specifically relative to the process of developing an LGBT-inclusive environment in schools. According to the findings of the study, despite the fact that progress has been made in the time period between 2007 and 2011, LGBT educators continue to face obstacles that prevent them from being open and honest about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. This study highlights the necessity of continuing efforts toward equity and justice within the context of sexual diversity and points to the importance of doing so. Students will benefit from these improvements just as much as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer educators would. It is crucial for the wellbeing of LGBT students, who are less likely to have those supports and a sense of safety outside of school, therefore it is important that all students feel secure and supported at school. However, it is important that all students feel safe and supported at school.

3. Priya Menon (2019, Times of India)

As per published articles, Bullying occurs in educational institutions as their lack of awareness among all towards LGBTQ+ community. There was a survey conducted in Tamil Nadu, which states that among respondents (transgenders) 60% are the victims of physical bullying when they were in middle or high school whereas 43% said that they were sexually harassed while in Primary school.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study history of LGBTQIA+ community.
2. To study challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ community in education sector in India.
3. To resolve concerns of injustice affecting LGBTQIA+ students in universities and schools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is purely based on secondary data. Information is collected through various news articles, books, journals, research papers based on LGBTQIA+ community.

Due to lack of availability of statistical data researcher has put figures available through various sources.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Researcher has only focused on challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ community in educational sectors.

As many people of LGBTQIA+ community are not comfortable with sharing view so researcher has done research based on primary data only.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Bullying of transgender persons is a widely prevalent phenomenon across the country. A transgender man from Bengaluru stated in interviews for the 2019 International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) report, "It [studying] got hard for me because everyone made fun of me, they didn't sit with me, and they didn't even touch me as if I had some sickness. Additionally, the teachers occasionally forced me sit alone. I chose to discontinue attending school since I was having problems at home and at school.
- Transgender persons in our country do not have access to education, as is evident from their socioeconomic circumstances. Survival is their main priority. They continue to view education as luxury. Children who identify as transgender experience social stigma outside of schools as well as lack of acceptance as respectable members of society.
- These occurrences expose the lack of understanding and compassion in our educational institutions. Our educational system must take steps to address the real difficulties transgender students in our schools confront. Our institutions are programmed to only classify people into the heterosexual binary of male and female, just as our brains.
- From our school uniforms to seating arrangements, from the school assembly to the washrooms, this binary expression does not acknowledge the existence of transgender persons. This impacts their mental health to a great extent and results in high school dropout rates.

Making schools and other educational institutions "trans friendly" is therefore urgently needed.

❖ Suggestions to make "Trans friendly" environment at school/colleges.

Making small changes around inclusive language can have a huge impact on either making people feel accepted and/or feeling excluded.

HERE ARE MY SUGGESTIONS

- Say, "Good morning everyone," rather than addressing your workers or pupils as "Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls." This allows you to accommodate various genders and identities without making any generalizations about people. Stop organizing students into boys' teams and girls' teams, find different ways.
- Stop dividing up the students into teams for guys and teams for girls; discover alternative methods.
- Give teachers a choice to wear LGBT badges/pins or have LGBT lanyards
- Display the Pride flag inside and outside your school. There are many flags here that represent the LGBT+ community.
- Displays. Show your visitors that you celebrate inclusion and diversity. Have displays celebrating LGBT stories and issues.
- Your curriculum should be well planned and deliberately tailored to minority groups and should not be left to chance.
- Children's story books should include and promote different family dynamics, including same sex couples, single parents, foster parents, disabled children and parents, families of colour, families of different religions.
- Researcher thinks that educating yourself, keeping an open mind, and being okay with being challenged are the greatest ways to learn more about the LGBT community.

CONCLUSION

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students frequently face more obstacles and unfriendly school environments than their heterosexual peers because educational practices, regulations, and curriculum frequently give preference to heteronormative norms.

As we said we say we are the citizens of Undivided Nation: India, so accordingly we should all not discriminate them at any field. They have all rights to survive as an independent person just like all.

Education is primary right of any individual. So, students of LGBTQIA+ community should be encouraged and feel free to take an education at any institute. For that we all should have friendly, open-minded schools, colleges, teachers, peer members who won't judge them at any ground.

Let's Be United on the grounds that **"Every child yearns to learn"**.

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PERCEPTIONS OF YOUTH TOWARDS LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS

¹Ketkar S. V and ²Singh A¹Department of Foundation Course, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane, India²Department of Business Economics, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane, India**ABSTRACT**

Our society is in the process of accepting and accommodating LGBTQIA+ members but the pace of acceptance is very slow. This slow acceptance of transgender members in mainstream society could be due to several influencing factors. Before making any extravagant claims or assumptions, an attempt is made to understand and evaluate the perception of youth towards members of these communities. In India, youths constitute a major chunk of the population and they are considered agents of social change.

The researchers attempt to evaluate the understanding of college youths towards gender and sexuality in general and their perceptions towards the LGBTQIA+ community, in particular, using the survey method. The sample population taken is the students from our college campus. The data is collected through a random sampling method. It is analysed through a questionnaire survey and percentage-based method and presented through a pie chart.

Keywords: Students, perception, LGBTQIA+

METHOD

This study is empirical in nature. The empirical data collected from students are analyzed. To attain the objectives and for getting first-hand information on students' perceptions regarding LGBTQIA+ community members, researchers have used a questionnaire/survey form. For the present study, a convenience or volunteer sampling technique was used. The sample was collected from 165 students. The researchers have prepared the google survey form in English and Marathi and circulated it among the students through WhatsApp groups for seeking responses. It was decided to have the data of at least 100 students irrespective of their disciplines and gender. The respondent students were from the following streams namely:

1. Students of conventional courses SYBSC, SYBCOM & SYBA
2. Students from Self Finance Courses

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current study does not cover a comparative analysis of the responses in terms of gender or terms of streams.

INTRODUCTION

For transgender persons, their gender identity is not in congruence with their sex assigned at birth. In official records and documents, they are categorised as Third Gender. Generally, they are regarded as transgenders. The concept of LGBTQIA+ is wider and inclusive of all possibly known shades of queer population. As society is in the process of accepting and accommodating LGBTQI+ members, the pace of acceptance is very slow.

Despite several legislations being formulated towards the protection of human and constitutional rights of the LGBTQI+ community, they are victimized and suffer from several forms of discrimination and social stigma. Social stigma, unwelcome gestures from fellow humans, non-acceptance in society as failing to the conformity standards, and denial of opportunities are worrisome situations for these community members even today. To overcome barriers, and get accepted as humans, there is a constant negotiation they have to undergo. The current research paper focuses on the need to understand perceptions of today's youth as they are the harbingers of change in society. Studying and understanding the perceptions of some 150+ students may not be conclusive for setting up the generalization but certainly, it will be a small gesture to create awareness intending that may result in a large leap towards equality and acceptance of the queer/transgender/LGBTQIA+ population or may be suggestive of conscientization of youth.

The term 'LGBTQIA+' is used to denote the following sects of people:

1. **Lesbian:** A lesbian means, a woman who is sexually attracted to a woman.
2. **Gay:** A gay means, a man who is sexually attracted to another man.
3. **Bisexual:** A bisexual person is someone who is sexually attracted to people of both sexes.
4. **Transgender:** It is a term used to define people whose gender identity and gender expression, differs from that usually associated with their birth sex.

5. **Queer:** Queer is a term used to refer to sexual and gender identities that are neither heterosexual nor cisgender (opposite of transgender). The term 'Queer' in itself is a community as they generally go for using pronouns instead of being restricted to, He, She etc.

The '+' in 'LGBTQ+' signifies that the above list is not exhaustive as it includes other categories as well like Pansexual, asexual, Intersex etc.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fosch et al (2021), In this study, explained how gender is inferred in social media sites like Twitter and others. The basic assumption the general public carries is that gender is physiologically rooted, but this assumption proves harmful to people who are non-binary and cannot be accurately classified.

Shally Dabra, and Vineeta Prasad (2021). "A Gap Analysis of the Perception of College Teachers and Students towards the LGBT Community". The study explains the approach of college teachers and students towards the LGBT community. This study examines the perception of teachers and students towards the issue. The teachers are considered trendsetters and responsible for the inculcation of values and virtues among students. The teachers' perception has been compared to the perception of the young students to explore the gap. The study shows a positive attitude of college students and teachers towards the LGBT community.

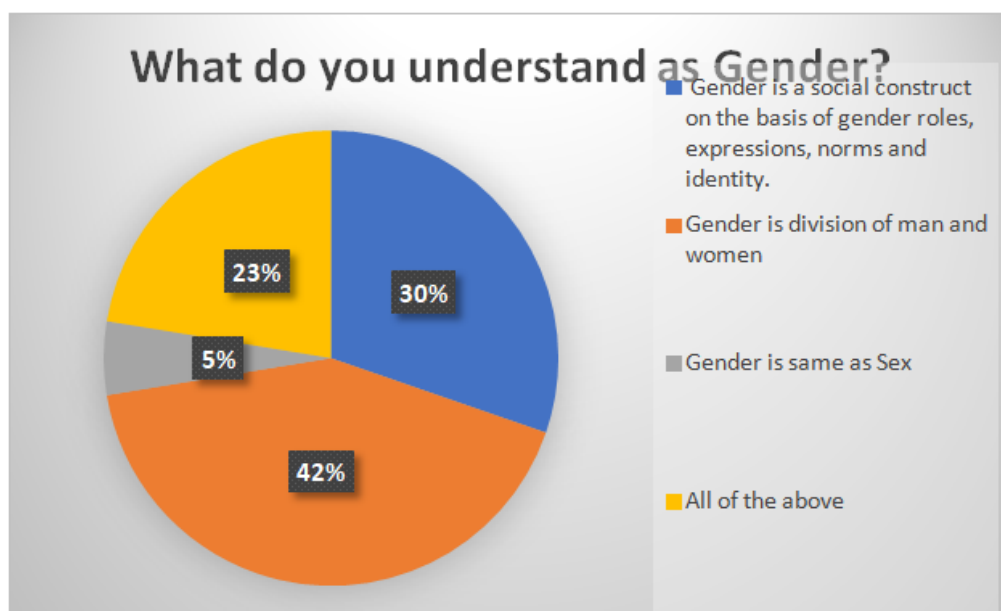
Data on public opinion from 2006 shows that 41 per cent of Indians would not want a homosexual neighbour, and 64 per cent believe that homosexuality is never justified. Negative attitudes have diminished over time, however. Second, the effects of stigma and exclusion are potentially costly to economies loss of labour productivity and output because of employment discrimination and the loss of life years due to early death or disability will reduce the economic output of the Indian economy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives

1. To understand the perceptions of youth towards LGBTQIA+ communities
2. To understand the perceptions of youth towards gender and sexuality

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

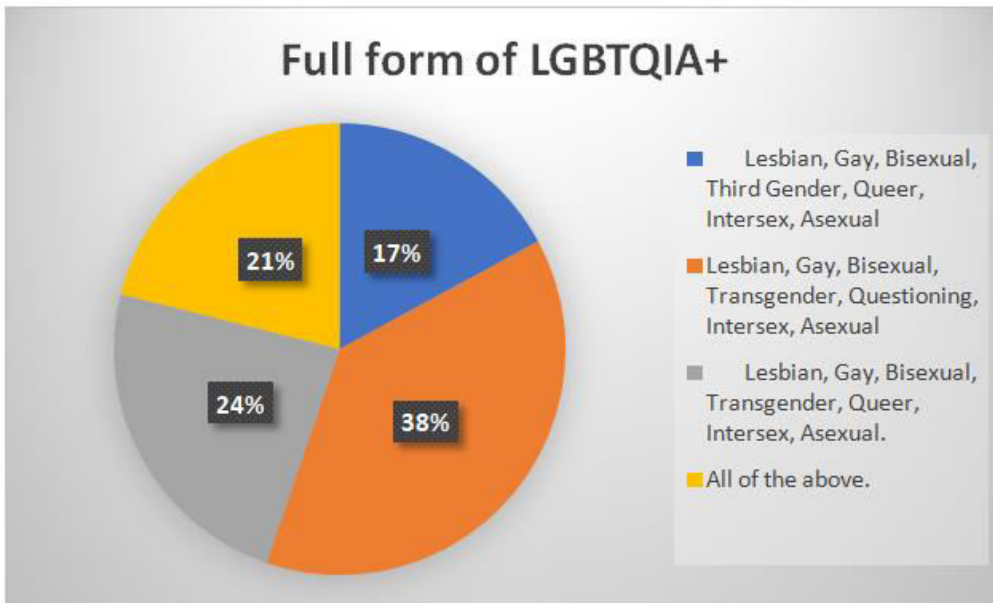


Pie-chart-1

Interpretation

Out of 165 respondents, more than 48 respondents opted for option a) which is indicative of Gender as a social construct. 30% of the students on our campus at least are aware that this is neither a natural category nor assigned at the time of birth. But socio-cultural conventional norms of society feed such fixes to us.

The perception for opting that Gender and Sex is the same is not sizeable. So, the myths and misconceptions regarding interchangeable words and interchangeable roles are slowly disappearing. The population whom we approached was not trained in sociology discipline except for very few respondents.



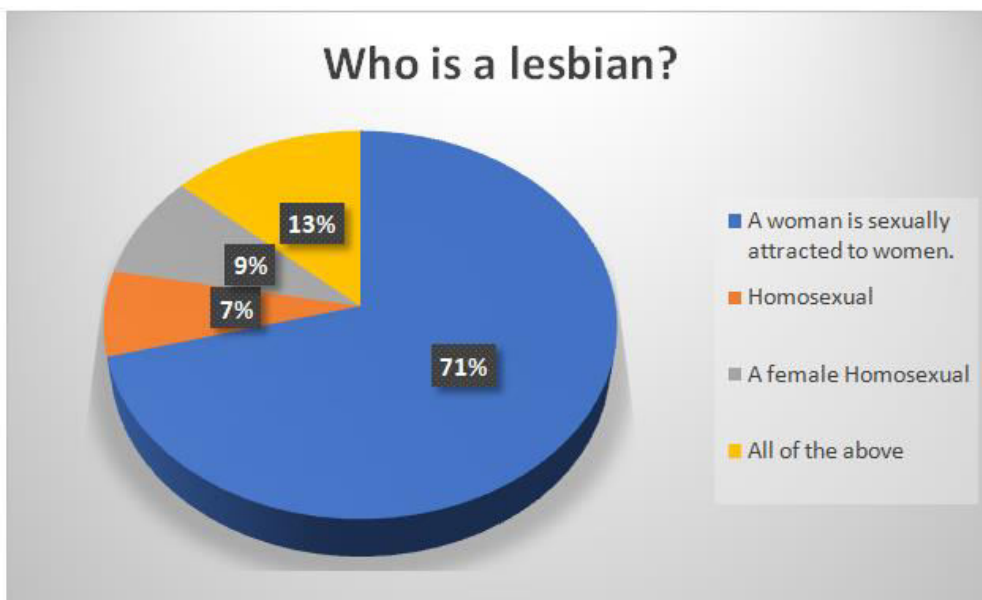
Pie-chart-2

Interpretation

More respondents opted for option b) which states that LGBTQIA+ includes lesbian, gay, questioning...

Queer was the expected response but majorly it was chosen as questioning respondents' choice may be guided respondents: they may not be aware of the meaning of the word Queer as it is not so common in public discourses; it appears in feminist discourses but as general respondents, they may not be aware of the shades of meaning it carries. Secondly, breaking the binary perceptions of society and questioning the non-vision-visibility gender is what is being done by human rights activists and also the groups and persons working for protecting and ensuring transgender rights.

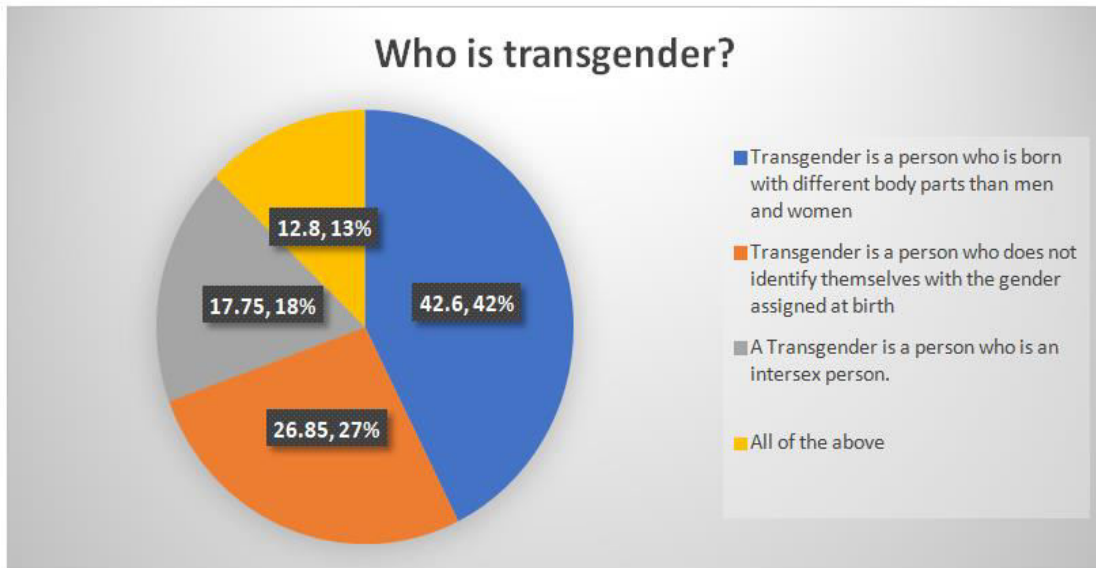
At the outset, observations go like this: the students' community may be sensitized to a certain extent towards a better understanding of accepting and integrating the concept that Sex and Gender are two distinct categories, but the terms used in these specialized discourses are yet to reach the public consciousness.



Pie-chart-3

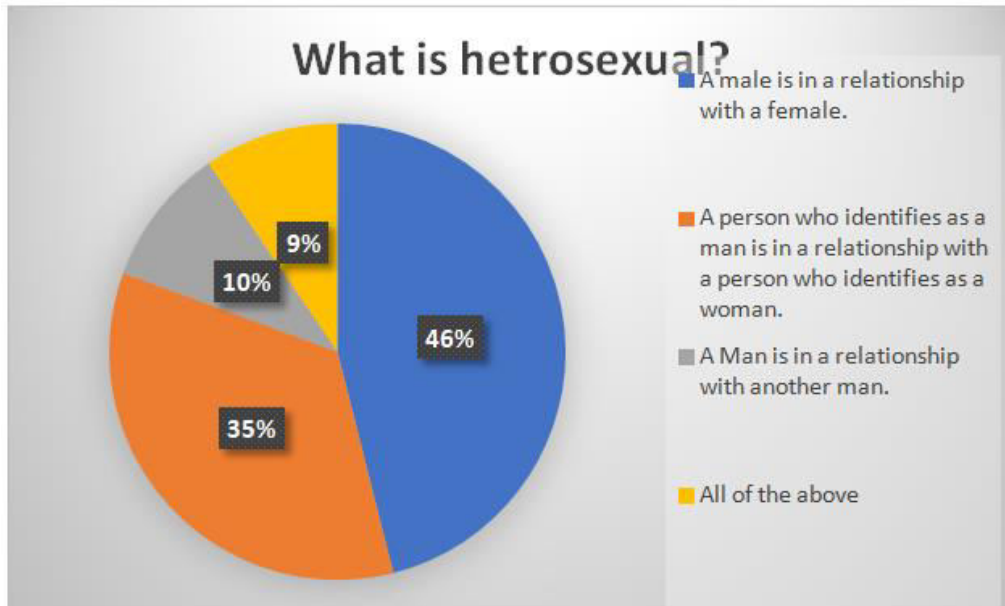
In the case of responses recorded to questions No. 3 who is Lesbian? and 4 who is a transgender, More than 110 respondents out of 165 opted for the right response that a Lesbian is a female who is sexually attracted towards another female. This understanding of the students may have been shaped by popular culture and the films screened on OTT. Depiction of lesbians or gays on daily soaps is rare, at least on Indian TV but OTT platforms are providing exposure to such unconventional constructs like homosexual relations and how marriages between gay couples and lesbian couples are deprived of social sanctions initially but eventually are

accepted. In the late 20th century, the world of cinema was shaken by films by Deepa Mehta like *Fire*, and *Water*. (*Water* is not about homosexuality) (hey, these films are not so old, certainly not late 19th century! At least, the society noted the presence of people who have different sexual orientations; though not accepting and accommodating them easily.



Pie-chart-4

In the case of responses recorded to question 4 who is transgender, more than 40% of respondents in the survey have chosen for option a) which states that a transgender is a person whose organs are different from those of normal men and women. In the case of option b) the respondents are more or less in the same percentage in the English and Marathi versions.

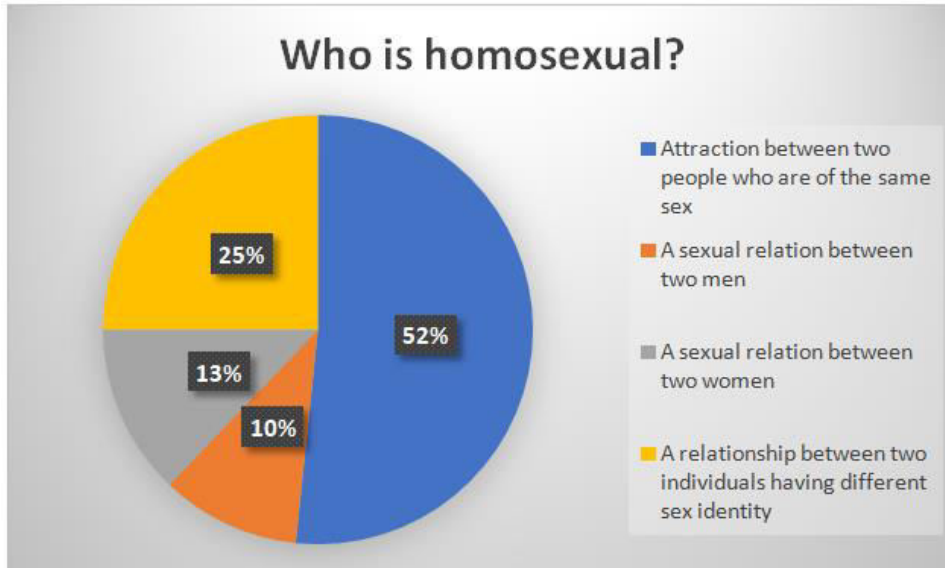


Pie-chart-5

In the case of question 5 What is heterosexual? more than 45% of respondents have opted for a) that states it is a relationship between a man and woman which has the basis of love. Researchers have marked option b) as a more suitable response but 46% and more have chosen that response.

Understanding and observation go like this: almost all familial relations are projected to be woven around love and respect between man and woman. It is a belief that we nurture through our social interactions and all cultural norms also. Reality differs: there are thousands of cases of wife beating, and abuse and psychological, physical harassment so we have to recommend for Act to prevent domestic violence towards women in the family.

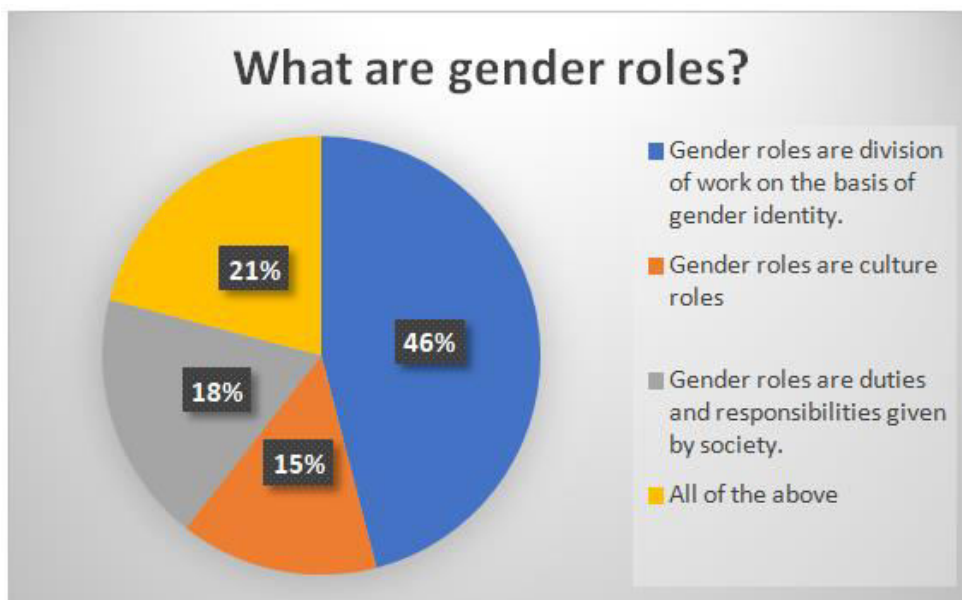
Another angle to the story may be the language used to describe the option states that “a person who identifies himself as a man is in ...”. it triggers the point that the generic terms of men and women are so underrated and ingrained in our thinking as if by default. So, someone describing/ declaring himself or herself as a man or a woman is not to be comprehended at all. Hence, popular terms of man and woman are never questioned or even doubted. That they are believed to be self-sufficient and not determined by context is what is ingrained in the popular psyche.



Pie-chart-6

Interpretation

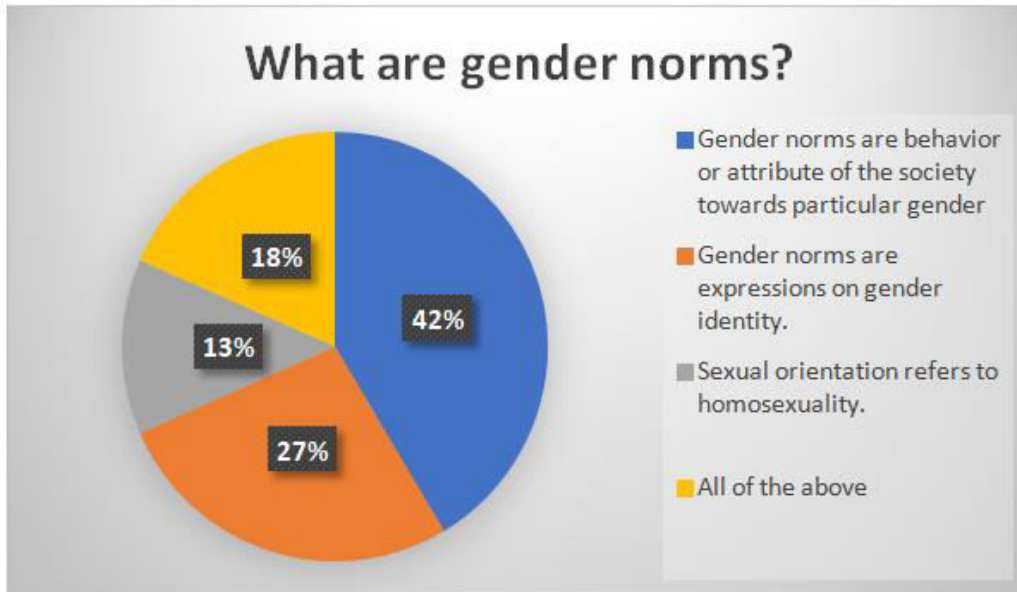
Respondents in both Marathi and English versions have opted majorly for the most suitable option that which is an attraction between two people of the same sex. More than 140 respondents opted for the above-mentioned choice. In a way, such responses indicate that understanding is slowly emerging and there is a familiarity with the term and its usage.



Pie-chart-7

Interpretation

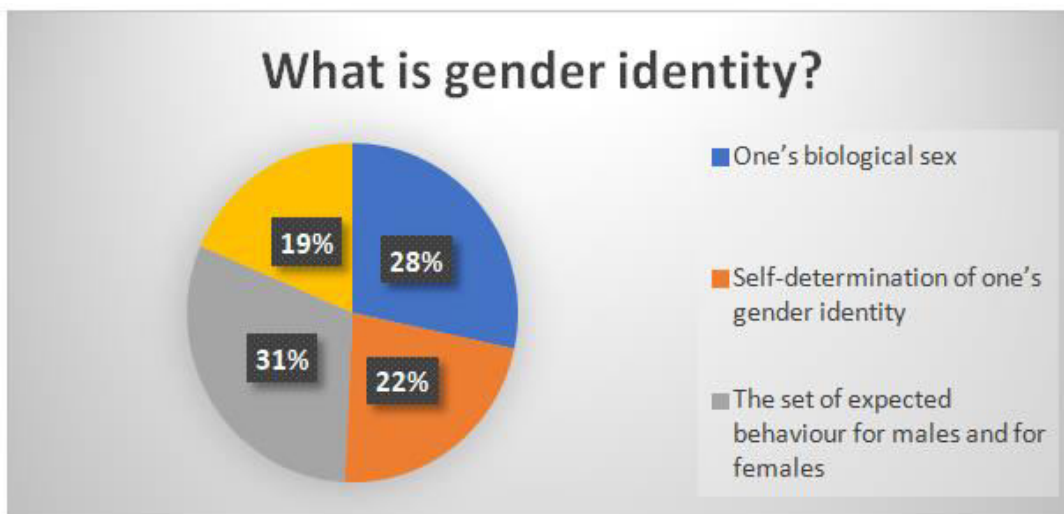
More than 45% of respondents have opted for option a) that gender role is a division of work based on gender identity. Researchers have marked d) which is all-inclusive as the most suitable answer but public consciousness is still governed by stereotypical images and gender-assigned work and gender-aligned roles. Gender is a socio-cultural construct is what is chosen for question 1. But when it comes to mapping the behaviour patterns and dictates, we are still governed by gender-driven expectations that men are to be the breadwinners and women are to be the homemakers.



Pie-chart-8

Interpretation

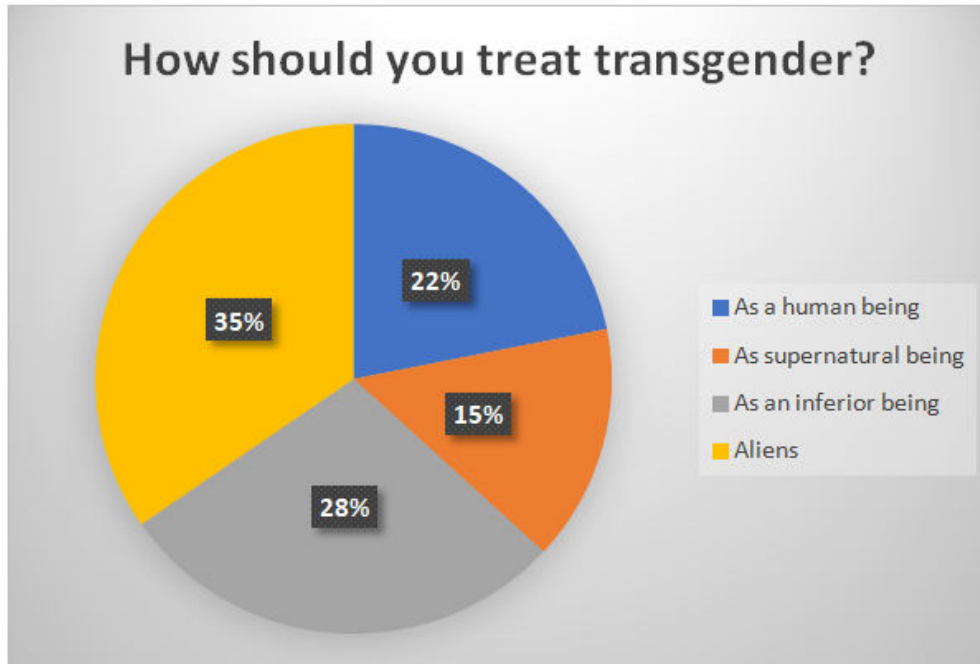
The survey interprets the majority of the respondent around 42% opted for option a) Gender norms are behaviour or attribute of the society towards a particular gender. The way society expects gender to behave with certain rules.



Pie-char-9

Interpretation

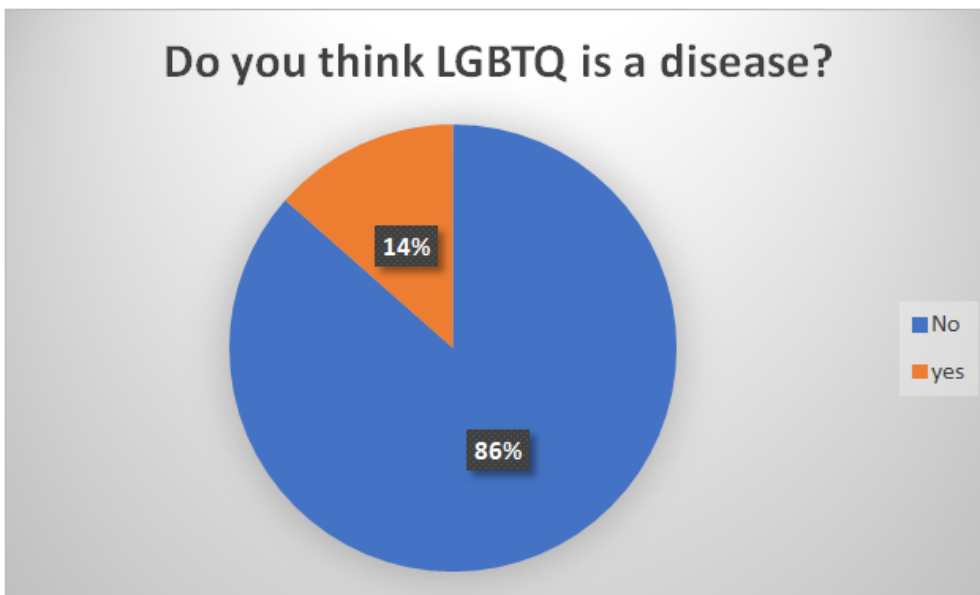
Almost 25% + of respondents opted for option a) that Sex is a natural/biological identity followed by option b) with 22% that gender identity is one's self-determination. So gender stereotyping as a superimposition of biological identity may not be known but that sex is to be identified with the body is the accepted response



Pie-chart-10

Interpretation

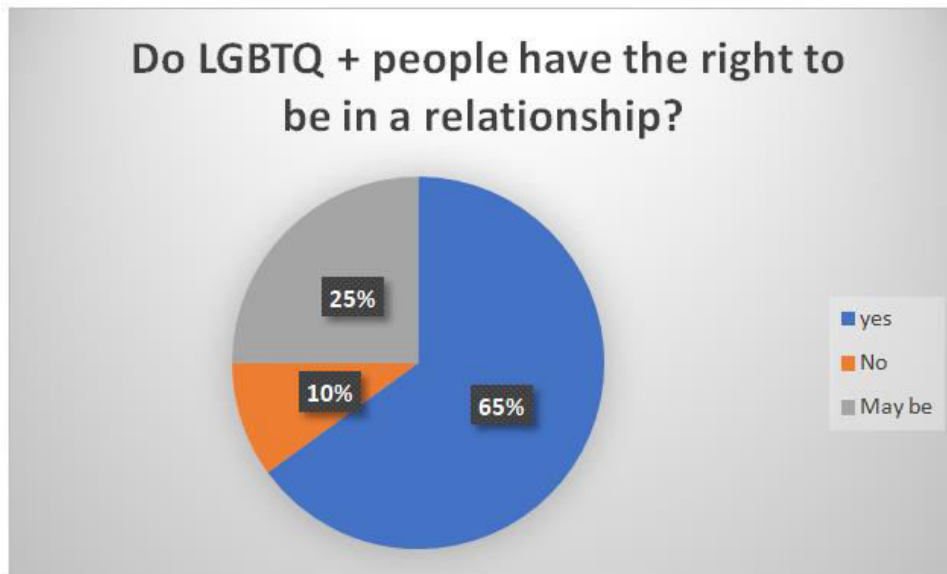
More than 20% of the respondents opted for treating transgender as human beings with equal respect and dignity. Hence it is very important to shape young minds about the transgender community and their socio-economic problem. Very few respondents think that they are to be treated as lesser human beings. 15% of the respondents have opined that they are to be treated as supernatural beings. The responses treating them as supernatural may be influenced by a general belief of treating them as having some “*ansha*” or a divine element in them. There are communities within this community who are especially invited to some religious celebrations, or cultural events like marriage and birth ceremonies. They are adored and worshipped on such occasions and are especially invited. In an open dialogue with some transgender members during a conference, Maya Avasthi spoke about the myths and misconceptions regarding this. She stated that we are as humans as you and not with any supernatural or divine powers. So, do not treat us as divine or special beings but treat and look at us as natural humans with diverse gender.



Pie-chart-11

Interpretation

Over 85% of the respondents stated that LGBTQA+ is not a disease. So, hopefully, that stigma and discrimination will be uprooted from the minds of people and will pave a way for accepting members of diverse genders.



Pie-chart-12

Discussion: When respondents were asked to record their responses to a question if LGBTQIA+ people have a right to be in a relationship, 60%+ stated their response as yes. Respondents were also asked to justify their answers. For discussion presenting here the responses which throw light on the deep and positive thought process of respondents.

REASON INTERPRETATION

The majority of 60+ of the respondent was of the view that it is an individual right to be in a relationship according to their preference of sex. These responses not only indicate hopefulness but also go beyond just treating and looking at them as par with their existence. It is natural to connect relationships with the same or opposite gender. There is no medical problem with such emotions. 10% of the respondent were of the view that transgender should not be in a relationship since it's unnatural and get emotionally cheated and harassed by the same sex.

DISCUSSION

The nomenclature with which transgender community members are identified has numerous shades of the task they perform. Sometimes transgenders are identified as Hijras. The life situations are hard for them. Most of the times they are poverty stricken and excluded from employment and education. They suffer from stigma and exclusion in India. The stigma and exclusion cost economic development. Discrimination brings constraints on the availability of labour. Their sexuality and gender need not provide others with an opportunity to exploit them and become victims of violence and harassment.

In the year 2014, transgender persons are recognized as the third gender by Supreme Court of India. The judgement brought new hope, but still the change in the society is awaited.

By 2014 like us, our neighbouring countries Nepal, Bangladesh also officially recognized third gender people as citizens deserving of equal rights. The Supreme Court of India stated, "it is the right of every human being to choose their gender," and that recognition of the group, "is not a social or medical issue, but a human rights issue."

The analysis of the survey results demonstrates that overall, the negative responses towards transgenders are decreasing. But the question still remains, whether people will welcome them as neighbours, colleagues, or schoolmates sitting on the same bench and sharing tiffin? Overriding the prescribed gender and sexual identities, will these youth accept them with ease and confidence?

CONCLUSION

The researchers acknowledge the long struggle of the LGBTQ community for basic fundamental rights and the government schemes to empower the LGBTQ community socio-economically. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) rights in India have evolved in recent years. They constitute 14% of our population, and because of their exclusion the labour force also suffers and economic loss as a country also becomes inevitable.

However, LGBTQ citizens still face certain social and legal difficulties compared to those who do not belong to that community. The duty of the general public is to welcome the decision of the court with open arms. Previously Indian Census never recognized them as third gender and collected the census data for them as transgenders. According to 2011 census data on transgender based on socioeconomic aspect, the overall population of the transgender community is 4.88 lakhs, and the highest population of transgender in India is in U.P followed by Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar. In the National Legal Services Authority, Union of India case (2014), the Supreme Court declared transgender people to be a 'third gender'. It also proclaimed that the fundamental rights granted under the Constitution of India will be equally applicable to all three genders.

Though the trends of acceptance and accommodation are seen in the analysis of data, there has to be conscious efforts to be made towards equality of all genders. People with diverse identities are humans and they are to be accepted and respected equally, this message should reach all. For rebuilding the lives of non-normative genders, training and skills are to be imparted. They have an equal right to access public spaces and to become a part of mainstream life. They are marginalized and care has to be taken that they will not get further marginalized due to digitalization and technological neutrality. We should work towards affirming the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community and create an enabling environment. Their lives are to be made visible. For the same, law-making bodies and authorities have already taken up the task, but being members of educational institutions, we are the torchbearers and should help them in mapping their world and joining their world with ours.

However, third gender community is hopeful. As Supreme Court has directed the governments to provide education and employment opportunities to all third gender members. They directed the government to open education and job opportunities to all third gender groups.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The queer/LGBTQIA+ population being part of human groups, awareness programmes and educative programmes need to be promoted to increase the degree of acceptance among the students and all the stakeholders on the campus. This will help in changing the perceptions positively towards non-normative genders.
2. Curriculum content is to be made gender-neutral.
3. Learning spaces are to be created in schools, colleges and universities for non-normative genders as their narratives reveal the fact that they leave the house in the early years of their life and become school dropouts.

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TO UNDERSTAND THE PERCEPTION OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY USING PERCEIVED PARENTAL ATTITUDES OF GENDER EXPANSIVENESS SCALE FOR YOUTH (PAGES-Y)

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INTRODUCTION TO LGBTQIA + COMMUNITY

The **LGBT** community (also known as **LGBTQIA +** community, **GLBT** community, the gay community, or queer community) is a loosely defined grouping of **lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersexual and asexual** individuals united by a common culture and social movements. These communities generally celebrate pride, diversity, individuality, and sexuality. **LGBTQ** activists and sociologists see **LGBT** community-building as a balance **between heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, sexualism, and conformist pressure** that exist in a larger society. The **LGBT** is diverse in the political association. Groups that may be considered part of the **LGBT** community include gay villages, **LGBT** rights organization, **LGBT** employee group at companies, students' group in schools and university, and **LGBT** affirming religious group. **These** communities may organize themselves into or support, movements for civil rights in various places around the world.

PERCEPTION ON LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

The condition of sexual disorientation behavior is a condition that develops from various and interrelated factors. This behavior is not the result of a single major factor, its formation occurs throughout the individual life span instead. **LGBT** individuals may experience social stigma in their day-to-day life. Prejudice and explicitly stigmatizing behavior of other people may increase **LGBTQ** individuals fear regarding discrimination. **LGBTQ** people can be negatively influenced by sexual stigma not only through the behavioral aspects, such as homophobic harassment and discrimination, but also through attitudinal aspects. For **LGBTQ** people, perceived homonegative attitude in social environment cause ill effect on mental health and make them doubt social justice.

PARENTAL ATTITUDES OF GENDER EXPANSIVENESS SCALE FOR YOUTH (PAGES-Y)

Parental support includes providing emotional support, ensuring safety and validating personal experiences, positively impact adolescent development and may counteract the deleterious effects of adverse childhood. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (**LGBTQ**) adolescent are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and victimization on account of their sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression. These adverse experiences have been linked to increased odds of psychopathology, suicidality, substances use, homelessness, and sexual risk behavior. **LGBTQ** adolescents who perceive their parents to be supportive of their sexual or gender identities report better psychosocial health and health behavior outcomes than **LGBTQ** adolescents without supportive parents.

When they experience parental rejection or insufficient support gender-expansive youth are likely to face economic and societal marginalization, incarceration, and physical abuse, leaving them at significantly higher risk for drug abuse, violence, HIV acquisition, other sexually transmitted infections, and homelessness as the age 15-18.

Degree of parental acceptance and rejection exist along two separate spectra and can, therefore both be expressed by a parent. For example, a parent may be somewhat accepting of their child's disclosure of transgender identity but prohibit (or not fully support) their child from initiating a social gender transition. Parental rejection may result from a parent's doubts about validity of their child's self-identified gender or due to deficits in parenting ability or capacities.

OBJECTIVE:

To study perceived attitude of **LGBTQ** community using **Parental Attitude Gender Expansiveness Scale for Youth (PAGES-Y)**

HYPOTHESIS:

H0: There is no significant difference in the perspective of parental attitude among the youth of **LGBTQIA** community

H1: There is a significant difference in the perspective of parental attitude among the youth of **LGBTQIA** community.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

SR NO	TITLE OF RESEARCH AND ITS AUTHOR	SUMMARY	KEYWORDS
1.	Perceived parental attitude of gender expansiveness development and preliminary factor structure of a self report youth questionnaire Author: Marco a. Hidalgo, Diane Chen, Robert Garofalo and Catherine Forbes	Briefly provides the factor structure, reliability and validity of the parental attitudes of gender expansiveness scale for youth (PAGES_Y)	Transgender, parental support, factor analysis, adolescents, measure development
2.	Parent’s perspectives on the inclusion of gender and s (Ritch C) (Ritch C) (Arthur E, 2017) (Mckay, 2019)exuality diversity in k-12 schooling: results from an Australian national study Author: Jacqueline Ullman, Tania Ferfolja and Lucy Hobby	This paper provides a descriptive overview of parents’ ideas about the purpose of relationships and sexual health education.	Gender and sexuality diversity, Australian schools, parents, relationship and sexual health, education, curriculum, quality education
3.	Parental influences on the self-esteem of gay and lesbian youths Author: Ritch C , Savin Williams	Perspective in predicting the degree to which parental attitudes as perceived by youth	The population of lesbians and gays, parental attitudes, sexual abuse
4.	Perception Of Support Among Transgender And Gender Expansive Adolescents And Their Parents Author: Arthur E, Hale M.S, Solana.	To capture and compare the perspectives of Parents and Gender Expansive Adolescents during pivotal moments of Gender Identity Development	Transgender Gender-Expansive Youth Parental Support Parental Adjustment Adolescent Perception
5.	Gender Expansive Youth Disclosure And Mental Health Author: Mckay, Timothy R., Watson.	Findings suggest a need to better prepare health professionals to understand not all gender expansive youth may feel comfortable disclosing their gender identities in medical contexts.	Health Care Providers, Symptoms Of Depression, Protective Factors For Negative Health.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary Data Sources: - Questionnaire devised for youth to understand the factors that create perception towards LGBTQ Community.

SPSS Software used: - Cronbach Alpha, Factor Analysis.

Standard Questionnaire: - **Parental Attitude Gender Expansiveness Scale for Youth (PAGES Y)**

Secondary Data Sources: - Research papers, Journals, Reports, webliography links

Sampling: - Purposive Sampling Method

Sample: - 82 respondents

DATA VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

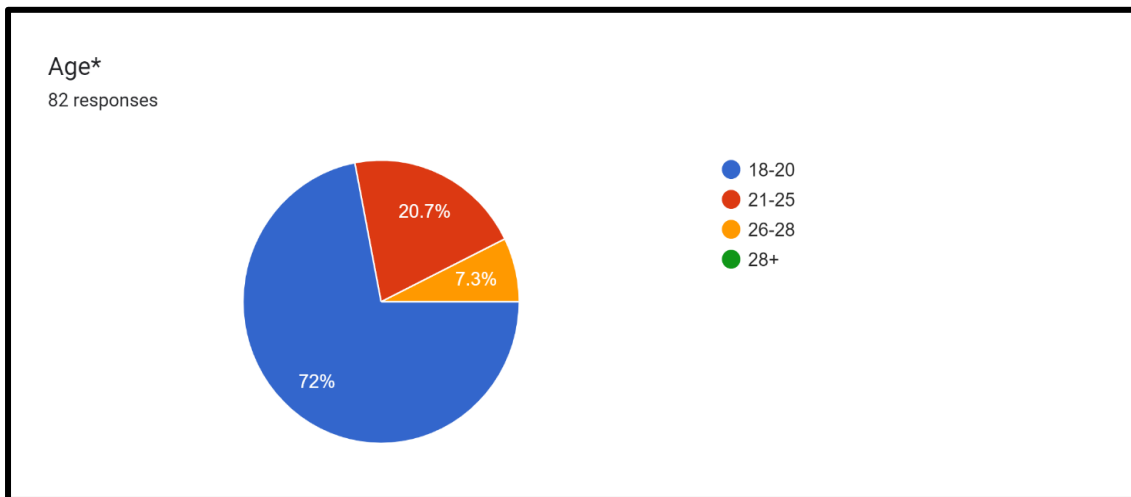
Testing of reliability of data of all 12 factors under study facilitating perspective of parental attitude among the youth of LGBTQIA community.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.745	.754	14

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
My parent(s) are proud of me	4.28	.730	82
My parent(s) are ashamed of me	4.64	.630	82
My parent(s) try to hide me	4.56	.624	82
I can be myself around my parent(s)	4.38	.785	82
My parent(s) advocate for my rights as a gender-expansive or exclusive child	4.26	.816	82
My parent(s) protect me and defend me against others prejudice against gender-expansive/trans* people	4.25	.791	82
My parent(s) have problems with my gender expression	4.04	.872	82
My parent(s) use rewards or treats to pressure me to live as my sex assigned at birth	4.51	.724	82
I can talk to my parent(s) about romantic relationships and dating	4.48	.685	82
My parent(s) worry about how my gender identity will affect our family's image if its different from normal	4.27	.826	82
My parent(s) probably believe that I am supporting gender-expansive/trans* because of something they did wrong	4.21	.751	82
My parent(s) are worried that my gender identity if different is a bad influence on other kids in my family	4.21	.766	82

Cronbach's alpha is the common measure of internal consistency ("reliability") as Cronbach's alpha is 0.745, which indicates a good level of internal consistency in the variable of study to understand various facilitating perspectives of parental attitude among the youth of the LGBTQIA community.

DATA INTERPRETATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

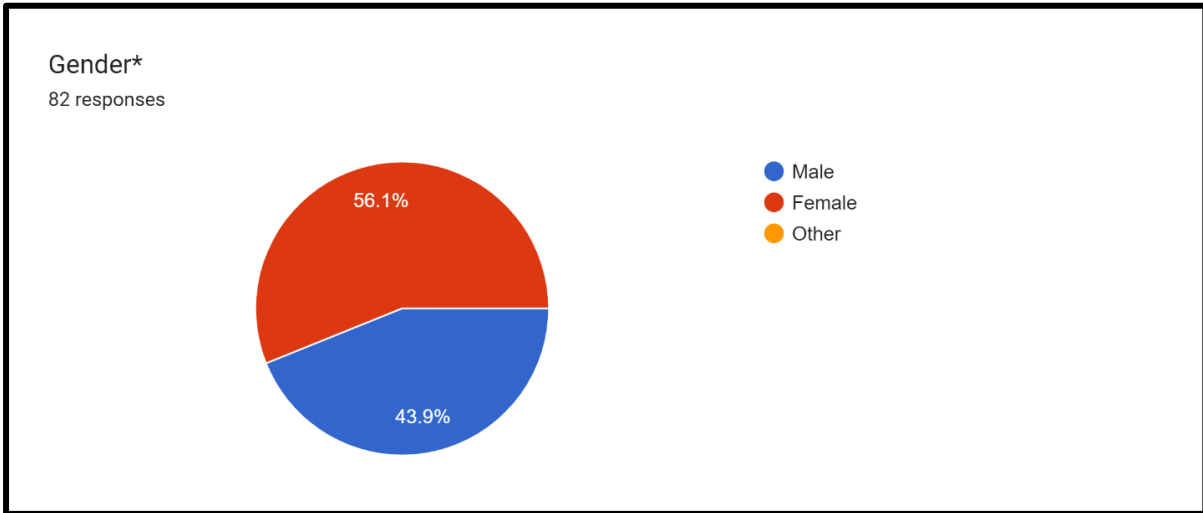


59 respondents belong to the age group 18-20

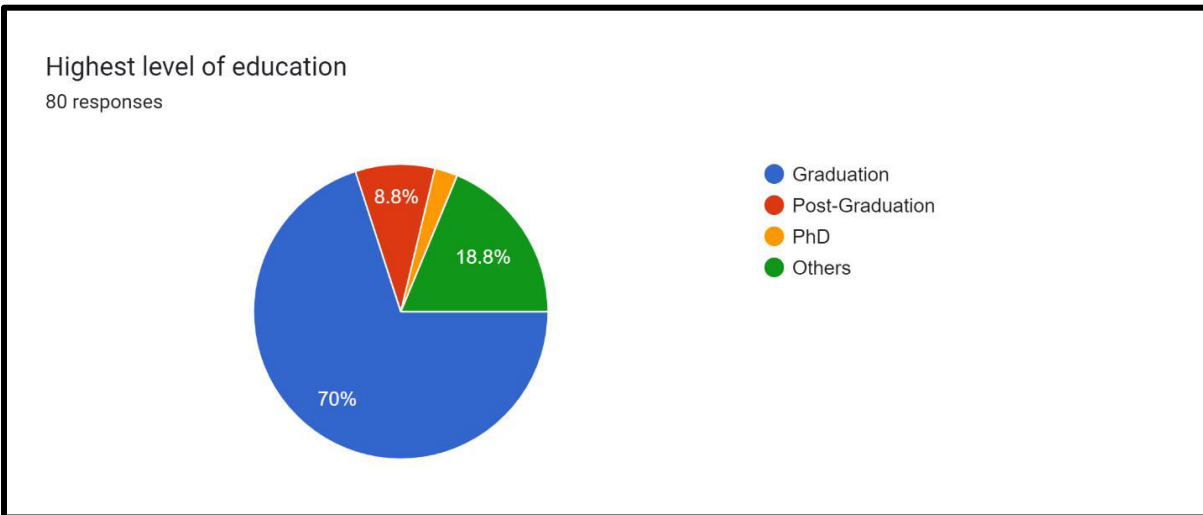
17 respondents belong to the age group 21-25

6 respondents belong to the age group 26-28

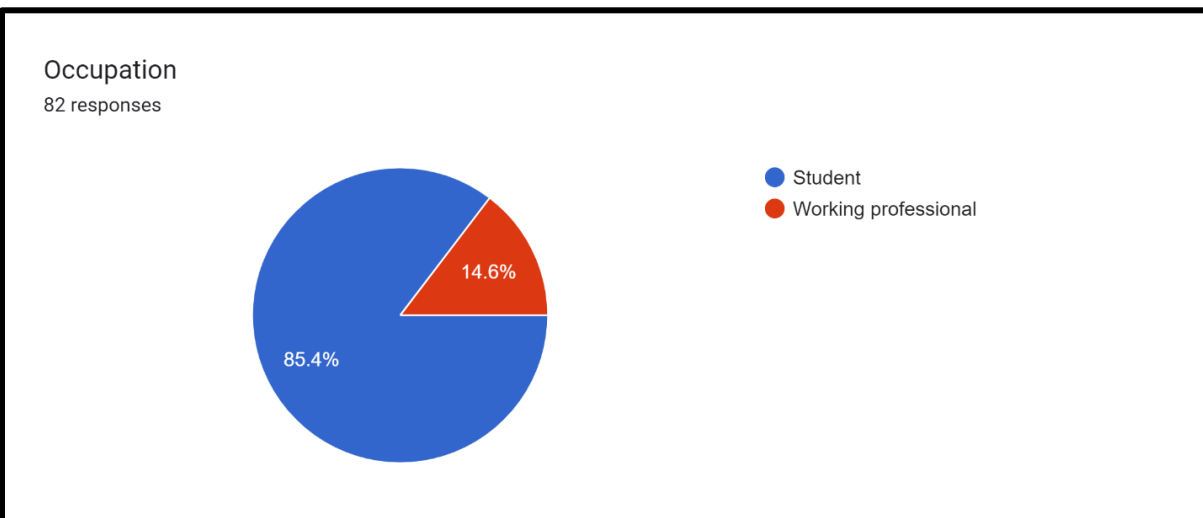
Majority of the respondents includes early adults (18 to 20 years)



46 respondents are female, 36 respondents are male



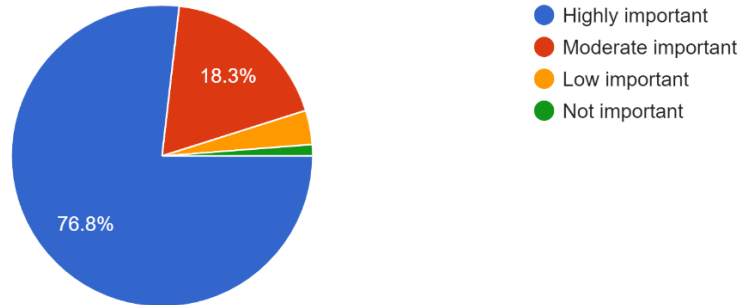
56 respondents are graduates, 7 respondents are post-graduates, 2 respondents have done PhD, 15 respondents are from others



70 respondents are students, 12 respondents are working professionals

Do you think parents and families have a critical role to play in affecting the self esteem, mental health, and overall well-being of youth in expressing thoughts and opinion?

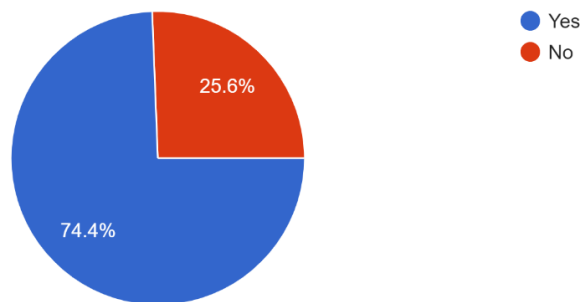
82 responses



A maximum number of respondents choose that parents to play an important role in Affecting their mental health and self-esteem.

Do you feel as a youth that you are free to express your opinion and thoughts and be yourselves at home?

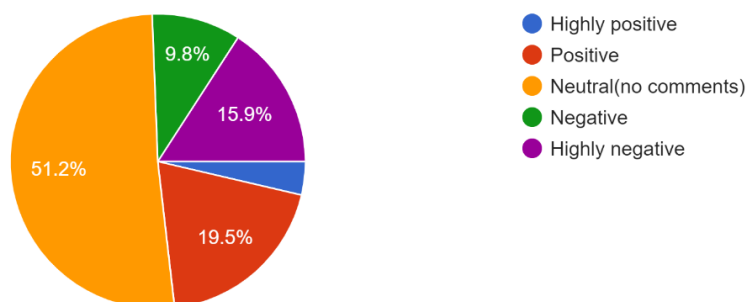
82 responses



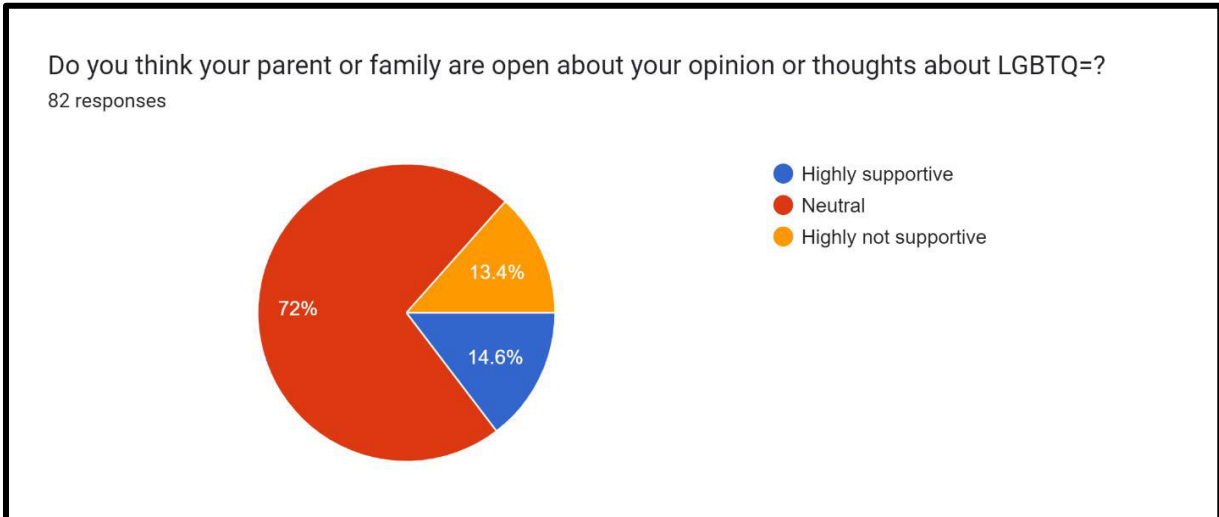
Maximum respondents feel that they are not free to express their opinion in their home

What are the reaction of your parents or family members about support for the LGBTQ+ community?

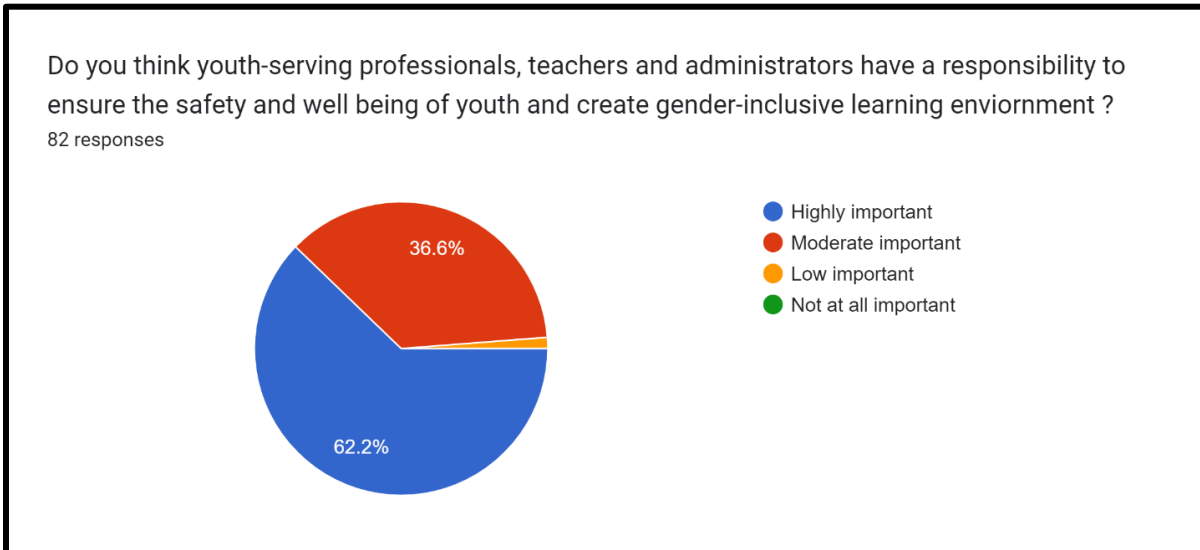
82 responses



Maximum number of respondents has no comments on the support of LGBTQ community. But 13 respondents have highly negative support because of their gender identity and 16 respondents has positive support.



Maximum respondents have no comments about their opinion and thoughts about LGBTQ community.



Maximum respondents feels that youth-serving professional, teachers and administrators has an responsibility towards the gender inclusive learning environment.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis (FA) attempts to identify the variables, of factors that facilitate the perspectives of parental attitude among the youth of the LGBTQIA community.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.626
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	977.317
	df	135
	Sig.	.000

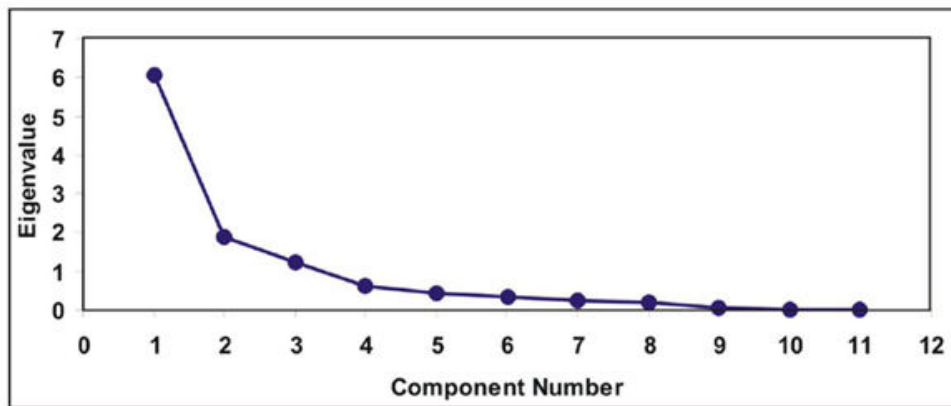
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy value is greater than 0.5 so it indicates the sample is adequate for factor analysis.

Since the significant value is less than 0.05 it indicates that the factor analysis the is correct technique for reducing the large no of attributes into a small no of factor components. As the p-value is less than 0.05, we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

H1: There is a significant relationship between factors that facilitate the perspectives of parental attitude among the youth of the LGBTQIA community.

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.935	39.353	39.353	3.935	39.353	39.353	3.919	39.188	39.188
2	2.687	26.867	66.219	2.687	26.867	66.219	2.703	27.032	66.219
3	1.593	15.934	82.154						
4	12.45	12.453	83.345						
5	9.67	9.667	85.678						
6	8.45	8.452	87.654						
7	.695	6.951	89.104						
8	.593	5.928	95.032						
9	.494	4.938	96.344						
10	.323	3.231	96.455						
11	.255	2.546	97.577						
12	.117	1.166	98.744						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.



The Scree plot graphs the eigenvalue against the factor number. The elbow of the graph where the eigenvalues seem to level off is found and factors or components to the left of this point should be retained as significant.

Rotated Component Matrix ^a		
	Component	
	1	2
My parent(s) are proud of me	.971	.110
My parent(s) are ashamed of me	-.031	.721
My parent(s) try to hide me	-.115	.811
I can be myself around my parent(s)	.956	.223
My parent(s) advocate for my rights as a gender-expansive or exclusive child	.820	-.021
My parent(s) protect me and defend me against others' prejudice against gender-expansive/trans* people	-.233	.799
My parent(s) have problems with my gender expression	.713	-.037
My parent(s) use rewards or treats to pressure me to live as my sex assigned at birth	.843	-.024
I can talk to my parent(s) about romantic relationships and dating	.975	.114
My parent(s) worry about how my gender identity will affect our family's image if its different from normal	.752	-.029
My parent(s) probably believe that I am supporting gender-expansive/trans* because of something they did wrong	-.123	.721
My parent(s) are worried that my gender identity if different is a bad influence on other kids in my family	.843	-.024

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Component 1 (Most Significant Factors)

- My parent(s) are proud of me
- I can be myself around my parent(s)
- My parent(s) advocate for my rights as a gender-expansive or exclusive child
- My parent(s) have problems with my gender expression
- My parent(s) use rewards or treats to pressure me to live as my sex assigned at birth
- I can talk to my parent(s) about romantic relationships and dating
- My parent(s) worry about how my gender identity will affect our family's image if its different from normal
- My parent(s) are worried that my gender identity if different is a bad influence on other kids in my family

Component II

- My parent(s) are ashamed of me
- My parent(s) try to hide me
- My parent(s) protect me and defend me against others' prejudice against gender-expansive/trans* people
- My parent(s) probably believe that I am supporting gender-expansive/trans* because of something they did wrong

According to factor analysis, it can be derived that parental attitude towards LGBTQ community mostly reflects the following

- My parent(s) are proud of me
- I can be myself around my parent(s)
- My parent(s) advocate for my rights as a gender-expansive or exclusive child
- My parent(s) have problems with my gender expression
- My parent(s) use rewards or treats to pressure me to live as my sex assigned at birth
- I can talk to my parent(s) about romantic relationships and dating
- My parent(s) worry about how my gender identity will affect our family's image if its different from normal
- My parent(s) are worried that my gender identity if different is a bad influence on other kids in my family

CONCLUSION

The above method helps us to evaluate that they are some amounts of acceptance among parents in terms of youth opinion about gender expansiveness, but they have still to embrace the fact of LGBTQ openness and inclusiveness in the society.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was majorly focusing on metropolitan area and diverse segments of the society was not included due to cost and time constraint.

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AN INTROSPECTION: GENDER IDENTITY ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

Dr. Shivani BannerjeeHOD and Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane,
Affiliated to University of Mumbai**ABSTRACT**

This paper brings out the difference between the terms - gender identity and sexual orientation. Gender is a broader term that includes a person's internal sense of who they are, that's called their gender identity. Physicians who practice in this area reminds us that gender identity and sexual orientation are independent characteristics that also typically develop at different times in a person's life. A child whose sex assigned at birth aligns with their gender identity, which is the more common case scenario, is sometimes called cisgender. When a child's sex assigned at birth doesn't align with their gender identity, and this is called transgender. Creating a gender-inclusive school environment is a powerful way in which to support the healthy growth and development of all children, including transgender children. In order to learn, children need to feel safe. As a global community, we have a responsibility to work together to build a world that is ready to support, and celebrate each and every child

Keywords: Gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender, gender-inclusive and healthy growth.

INTRODUCTION

Many people use the terms sex and gender interchangeably, but they are actually two separate characteristics. At birth, a child is usually assigned a sex according to the body parts with which that child is born. Gender is a broader term that includes a person's internal sense of who they are, that's called their gender identity. And most children are aware of their gender identity pretty early on in childhood. The term gender also includes the way in which people express their identity, by way, of how they choose to dress and present themselves to others. In any society ideas about what's considered acceptable gender expression change over time. Today, not many people would be shocked to see a woman wearing pants or a man wearing an earring, this probably wasn't the case 100 years ago. As a society, we seem to be a little more accepting of sex assigned girls, who also identify as girls, but they prefer to dress and act in ways that are considered typically boyish. Interestingly, our society is still less accepting of sex assigned boys who identify as boys, but choose to express themselves in ways that our society considers girlish. Many children whose gender identity and their sex assigned at birth are aligned, will choose to dress or act in ways that don't conform to traditional gender roles. But even though we've become more comfortable with a more expansive view of gender expression, the general understanding of gender identity in our society has been that there only two choices, male or female. And that they should match or align with a child's sex assigned at birth, today that's changing. More and more scientists, healthcare professionals, and people in the general public are beginning to recognize that gender identity may be better understood as the characteristic that exists across a spectrum, like many other human characteristics. And that gender identity and sex assigned at birth don't always align.

CIS AND TRANS GENDER

If we start to think about gender identity as a spectrum, and we remember that this is a characteristic that's separate from a person's sex assigned at birth. Then it begins to make sense that in some cases a person's gender identity, and the label they're given at birth, might not be oriented in the same direction. A child whose sex assigned at birth aligns with their gender identity, which is the more common case scenario, is sometimes called cisgender. When a child's sex assigned at birth doesn't align with their gender identity, and this is the less common case, this is called transgender. The prefixes cis and trans come from organic chemistry, where a cis molecule is a molecule with two functional groups oriented in the same direction. In a trans molecule, the functional groups are oriented away from one another. Understanding gender identity as a characteristic that's separate from a person's sex assigned at birth, and one that exists across a spectrum, is a much more inclusive way of looking at the world around us. It creates space for diversity, and allows all of our children the chance to be celebrated and loved for who they truly are, regardless of where they fall on the gender spectrum.

CREATION OF A GENDER-INCLUSIVE SOCIETY FOR CHILDREN

Intentionally creating a gender-inclusive school environment is an effective way to support the healthy growth and development of all children, including transgender children. Children need to feel safe in order to learn. Because many people in the world still don't know what it means to be transgender, this can all too often lead to bullying in schools. Which can prevent even the brightest child from developing fully. When schools have a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, it creates a safer and more effective learning environment for everyone.

Because children are more likely to specify the differences that make each of them unique. As authority figures, teachers play an important role in modeling respect and acceptance for transgender children. One of the most effective way, a teacher can demonstrate affirmation is to consistently use a name and pronouns with which the child identifies. When someone with the authority of a teacher actively paints a picture of the world that includes a diverse cast of characters, where all the children can be found. This worldview is more likely to leave all children feeling safe, validated, and ready to learn. This may include ensuring that literature that celebrates diversity and promotes gender-expansive thinking is available to students in the classroom and library. Another step that schools can also take is to have people who are friendly, culturally strong. And to have a diverse staff, diverse faculties that collaborate with the school. Also to have a diversity assembly so they can show that we are not men, women, but there are also gender fluid people in the world. And having role models and classrooms where kids can talk about these things. Making basic facilities like toilets and changing rooms available to all children is also a crucial step schools can take to better serve their students. When a child can use the toilet without fear of harassment, it allows the child to focus on learning. Instead of investing a significant amount of their time and energy, they found ways to avoid using the bathroom at school. Sadly, many parents of transgender children say their children won't drink water all day. Or they will try to wait until they are out of school to use the bathroom where they feel safe. This can lead to serious health problems such as dehydration and chronic constipation. All this has a negative effect on learning. As more and more schools that only have one-stall bathrooms are learning about it. Or having the child be able to use the bathroom he or she would like. So it's about when you have a child who might identify as a girl, for example, and they walk into a girls' bathroom, but they may not physically come out as a girl. The children will notice, wait a minute, someone else comes to the bathroom and can look at the child a little, but it will not be comfortable. Our children are the future of our society. So, as they continue to expand the ways they understand and express gender. Our schools have a responsibility to provide them with an environment that helps them be their most authentic selves.

WHAT WE CAN DO?

As a society, we all should try to protect human rights, especially the rights of our children. Imagine a world where all children have the right to be loved and accepted, regardless of their gender identity, and whether or not it aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. In early childhood, establishing an affirming environment for a transgender child is probably the most important way to protect their health and help them develop to their full potential. This includes allowing them to express themselves by letting them dress in ways that they feel most comfortable. Allowing them to choose a hairstyle that they feel fits their sense of who they are. And listening to them about things like the name and pronouns they want others around them to use. This also often includes working with family, friends, and teachers to honor a child's request. Little kids don't really need much treatment, so to speak. But what sometimes people will do is they'll do sort of a social transition. They'll dress in the gender they're comfortable. They might even want you to call them a different nickname. They might cut their hair a certain way. And so that's a way that they can sort of come out and experience that gender to their family and to their friends in school. of course, those kids really need a lot of support and acceptance. The time around puberty is uniquely challenging for transgender children, as they face the prospect of developing physical characteristics that may not match their gender identity. At this time, many transgender children and their parents begin to discuss the option of delaying puberty. This gives the child and the family more time to make decisions together about longer term medical options. It also prevents the child from experiencing distress, as their body develops in a way that doesn't align with their internal sense of who they are. Another time when it becomes a little bit more of an issue and distress for the child is when it's about time to go into puberty. And especially if the child is identifying as a different gender than their assigned one at birth, the puberty they're going to go into is going to be different, not the one that they want.

HOW GENDER IDENTITY IMPACTS SEXUAL ORIENTATION?

Some human beings might wonder if someone is transgender, does that still mean they can be gay? In order to understand the difference between gender identification and sexual orientation, doctors who practice in this sector remind us that gender identification and sexual orientation are unbiased features that are still generally expanded in the specific cases of one's existence. The formation of gender identification can begin very early, this could be one of the first real elements of self-discovery that a child might feel. But transgender children generally find inner gaiety in being different as transgender or gender nonconforming early in life. People will inform you that they knew as soon as they were four years old or they were heard as under 18 months, knowing that their gender did not affect their assigned sex at birth. One of the elements that lead to confusion between gender identification and sexual orientation is that within the English language. Because of this, several human beings appear to be bothered and assume that transgender children somehow express their sexuality at an early

age. In fact, they may simply be telling us who they are from their hearts and minds. Later, as they begin to age and develop into puberty, they may begin to develop emotions that are attractive to different human beings. Sexual attraction would not generally begin in children earlier than perhaps inside the older primary or middle faculty, where infatuation may also begin in who they may be attracted to. And at that moment, the peace of the appeal could also come additionally. But of course, they can be much older once they certainly have real sex appeal and their expression in their appeal. Many children are able to identify their gender by age 3 or 4, and this sense of self grows with the child. Later on, generally around adolescence, maximum human beings begin to feel the emotion of attraction closer to different human beings. These can be aimed closer to those of the same sex, the opposite sex, everyone, or none. This is the time when someone begins to develop to recognize their sexual orientation. Thus, the time period of sexual orientation describes an individual's attraction within the sphere around them, something quite specific of their feeling in their personal internal gender identification. Sexual orientation can be simply as fluid as gender identification in that our gaze can be male, female, somewhere in between, or all of them.

WHY IS SOCIAL SUPPORT SO IMPORTANT?

The social network from our own circle of relatives, the community, and society in general, is one of the maximum effective non-scientific interventions which can assist a transgender individual thrive. Starting at home, it is own circle of relatives' acceptance. Any human's existence, needs to be cherished, which invariably occurs with the aid of our own circle of relatives. Thus, social guide might be the great remedy that we will be able to provide out there. So, in case you become aware of a child, and they arrive to you, simply permitting the kid to experience and providing security is one of the best things we can do. And if that social guide is there, then incidences of despair, suicide, anxiety, all of that may be decreased. The primary factor that parents and all of us, could do for them, is to simply accept them for precisely who they are, just in case you need to do something for them. Many studies have indicated that family acceptance has greatly reduced the instances of being distress, stress, depression, anxiousness, drug abuse and suicides among such children. Children with accepting families have higher self-worth, self-esteem, overall good health and have greater chances to succeed in life. According to Dr. Caitlin Ryan, the director of the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University "The most important thing you can do is to tell your child how much you love them. Your love reassures them that you are there for them and it creates space to talk honestly about each other's feelings. This helps your family stay connected and grow together."

CONCLUSION

As a worldwide community, we've a responsibility to play a role together, to create a world that's able to support, and celebrate each and every child. Not to think about their differences but focus instead on what they need in common. All children must feel safe, loved, and revered so as to achieve their full potential during this world. By establishing a robust foundation, we all should help our kids build a stronger, and more stable future for all. Develop empathy for all and greater understanding of the experience of transgender individuals. Proactively identify and communicate with non-conforming, transgender and LGBT patients and their families so as to produce optimal care. Integrate supportive care in managing the health needs of transgender individuals, including the requirements of transgender children. We need to make sure that we are treating all people with dignity and respect.

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A STUDY OF LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS IN INDIA

¹Shubham Vijay Gothankar and ²Dr. Shraddha Mayuresh Bhome¹Student, M.Com (Banking and Finance) Part 1²Vice Principal and Head, M.Com Banking & Finance, B.Com Accounting & Finance**ABSTRACT**

The idea of human rights rests on the center of thinking that all humans are equal. All humans have dignity and thus should be treated equally. Anything that undermines that dignity is a violation, as it violates the principle of equality and gives way to discrimination. Homosexuality is one of the most debated issues in the world which raises the question of human rights. People around the world become the prey of violence and discrimination only based on whom they love and how they look. The year 2018 ushered a ray of hope for the LGBTQIA+ community who has been fighting a prolonged battle for their rights, and finally, homosexuality is decriminalized in the judgment of the Navtej Singh Johar case. While the laws have changed but violence and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community persist at the hands of state machinery is evidence of the low status it grants to the LGBTQIA+ community. In India same-sex marriage is still a far-fetched dream. We must look forward to the International statute for the attainment of the real objective of the Constitution i. e. All citizens are equal. There is a need to reform society, to amend the underline thinking that it is no taboo or some mental condition, and to make everyone believe that human rights stand for all.

Keywords: Homosexuality, LGBTQIA+, India, Section 377, Transgender, Human Rights.

1. INTRODUCTION

“This world would be a whole lot better if we just made an effort to be less horrible to one another.”

- Ellen Page

On 6th Sep 2018, Sec 377 of IPC a colonial-era law that criminalized “carnal intercourse against the order of nature” was read down and homosexuality was decriminalized in the case of Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India³. The Supreme Court has finally upheld that every human being has a right to be free, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity. So now, homosexuality is decriminalized but the reaction of society is still challenging and detrimental for the LGBTQIA+ community. The term homosexual means ‘of the same sex. Homosexuality is a sexual orientation specified by sexual attraction or romantic love only for people who are recognized as being of the same sex. As time goes by Homosexuality is used in different terms. Presently it is known as LGBTQIA+. LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer.

Lesbian: -A lesbian means, a woman who is sexually attracted to a woman.

Gay: -A gay means, a man who is sexually attracted to the man.

Bisexual: - A bisexual person is sexually attracted to people of both sexes.

Transgender: - It is a term used to define people whose gender identity and gender expression, differs from that usually associated with their birth sex.

Queer: - Queer is a term used to refer to sexual and gender identities who are neither heterosexual nor cisgender.

At present when Section 377 is gone, are homosexuals finally equal citizens? And have we accomplished full equality for transgender, or do we need to go beyond Sec 377? The researcher in its research is trying to focus on the history of legal battles of the LGBTQIA+, the struggle against Sec 377, and the impact of societal atrocities on the lives of the LGBTQIA+ community. This paper, thus, looks to discuss the difference between the text and practice, between legal imaginations of the existing case laws and the legal realities, the actual realities, and the happenings in society

2. OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study of difficulties and challenges faced by the LGBTQIA+ community even after decriminalizing homosexuality.
- (2) To understand the history of legal battles of LGBTQIA+ and campaign against sec 377.
- (3) To elaborate and thorough study of the Impacts of COVID-19 on the LGBTQIA+ community.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A secondary research has been done in drafting this research paper. Various books, research papers, articles, and journals have been analyzed and consulted while drafting this paper. The review and study of reports occurred only from authentic and official websites. All the important case laws and reports have been collected from e-data sources such as SCC online, Indian Kanoon and Manupatra e-database, and so on. This study is also collaborated by a personal interview with some members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Few social media platforms have also been accessed while this research. Only verified instances and records have been added to this study.

This study has targeted the analysis of the current condition of the LGBTQIA+ people living in India. We have tried our best to put forward the principled and parsimonious record of the current phenomenon and perception of a layman toward the LGBTQIA+ community. We have examined multiple issues towards the LGBTQIA+ community in legal, personal, and social fields.

- A brief analysis of the International position of Human rights of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Critical evaluation of The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- A brief study of different social media platforms to gauge the societal perception of the LGBTQIA+ community.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Louis Arbour, 2019** During the past few decades, the human rights of the LGBTQIA+ community have come into sharper focus and several journals, articles, reports, and books have surfaced that deal with the Rights and Issues of the LGBTQIA+ community. The principle of non-discrimination and the right to be equal before the law requires that the state should not only protect people from discrimination from state agents but also private entities and persons.
- **Cohen, Doyle, & Skoner, 1999; Dohrenwend, 2000** People can be adversely affected by high levels of stress, and the link between experiencing stress and manifesting symptoms of psychological or physical illness is well established in human beings and other species.
- **Law Commission of India, 2000** In the 172nd report of the law commission, the committee members recommended the deletion of Section 377 of IPC and pleaded that it is harmful to public health due to its direct impact on the life of a homosexual.
- **Feldblum, 2005** There is a need to establish equality in same-sex marriages with the support of society so that LGBTQIA+ groups may win the battle.
- **Ray, 2006** Among all homeless youth 20% to 40% of youth consist of LGBTQIA+ people and the reason behind that was a negative impact of society towards them, lack of understanding of their sexual orientation.
- **Dr. Madhurima Chowdhary, 2017** LGBTQIA+ having voting rights cannot be treated separately than other people as one person can have only one vote as validly spoken by the Chairman of Constitutional drafting committee Dr. B.R Ambedkar.
- **M. V. Lee Badgett, 2014** Stigma and exclusion of LGBTQIA+ people are likely to generate economic costs, particularly from lost productivity as a result of workplace discrimination, and health disparities.
- **V. Revathy and Dr. S. Pandiaraj, 2018** The Government should pass legislation for the marriage of LGBTQIA+ people. This study will further discuss the difficulties and challenges faced by the LGBTQIA+ community in India even after repealing Section 377. This paper also deals with the impact of the deadly virus COVID-19 on the entire LGBTQIA+ community. In addition, we have discussed the perception of society about the LGBTQIA+ community, the international legal position of LGBTQIA+ rights, the history of legal battles of LGBTQIA+, and the campaign against sec 377. Although there has been enough research work on LGBTQIA+ issues, research work on the position under special marriage act and personal laws has been very few and is found rarely, this study has dealt with the same. Furthermore, Social media platforms have been analyzed to gauge societal perception.

Statement of Problem

After doing various reviews of related literature the researcher has thought of studying legal battles of LGBTQIA+ and campaign against sec 377.

5. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

History of Legal Battles of LGBTQIA+ Community and Campaign Against Sec 377

In a culmination of decades of legal challenges to Section 377, the Naz Foundation 2001 filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court challenging the law's constitutional validity. Their petition was rejected by Delhi High Court in 2004 based on locus standi. Subsequently, in 2006, they appealed against the order of the Delhi High Court in the Supreme Court of India. The Decision was in their favor and their petition was sustained.

In 2009, a landmark verdict was passed by Delhi High Court in the case of Naz Foundation v, Govt. of NCT of New Delhi and Others⁴, where Section 377 was read down and was held to be unconstitutional. The reading down of Section 377 by the Delhi High Court is a pivotal moment in Indian history. This judgment gave a ray of hope in the Dark Age to the LGBTQIA+ community. But this remained not much longer when Supreme Court ruled over the judgment of the Delhi high court in 2013. In 2013, the Supreme Court overruled the Delhi High Court judgment in Suresh Koushal v. Union of India. The Supreme Court held that Section 377 could not be read down and it was for Parliament to decide on the decriminalization of homosexuality. Despite the Supreme Court judgment, the movement against Sec 377 expanded on a large scale.

In April 2014 a bench of two judges of the Supreme Court of India passed a verdict in the National

Legal Services Authority v. Union of India (“NALSA”) and held that the rights to life, dignity, and autonomy would include the right to one's gender identity and sexual orientation and they have a right to express their chosen gender identity. The NALSA verdict gave a new hope to rekindle the battle against sec 377.

Subsequently, in 2017, a landmark verdict was given by the Supreme Court in the case of Puttaswamy v. Union of India, the Supreme Court held that the right to privacy cannot be refused “even if a minute fraction of the population is affected”. The Court declared that the right to privacy distinctively incorporates the right to have intimate relations of one's choice and includes the right to sexual orientation and gender identity.

The year 2018 ushered in a ray of hope for the LGBTQIA+ community who has been fighting a prolonged battle for their rights. Navtej Singh Johar, a dancer who identified as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, filed a Curative Petition in the Supreme Court in 2016 and challenged the Constitutional validity of the decision in the Suresh Kumar Koushal case. The Petitioner contended that Section 377 was violative of Article 14 of the Constitution because it was ambiguous in the sense that it did not define “carnal intercourse against the order of nature”. There was no intelligible differentia or reasonable classification between natural and unnatural consensual sex. The Petitioner further contended that:

- (i) Section 377 infringed Article 15 of the Constitution, sexual orientation is a ground related to sex, and that discrimination on sexual orientation is not permitted under Article 15.
- (ii) Section 377 had a “chilling effect” on Article 19 since it denied the right to express one's sexual identity and orientation.
- (iii) Section 377 also violated the fundamental Right to privacy.

On 6th September 2018, 5 judge bench of the Supreme Court led by the Chief Justice unanimously held in Navtej Johar Singh's Case that Section 377 was unconstitutional to the extent that it criminalizes consensual relationships of any kind between adults.

Legal Recognition of Marriage- Still a Dream!

Section 377 was repealed in the year 2018 which decriminalized homosexuality. Indeed it was a historic win for the entire LGBTQIA+ community. But same-sex marriage is still not legalized and ultimately the community continues to suffer discrimination. There is a legal aspect of marriage that bestows rights and responsibilities on two people such as adoption, inheritance, tax planning, life insurance policies, and other such rights. Unfortunately, the law of our land doesn't provide the same set of rights to LGBTQIA+ couples that it does to heterosexual married couples. Marriage equality is one of the most basic rights for a person but the LGBTQIA+ community is still devoid of it. Though scrapping down Sion 377 was a historic and the most important decision, marriage is still a far-fetched dream. In India, there is still no legal provision to get married for the LGBTQIA+ community neither there is any law on adoption. Only providing the option of civil unions and excluding marriages for same-sex couples is itself discriminatory, since it provides a class of people only an option that possesses an inherently lower status than marriage. ⁸ What would be the point of decriminalizing homosexuality in a country like India which puts such huge importance on marriage and still be unable to get married to the partner of your choice?

LGBTQIA+ couples often prefer to migrate to countries that recognize LGBTQIA+ marriages, so that their

marriage can get legal status and enjoy all the rights a heterosexual couple does. India is, however, heading towards a change and the Madras High Court Verdict is one such example. The path-breaking verdict of the Madras High Court is a ray of hope for sure. In *Arunkumar and Sreeja v. The Inspector-General of Registration & Ors*⁹, the Court held that “the term ‘bride’ as per the Hindu Marriage Act would also mean a transsexual and not just refer to someone born as a woman”.

“I think marriage as an institution is loaded with baggage and our community needs to ensure several other civil rights first. I believe a person should have the right to get married. Our society has to accept us first. Even after the verdict, a large number of LGBTQIA+ members are still not accepted by society,” - said Malabika of Sappho, who identifies herself as a queer feminist activist.

Same-sex marriages under the Special Marriage Act, 1954

The Special Marriage Act is secular legislation that facilitates marriages between people of different religions or those who do not wish to be bound by their laws. Instead of a religious ceremony, a Marriage Officer registers the marriage. The only option which might not raise religious hackles is to amend the Special Marriage Act, 1954¹⁰ so that same-sex marriages can be permitted. In its present form, the SMA applies to heterosexual couples only, since it provides that males should have attained the age of twenty-one years and females the age of eighteen years. But it is not as difficult as it seems to accommodate homosexual marriages within the sphere of SMA. The only thing that needs to be done is to amend Section 4 (C) so that it reads that a party, if male, should have attained the age of twenty-one years and if female, should have attained the age of eighteen years or it can add a specific provision that same-sex marriages are permitted. In our opinion, an amendment is the easiest and the best legislative option.

The Transgender Persons’ (protection of Rights) act, 2019 or the Murder of Gender Justice

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill¹¹ was passed by the Lok Sabha without much dissent on 5th August 2019 – the same day Centre scrapped the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The Act provides power and equality to everybody but the transgender community. The bill was passed after many efforts still it serves no good to the community and has several lacunae.

Almost all the definitions in the act are either redundant or profuse regarding community issues. The chapter which prohibits discrimination lacks enforcing authority, remedial measures, and punitive measures. The Complaint officer, as stipulated in the bill is very unclear and as of now, it is completely non-existent. The restriction on the separation from parents and allowing them to separate only with an order of a competent court is unreasonable. There isn’t a single organized protocol in the act that guides the medical community on the healthcare of transgender people. The National Council for Transgender Persons has no independence to carry out functions and has a mere representation of 5 persons from the transgender community. Any kind of violence including sexual abuse against a transperson is punished by a term of a maximum of 2 years only. “The message is, rape a woman; yes, very bad; rape a child, worse; but, the transgenders, these people are on streets, they are begging, they are under high risk, and what is this Bill that we are passing?” asked Trinamool Congress MP Derek O’Brien.

Checking their gender and giving them certificates is inhuman. This is not a bill for them but a bill against them. The act has no provision to apprehend those who discriminate, bully or harass them. This act deprives the community of some of the most basic rights a person should have. The bill that was supposed to protect their rights was drafted and passed without having a single transgender person and nobody from the community was asked about their problems and requirements.

International Legal Position of LGBTQIA+ Rights

Till the twentieth century, Homosexuality was never accepted by the state as well as by religions and was considered to be a crime and sin. Only in the late 20th century, there was a shift in the understanding of homosexuality from sin to a normal variant of a human being. In 1992, WHO accepted it as a normal variant, and since then the negativity towards homosexuality has been eroding as states are recognizing homosexuality as normal human behavior and guaranteeing rights and privileges. Also, LGBTQIA+ rights have made a great impact within international diplomacy over the last decade but debate regarding the subject remained intact among all the nations. International organizations such as the UN and Human Rights Watch have passed several measures but lack official statements due to opposition by several member states.

The Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting¹² incident in 2016 drew attention for the first time. United Nations Security Council released a statement condemning the attack and addressed issues related to sexual orientation. Even notorious anti-LGBTQIA+ countries like Russia and Egypt condemned the such act of barbarism. As of

now, LGBTQIA+ rights are given recognition as human rights by several UN bodies, but blocs within the United Nations have left no chance to halt the formal recognition of such rights. “More than 70 nations still criminalize same-sex relationships and the death penalty may be applied in certain African and Asian countries” – said Visit Munabhorn, the UN independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual-orientation and gender identity.

Around 66 nations extended their support by stating LGBTQIA+ rights in 2008 before the UN General Assembly. Unfortunately, Russia, China, and the US opposed these countries during the Bush Administration. The same statement was followed in 2011 by Human Rights Council which documented the problems faced by the LGBTQIA+ community and it was further updated in 2015 when UN Human Rights Council released a report concerning violence against the community related to commitments made under International Law. Despite these many efforts, there is a huge faction of nations that oppose such reforms. Ban Ki-moon, Former Secretary-General of UN stated that- “Advocacy for LGBTQIA+ rights often put him at odds with powerful member states”. On 29 September 2015, Several UN agencies (ILO, OHCHR, UNAIDS Secretariat, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women,

WFP, and WHO) made a statement putting forward their intention to end violence and discriminatory practices against the LGBTQIA+ community. The fact cannot be denied that the political landscape has changed remarkably over the last decade. But due to non-compliance from certain member states, the UN’s formal institutions face many hurdles and obstacles in promoting widespread support but the LGBTQIA+ Core Group works as an informal assembly; to tackle such barriers so that policy among countries must be coordinated.

In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council established an expert so that the global violence and discriminatory behavior toward the LGBTQIA+ community can be examined. But Security Council members China, Russia, and all other Islamic countries didn’t support the measure and voted either No or Abstaining. Despite the contradiction in many countries, the recognition of LGBTQIA+ rights has been witnessed in the actions of individual countries. In countries like India, Kenya, Botswana, and Trinidad and Tobago, efforts to lift down the laws barring homosexual relationships are exemplified. In 2018, the Constitutional Court of Taiwan declared that same-sex marriage is a legal right. André du Plessis, the Executive director of the International LGBTQIA+ Association says - “We’ve seen a lot of exciting changes. Progress has been slow but steady.” Reforms, awareness, and Decriminalization have been seen in Africa, Asia, Middle East, reflecting the gradual change in the global LGBTQIA+ rights movement and it surely inspires belief in an arc of history towards progress. States must value or honor their human rights commitment within themselves while advocating for change on the international level.

Mainstream Reaction towards the LGBTQIA+ Community Post Decriminalisation

Indeed, without an attitudinal change of people toward the members of the LGBTQIA+ community in India, the fight for civic, social, and political equality is far from over, irrespective of a constitutional status as equal citizens. While the laws have changed, violence and discrimination against transgender women still exist at the hands of the state machinery is evidence of the oppressive low status it grants to the LGBTQIA+. This continued negligent behavior of the government put several lives at risk of people belonging to sexual and gender minority groups, especially in Kashmir, where there is restricted access to the internet, the lack of non-discrimination laws of welfare schemes, and restrictions on mobility and ability to earn since the abrogation of Article 370 has hit transgender persons the hardest.

Following are the major problems faced by LGBTQIA+ people even after the decriminalization of homosexuality:

1. Marginalization and Social Exclusion

Social exclusion, isolation, and identity seclusion are the bitter realities faced by LGBTQIA+ people nowadays. They become marginalized because of a lack of recognition of LGBTQIA+ people as a member of the community. They are not recognized for who they are and are socially persecuted because of their identity as an LGBTQIA+ person. Dutee is the first Indian athlete who publically declared her relationship with a same-sex partner. After her declaration, she has been shunned by her parents and her villagers called her an embarrassment who once took pride in her. People think that being a transgender person is something bad and sinful and this mentality hit them hard. They eventually develop low self-confidence and self-esteem and may become isolated. Marginalization and social exclusion lead them to have limited access to valuable social resources such as education, employment, health services, etc.

2. Social Media Bullying

Social media reflect and affect the opinions of society. Social media can help individuals who may feel

vulnerable, alone, or isolated to have a sense of community. This allows social media to be a haven for the many LGBTQIA+ people around the world who face discrimination and harassment in their daily lives. Social media diminishes the isolation of LGBTQIA+ people, being a tool for people on their journeys and struggles to start reaching and accessing allies and like-minded people. But the negative impacts of social media cannot be neglected because social media platforms themselves are capable enough to silence the LGBTQIA+ voices. This world is not as good as it seems. LGBTQIA+ people are bullied, harassed, and laughed at. Homophobic and transphobic words are often used loosely under the umbrella of 'humor' or 'friendly bullying'. Recently a YouTuber Carry Minati²⁰ uploaded a video called "TikTok vs YouTube: The End" taken down for content. One statement from his video infuriated the LGBTQIA+ community- "Mithai ki dukaan pe 200 rupaye me bik jaayga". The term "mithai" is used derogatorily to refer to gay people. This Statement showed how people find it insulting to call someone gay, it is not only humiliating but degrading to the value of a queer person's life. These videos are a symbol of harassment and bullying against queer people.

Social Media: Supportive or Sceptic?

Different social media platforms have been analyzed to gauge the societal perception of the LGBTQIA+ community and whether social media users are supportive or skeptical about sexual minorities.

According to Research conducted by Aparup Khatua, Most of the tweets are in support of LGBTQIA+ people and revolve around equality, justice, and human rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. Immediately after the scrapping of sec 377, Twitter flooded with the multiple hashtags such as #Section377, #377verdict, #LoveIsLove, #LoveWins, #LGBTQIA+, #IndiaRejects377, #377Scrapped, #IndiaForGayRights and so on. Since then, tweets haven't stopped and have been surfacing all over India. The Twitter deliberation in India is most encouraging and supportive of LGBTQIA+ rights. However, the small number of tweets that oppose the verdict perceives it as a threat to Indian Culture, Rites, Traditions, and the Family System. People are getting more usual with the concept of it and especially the younger generation who are the voices of the Future. The Bollywood movie "Shubh Mangal Zyada Savdhaan" is one such step by India Cinema that has aggravated the LGBTQIA+ Rights movement in India. People are now opening up and talking about issues and rights.

1. Impact of Family Reactions on LGBTQIA+ Person: Conflict and Rejection

Many LGBTQIA+ adults hesitate to openly share their lives because of fear of rejection and serious negative reactions. Lack of communication and understanding of their gender identity leads to fighting and family disruptions, that can result in an LGBTQIA+ adolescent being removed from or forced out of the home. Many LGBTQIA+ youth end up in juvenile detention, are placed in Foster care, or on footpaths because of family conflict. All these factors undermine their self-worth and increase the risk of HIV and the use of health deteriorating substances such as drugs, alcohol, etc. They also become a victim of many heinous crimes and many of them indulge in committing crimes.

2. School Bullying and Harassment

Recently, a 19-year-old boy committed suicide after he was bullied and mocked for being homosexual. The effects of bullying lead to depression, anxiety attacks, homelessness, school drop-out, Suicide attempt, etc. Harassment and ragging of LGBTQIA+ youth marginalize them in society and make them vulnerable to social exclusion. Queer person hesitates to disclose their identity as they know that after disclosure they are likely to experience homophobia and heterosexism from friends, family, and society. The majority of young LGBTQIA+ people think that coming out would endanger their physical and emotional well-being and therefore they choose to hide their identities, a practice which can result in suicide ideation, depression, and alcohol and drug use.

3. Conversion Therapy

Conversion therapy is a risky and discredited practice that falsely claims to change a person's gender identity or sexual orientation or expression. Due to discrimination and biased behavior against LGBTQIA+ people, people continue to put their children in conversion therapy, despite its rejection by mental health organizations. Recently, a 21-years-old LGBTQIA+ activist, Anjana Harish from Kerala's Kannur district committed suicide on the 12th of May in North Goa, under the enigmatic circumstance. She was forced into conversion therapy by her parents. Conversion therapy enhances the stigma of homosexuality and it is also against the principle of justice. Even after the decriminalization of homosexuality, instances like these are continuing, highlighting that just the decriminalization of homosexuality is not sufficient, there is a need for criminalizing conversion therapy and other such practices.

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

As we already know that the condition of the LGBTQIA+ community is vulnerable during normal times, we cannot even imagine what they are going through during these tough times during the global pandemic COVID-

19. Apart from the absence of healthcare, employment, housing, and other such domains, Bias and limited anti-discrimination protection laws have amplified the situation making it worst.

- Older people from the LGBTQIA+ community mostly live alone and rely on their chosen family for care and support. Like any other old person, they experience physical health problems, which ultimately make them vulnerable to severe complications from deadly COVID-19. They experience discrimination from healthcare providers, caregivers, and every other layman in society which eventually put them at great risk. Generally, these people live in congregate care facilities such as nursing homes or senior living communities, despite the increased risk of meeting persons having COVID-19, they also are exposed to poverty and economic insecurity.
- As we all know that countrywide lockdown has made everybody stay at home, due to which LGBTQIA+ youth are being forced to stay at home with their oppressor and perpetrators of physical and mental violence. A 24-year-old customer service executive, Mehak identifies herself as a transgender woman. She lives in Kandivali, she says it is getting difficult for her to deal with her Conservative family members during this stringent lockdown. My family does not approve of my gender identity, my father uttered that I am dead for him. Living under the same roof where you are being considered dead is something horrible and heart-wrenching.
- Transition-related medical care, which is life-preserving care for transgender people, may be regarded as non-urgent and postponed or can canceled to the outbreak of COVID-19. However, the two components of this transition-related medical care must not be deemed non-urgent: continuation of ongoing hormonal therapy and surgical aftercare for previously- conducted surgeries. Delays or cancellations of care can lead to infection, surgical scarring, and re-injury sometimes requiring additional surgical correction, chronic pain, hormone imbalances, Osteoporosis, and migraines. Physical consequences may lead to psychological consequences also.

Transgender persons specifically those belonging to the Hijra/ Kinnar communities have no access to daily income as their traditional livelihoods are affected due to stringent lockdown and social distancing. Recently, The Delhi High Court refused to entertain a PIL seeking directions to take steps to protect and provide welfare measures such as food, accommodation, and medicines, to sex workers and the LGBTQIA+ community member in Delhi to ensure their survival during the lockdown.

- Due to a lack of proper identification documents like Aadhar cards, Ration cards, PAN cards, etc., these people are not able to get access to social security schemes and government relief care packages because of the requirement of a government identification document or linking Aadhar, the biometric ID, to bank accounts as a prerequisite to receiving financial aid.
- LGBTQIA+ people have previously been blamed for disasters, both manmade and natural, and there are scattered reports of this happening in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In some countries, reports suggest an increase in homophobic and transphobic rhetoric. There are also reports of police using COVID-19 directives to attack and target LGBTQIA+ organizations. In at least one country, the State of Emergency has been used to propose a decree that would prevent transgender people from legally changing their gender in identity documents. A few countries have put in place restrictions of movement based on sex, with women and men allowed to leave their homes on alternate days, which has put non-binary and trans people at risk of heightened discrimination, as they may get stopped and questioned.

Are LGBTQIA+ People More at Risk from COVID-19?

Due to fear of encountering LGBTQIA+ phobia and as a result of social stigma and discrimination, they are forced into poverty and homelessness without having any support system. They are more reluctant to get to healthcare facilities and this may lead them to avoid symptoms of COVID-19 and take proper advice from doctors, finally ending up with tested coronavirus positive. A Transgender person is disproportionately affected by HIV, which may have weakened the immune system that can make them more vulnerable to coronavirus. Additionally, those who earn their livelihood through sex work might continue to indulge in sex work even during the pandemic, and end up with putting themselves and others at risk of contracting the virus.

6. CONCLUSION

India is a developing country and to boost the growth and development of the country there is a need for progressive law in which all citizens are equal and have equal opportunities to do substantial efforts for the future of the Nation. India has finally managed to cast off one of the most prejudicial pieces of Victorian-era legislation. But same-sex marriage is still not legalized. It is the marriage that bestows rights and responsibilities

on two people such as Adoption, inheritance, tax planning life insurance policies, and other such rights. Marriage is a basic right for every citizen in a country like India where so much importance is attached to marriage, but the LGBTQIA+ community is still devoid of it. What would be the point of decriminalizing homosexuality in a country like India where LGBTQIA+ people are still unable to get married to the partner of their choice? The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 5th August 2019 after so many efforts still it serves no good to the LGBTQIA+ community and has several lacunae.

Researchers want to suggest that there is a need to strengthen the transgender bill and make some amendments favorable to the LGBTQIA+ community. It is a need of the hour to legalize same-sex marriage and relieve Indian history from this dark spot. Homosexuality will remain a stigma as long as people are willing to shove it under the carpet of oblivion. The Government should make efforts to educate the public and raise public awareness about sexual minorities. The three organs of the State and the society must ensure that the morality and values emanated from the Constitution prevail and guide us towards a better tomorrow with dignity, sexual autonomy, and individuality for the LGBTQIA+ community in India.

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POSITION OF TRANSGENDER IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this research was to identify the current Position of Transgenders and allow peoples to describing the current scenario of the transgender communities. Transgender is a person whose gender identity differs from the sex of the person at birth. Their gender behavior identity does not match with their biological sex from the time of their birth.

The major significance of that study is to analyze the data that are related to their communities that are not in main stream. Many organizations work together to gather primary data related to their human rights, health, and education. With the help of this data, we can investigate the current situation of these communities in across India. The scope of these data is extremely helpful for government bodies to take an effective approach towards them.

As per the many data analytics shows that the many transgender communities are not in acceptable position in society. We approached many organizations and NGO's for collecting data regarding to transgender issues and their social values. The data we have says lots about transgender and gives a clear viewpoint regarding their problems. The contribution of transgender to the society is respectable because of many Acts and laws were passed in last few years by Indian Government.

The current scenario states that LGBT community are aware about their existence in society and their remarkable contribution towards the betterment of society. Now the law should work and provide equality and respectful treatment of transgender. And society should accept transgender as one of us. This will lead to peace and harmony in society.

INTRODUCTION

In Ancient India, the Hijras or Kinnars have a recorded cultural history which relate back to thousands of years. Their references can be seen in Hindu texts such as Mahabharata and Ramayana. One of the many forms of shiva involves him merging with his wife as Parvati to become Ardhanari holds significance in the community. The depiction of this community was often the theme of art and paintings like sculptures in Sanchi, Ajanta, Amaravati. They held important positions in courts and various administrative duties during the Mughal-era in India. In India, transgender is known by different names like Hijras, Kinnar, Jogtas, Joggapas, Khusras and Shiv shakti's.

Violence against transgender is discrimination with their sexuality condition because they do not fit into traditional gender categories. It was hopefully expected that society would recognize their sexual condition and respect their genders. The transgenders or hijra community is still revered by society at large. They are often victims of hate crimes and abuse. They were also described as minorities in faced many criticisms regarding their identity and gender behavior because they do not match with their biological sex from the time of birth.

According to 2011 census there were around 4.88 lakh trans-people in India. They are in considerable number but they are not considered as human beings. The issue of transgender is still a matter of quest in societal and cultural context from many decades. Gender equality remains a challenging factor towards the development of society in existing believes that regarding to gender stratification in many social structures of India. Still many people have risen from this irrespective of all bigotries and troubles and have made a name for themselves. In this paper we discuss the issue of discrimination encountered by many transgender communities. And we will also discuss the welfare schemes and initiatives started by the government while giving some inferences from the famous NALSA judgement.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The aim of the study was to describe the issues with transgenders and represent them in main stream of society. The objective behind this study is clear and impactful in various fields to give a preference to transgender community and reach their access in government policymakers, science also giving them opportunities in education, health and various sectors that is needed for pushing the limitation of their genders and changing the mindset of the society that helpful for them to live with full freedom like others do.

METHODOLOGY

Information Resource:

It is mixed research of the study, in that we done to collect secondary data from NGOs and other government bodies.

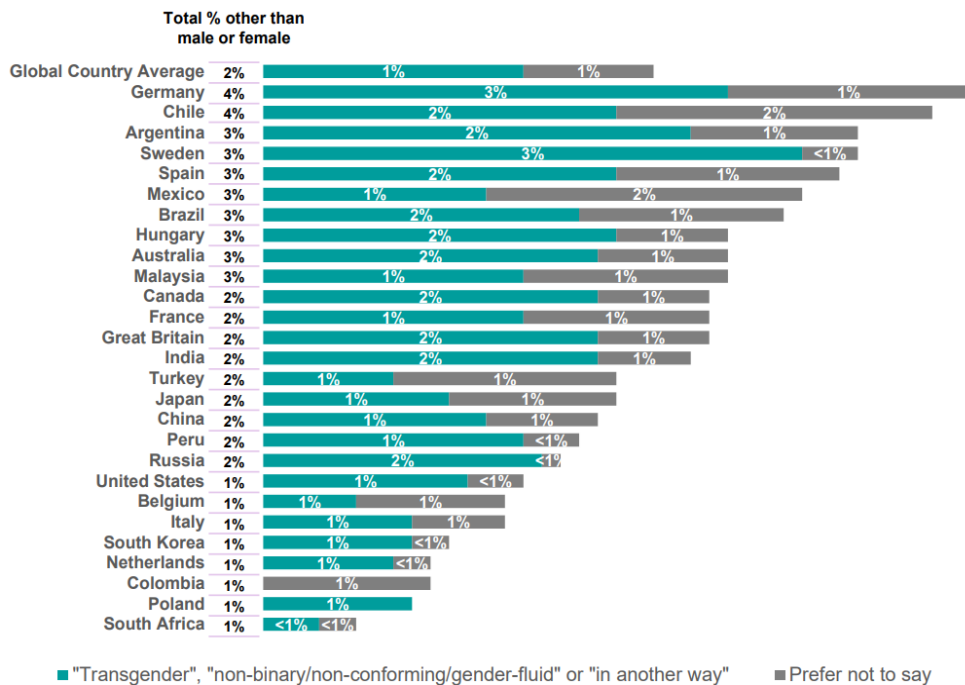
The sampling of the data was drawn NGOs based on health and education. This data is in the form of secondary format. Here we directly get data in the form of graphs and charts. The data is regarding to the transgender life and identity ratio.

Procedure for that research that we took some LGBT reports of health and rights of them. We get some references from many other research that is like our research.

Search Strategy

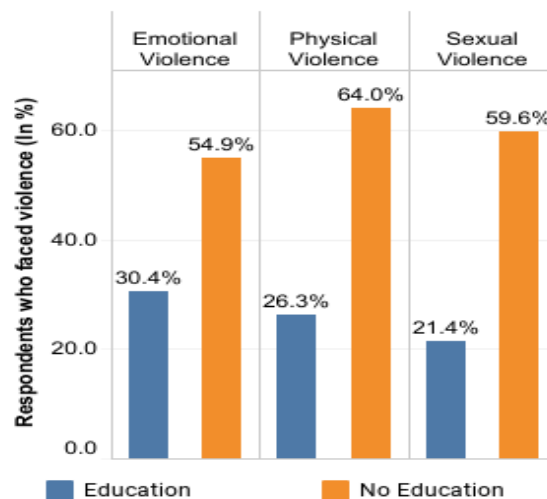
For better understanding to the LGBT community, we held a google form survey and collect a primary data that regarding to transgender current position in society and found some major loop holes of the society in the perspective of transgenders.

Data Management



This data showing only 1%-2% of adults can identified as neither male nor female

Violence Against Transgender Indians By Education



This data shows the violence against transgender is high with those transgender are not well educated as compare to transgender they are complete their education is low.

DATA ANALYSIS

The above data is an analysis done with the study topics that focused on health and identical issues of transgender. In this process we took both primary data and secondary data. Here the primary data was collected from google form surveys used for the health and education related issues in English language and translated (on phone) to local language by the researcher and the secondary data that we collected from other sources that are used to utilized the important points or topic from the primary data for further research. We also discussed all rights that are given to the LGBT community and analyses resultant outcome that we get in the primary data.

The Government of India recognized them as a third gender and giving them some rights as a citizen or as a part of this society.

- Right to live: This right gives them to live with dignity without any restriction and follow their tradition as well as their culture.
- Right to vote: This right gives a power to choose a public leader through voting who works for their community as well as they can choose a transgender as a public leader to represent their community.
- Right to Marry or Adopt children: This right has some constitutional acts to marry or adopt children without any legal restrictions. They can also adopt children without marrying a person and this is legal for them.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In today India, we see multiple LGBT communities are came forward and do their best in all fields. But there is certain limitation are there. Such as, they are not the first-choice or they do not get a preference unlike other genders. There is lack of awareness in society regarding their genders also they are not differentiating as a third gender. So, they face social stigma among the people. But the judiciary takes a giant leap to help them to achieve their fight for autonomy. For that we suggest our opinion that will be helpful for them and improve the status of transgenders: -

- 1) We need to hold seminars, workshops and training programs that will help the community to access legal mechanisms.
- 2) Every public authority and private entities need to give representation of transgender persons. That will be helpful to reach their voice to every person or the representative of peoples.
- 3) Gender equality plays a key role in the development of a country or state. The legislature shall make effective laws to ensure justice to every gender.
- 4) Education curriculum must make the young children aware about their gender equality with the help of proper guidance of parents as well as teachers.
- 5) There is a need for surveys and studies regarding this issue and statistical data is required for the better implementation. This data helps in many topics like the gender economic effect, crimes against transgender, representation of transgender in school or universities also income generation and overall development.
- 6) Need a committee for establishing communication through hotlines and helpline numbers to give help and support. With the help of this we can also provide a counselling to any transgender regarding their issues.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

LGBT communities have exists from long time and the issue related to their gender and representation is remain same or changed in further years. But we need some laws that give power to these communities for their better future. With the help of these studies, we can spread awareness and need to work on gender equality. For that we can organize seminars and we can encourage students to do some research on these communities because many transgenders are living in the shadow of fear or anxiety or mental trauma. For that we can do many things for them and the conclusion of that part is the research cannot be completed with the help of these people.

THE CONTENT ANALYSIS ON THE LGBTQ PORTRAYAL IN INDIAN CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

Film is the main medium that impacts individuals' perspective and it has contributed a great deal to the spread of queer awareness. This paper examine how the sexual minorities like LGBTQ are addressed in Indian Cinema. The target of this paper is to examine the way in which LGBTQ is depicted in film and how much that depiction impacts people Perceptions. Cinema was and will remain one of the strongest media for influencing peoples' perceptions especially on emerging issues of an ever-changing society A moderate and humane treatment of the subjects can contribute positively to liberating the general public from heteronormativity and homophobia. Sexual minorities are gradually tracking down place in Indian movies. The paper discusses how movies have addressed various talks on the LGBT topic over the long run. Simply it required very nearly 40 years for Indian film to depict a gay person. From that point forward, there have been differential portrayals of the LGBT people group and the crowd in this homophobic culture has additionally responded differentially.

Keyword: Indian cinema, Society, LGBT, transgender portrayal

INTRODUCTION

One of the best source of influence of media on present day life has been cinema. Film, from one perspective, thinks about changing social reality and effects people's perception on the other. It has turned into a powerful vehicle for correspondence in the fields of culture, training, relaxation and many more . Indian cinema took a long time to make films based homosexual themes. Yet, the depictions generally speaking have been undecided, reflecting areas of strength for a division on the issue. At times, be that as it may, the depictions have been sympathetic, touching the roots of the problem.

Gender minority is a group whose sexual identity and practices are not generally accepted in society. The "LGBTI" acronym stands for Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. Our society deeply committed to the opinion that there are only two forms of sex .e., male and female. Heterosexuality has been defined as "Normal" and all other forms of sexuality are labelled as "Abnormal".

Homosexuality is not new phenomenon and are found in Hindu Mythology. Various ancient texts such as Manu Smriti, Arthashastra, Kamasutra, Upanishads and Puranas have references.

There are also reports that same-sex activities are common among sannyasis, and members of the Orthodox Church, who cannot marry.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this paper is "Content Analysis". Content analysis is a research method for studying documents and communication artifacts. For this paper I have done content analysis of some selected Indian language films what I watched which feature sexual minorities. I have tried to capture the varying discourses that find reflection in the portrayal of homosexuality in Indian cinema in recent decades.

JOURNEY OF INDIAN CINEMA TOWARDS SEXUAL MINORITIES

The researchers began checking out the meaning of homosexuality in film during the 1970s.

With the changing society, the universe of film has also changed. The crowd becomes more lenient about the strange relations. The Indian film is as yet baffled about the projection of LGBT characters. The discussion on queer love tales has been a long one with exciting twists. It actually has a wave of awkwardness, disgrace, joke and the feeling of dread toward the public judgment and defamation. Hindi movies have attempted to remember gay subjects for their own specific manner. Yet, in such films the gay characters are a long way from the real world. The standard motion pictures constantly show a cartoon for the sake of a gay or LGBT character and the crowd also anticipate that these characters should bring some comic. The entertainment world is one of the strong powers to create new opinions or feelings.

Highlighting the LGBT characters in any Hindi film implies that they are only an object of mocking and joke. The director never set out to bring different sexual characters under one screen. Earlier during the 1960s and 1970s the characters of LGBT were portrayed as friends of hero or heroine. The characterization of LGBT was far from reality as they were just represented in the form of transvestite or cross dressed in order to evoke laughter.

PORTRAYAL OF THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY IN MOVIES: 1990-1999

It was the last two decades that the filmmakers are in a dilemma to choose the themes of the films, which is publicly accepted and does not hurt the morals and traditions of any community. As cinema is one of the most powerful, popular and accessible form of art which leaves a strong influence on the people.

Here, the researcher tabulating some of the movies of 1990 - 1999

Movie Name	Year	Portrayal
Saadak	1991	Transgender character- Depicted completely evil
Bombay	1995	The secular character of the hijra
Raja Hindustani	1996	Two homosexual characters Kammo and Gulab Singh as comic characters
Fire	1996	The concept of homosexuality, especially lesbianism
Tamanna	1997	The film was based on actual life of a eunuch.
Thulladha Manamum Thullum(Tamil Movie)	1999	A male showing signs of being effeminate and is mocked even by their own friends

2000-2020

It was after 2000 that the Indian Cinema was conscious about not mingling up the gay characters with the transgender.

Film like,

Kal Ho Na Ho (2003) - created a comic gay plot between two lead characters.

Dostana (2008),

Straight: Pinu Patel ki tedhi medhi love story (2009),

Kanchana in Muni 2: Kanchana (2011)- Transgender

Vishwaroopam (2013) - Trans person

Ek Ladki Ko dekha toh aisa laga (2019), and

Shubhmangal zyada sabhdhan (2020)

Various movies have also dealt with different themes relating to homosexuality.

ANALYSES OF COUPLE OF MOVIES

1. Fire – 1996 - Homosexual

Fire, released in 1996, is the most controversial film in the history of Indian Cinema. It was written and directed by Deepa Mehta and is an IndoCanadian romantic drama film. It was the first transnational film which was commercially released in various global cities. After release it had a negative impact on the main stream audience. The film got banned in Delhi and Mumbai, where its screening stopped after two violent demonstrations. The film was described as “unconventional”, “sumptuous” and not “lesbian” or “homosexual”. The film is about two daughters-in-law of a family, who are not happy in their respective marriage. Radha (Shabana Azmi) is the wife of elder brother Ashok (Kulbhushan Kharbanda) and Sita (Nandita Das) is the wife of younger brother Jatin (Javed Jaffrey). Ashok had no intimate relation with his wife, as he was under the influence of a Swamiji. Jatin, on the other hand, had a Chinese girlfriend and thus had no interest in Sita. These denials brought both the daughters-in-law closer and they, as an alternative exploration, started having an affair. Having been caught red handed by Ashok, Radha confesses that she loves and Sita and wants to be with her.

2. Aligarh – 2016 - Homosexual

Aligarh is an Indian biographical drama film released worldwide on 26 February 2016. This film is directed by Hansal Mehta and written by Apurva Asrani. This film is based on the life of Ramchandra Siras, who was an Indian Linguist and author and was a professor at the Aligarh Muslim University. He got suspended from his job just because he was homosexual. This is a true story of Ramchandra Siras (played by Manoj Bajpayee), a professor in Aligarh Muslim university. He worked in that university for 20 years and suddenly got suspended because of his different sexual orientation. His intimate video with a rickshaw puller was released in the internet which resulted in many protests resulting in his suspension from his job. After this a journalist Deepu Sebastian (Rajkumar Rao) helps him and the court gives verdict in his favour. This film is in fact the best gay-themed film in Indian cinema. Thanks to the directors like Hansal Mehta and many others, Bollywood has come to accept

homosexuality as a serious mainstream theme. Some of the well-known filmmakers in the industry were otherwise interested only in the “funny” portrayal of gay people. This film is more significant because it has boldly represented the attitude, pressure, prejudices towards gay people.

3. Thimiru Pudichavan – 2018 – Transgender Character and Employability

In Tamil movie - Thimiru Pudichavan, director created a transgender character played by Sindhu, a transgender actress, for his police tale. In this film given importance to create employability for transgender people. This character was inspired by Tamil Nadu's first transgender police woman.

4. Super Deluxe – 2019 – Transgender

Vijay Sethupathi played role as transgender character and his segment featuring his wife and son questions gender dynamics and one's basic freedom to choose who he or she wants to be.

5. Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan – 2020 - Gay Man and His Partner

This Hindi movie, directed by Hitesh Kewalya, portrays queer people in a more realistic and dignified manner, although through humour. Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan is a story of Kartik Singh (Ayushmann Khurana) who overcomes all the social obstacles to be with his lover Aman Tripathi (Jitendra Kumar). The main characters of this movie do not hide their masculine and gay identities.

6. Thittam Irandu – 2021 – Genetic Disorder

Director Vignesh Karthik's and writer to make a great message where we are not the reason for harmonic and genetic disorders. Social responsibility of accepting people what they are but that is not the case in these days. The film has Aishwarya Rajesh, Ananya Ramprasad, Subash Selvam, Paval Navageethan, Gokul Anand and others in the crucial roles.

Art has the immense power to change and dictate opinions on social issues like divorce, violence, and identity. When it comes to identity in Indian cinema, there has been a recent influx of LGBTQIAP+ centric movies like *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga*, *Badhaai Do*, and *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*. Above discussed movies focused on the identity issues like lesbian and gay albeit in a typical Bollywood masala style.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Cinema was and will remain one of the strongest media for influencing peoples' perceptions especially on emerging issues of an ever-changing society. So it is the duty of directors to make films on the LGBT subjects.
- Government also should keep tax free for this kind of subjects.
- Section 377 of the IPC by the Supreme Court on 6 September 2018 it can be expected that the filmmakers would be able to make films on queer themes

CONCLUSION

Times are changing and thereupon sexual minorities are slowly finding an area in Indian cinema. As trans people, their lives are extremely hard, there's tons of stigma within the society. The shift from negative to positive representation of the “queer” in the films has helped to change the societal attitude towards the LGBTQ community. Some of the young directors have challenged heteronormativity through their projection of gay themes. The reaction of audience of these films also holds a touch of patriarchy. People are gradually becoming sympathetic towards gay relations but still find difficulty in accepting lesbian or gay relationships wholeheartedly. After the decriminalization of The films being popular can do a lot in bringing about the necessary discursive changes in giving the LGBT communities their rightful place in society. Many people have different sexual orientation but they are still in their closet because of the fear of discrimination heteronormative society; they will come out in the open and claim their identities when the overall ambience in the society changes. Films like *Aligarh* and *Shubh Mangal zyada saavdhan* capture the changing moments of a major social transformation.

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LGBTQ INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM: ARE THE TEACHERS READY?

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ABSTRACT

We have come across cases of ragging, bullying of LGBTQ members very often in our society. Even after having the transgender bill and decriminalisation of Section 377, LGBTQ members face discrimination in our society. They come across rejection at home, school, workplace and all other spheres of their life. Most of the LGBTQ remain in closet and some commit suicide. To end this discriminatory behaviour we have to work to change minds right from school level. The data that is fed into the minds of the children, remain forever. Teachers have the power to influence the minds and create a picture where people of all sexual orientation and gender non binary co-exist peacefully. It is possible through the LGBTQ inclusive curriculum where the children learn about LGBTQ, communities' right from their child hood. We need to know how the teachers perceived the need for LGBTQ inclusive curriculum at the primary grade. Thus the researcher used qualitative approach in this exploratory study aiming to collect perceptions of teachers towards implementation of LGBTQ inclusive curriculum at Primary level. The researcher uses blogging as a reflective tool for collecting data from the teachers. The responses of the participant teachers was analysed through the axial coding process. The teachers perceived implementation of LGBTQ inclusive curriculum as something which helps in Overcoming psychological barriers, Achieving social justice, Accommodating. The challenges perceived by the teachers pointed towards Narrow mindedness as well as inability to see relevance.

Keywords: LGBTQ inclusive curriculum, sexual orientation, LGBTQ acceptance

INTRODUCTION**Discrimination faced by LGBTQ**

LGBT community in India faces lots of discrimination and harassment because of their sexual orientation as compared to the heterosexual people. Be it home or school or even workplace we mostly focus on the Women as a victim and completely ignore that even LGBTQ members face a lot of sexual harassment. Being LGBTQ is perceived as sickness by many people in India.

According to an online article NEWS 18 (June 2021), Forced marriages as well as Corrective rapes are witnessed in Kerala by many LGBTQ members and the sad part is that the parents of these kids get the corrective rapes done thinking that their child will be heterosexual once they get raped. This puts many of the LGBTQ members into fearful situations and some of them even fall into hands of tantriks, ayurvedic doctors and pandits who call this as perversion and assure the parents that they can cure such behaviour.

At work place this community faces harassment in various forms like they come across homophobic jokes or at times get insulted by the colleagues for being a member of LGBTQ community. This forces them to hate their own self and isolate at the workplace. As per an online article, the International Labour Organisation expressed that workplace discrimination affects not only the LGBTQ person's economic status but also the national economy. Small and medium industry associations and the trade union should work with Government so as to address the discrimination faced by the LGBT community. ("End discrimination, frame specific policies for LGBTIQ+ workers: ILO", 2022)

LGBT community has faced so many fights for their rights violation. Their struggle began from the year 1991 where Aids Bhedbhav Virodhi Andolan exposed the facts about the violence faced by Gay community to NALSA judgement where we have come across the landmark decision of legal recognition of Third gender. Even though we have the Transgender bill however do we see this minority community in the education arena or at the workplace co existing peacefully? This is something that cannot be ignored and a deep discussion is required to address this issue.

There are many questions which may be raised for discussion. Do the homosexual members have the same rights as us? Ask yourself if you are a Principal, are you ready to accept an LGBT community member in your college as a student or If you are an employer would you see the credentials, talents and abilities of an individual or the sexual orientation would be the main criteria for recruiting?

Apart from the discrimination or hatred faced at home and workplace, they face discrimination even on social networking sites. Abusive language as Gud, Chakka, baylya laundebazi, chakletpanthi, etc. puts the LGBTQ members in humiliating situation. This is to the extent that the transgender members develop hatred

called internalised transphobia which happens by seeing hatred for themselves in the eyes of others. For homosexuals they develop internalised homophobia which comes as hatred towards self after being disliked and hated by others. Further these sexual minorities either go into depression or they show suicidal tendencies.

To save themselves and to survive in our society the transgender members suffer a lot. They need to be binary for which they get gender surgery assignment. Also the homosexual members of the society remain in closet as they are aware that they are treated as abnormal. One of the research stresses on global closet and that around 83% of the world's LGBT community members remain in closet and hide their sexual orientation from all or most of them (Pachankis J.E, 2019). It was also mentioned that concealment leads to anxiety, substance abuse, depression and makes one more vulnerable to infectious disease.

According to an online article on Deccan herald.com which mentions about a research study by IPSOS research 2021, approximately 17% of Indians identify as LGBTQ+ community however the numbers may not be accurate as most of them choose to remain in closet. (Verma H, 2022)

School Experiences of LGBTQ Children

LGBTQ students face discrimination in the form of humiliation and bullying at school. One such case was mentioned in an online article India.com, when a class X student of a school in Haryana's Faridabad ended his life after he suffered harassment from his schoolmates. The school kids abused the student by calling him homosexual. (Shaurya, 2022.) There are many such cases where heterosexual students are not accepting towards the homosexual kids. Another similar case was seen at Gopalpuran Chennai where a girl openly wrote on social networking site about her first crush being another girl. Here the teachers called the girls prostitute. Even the Principal instructed the girls to kill themselves. All this depressed one of the girls and she committed suicide.

Teachers are expected to be more sensitive only then we can make great changes. In one of the online article TheHindu.com, it was mentioned about one of the schools in India have started sensitising students by having a dialogue about homosexuality through different workshops. Teachers from this school allow students to voice out their opinion on the laws related to homosexuality and opinion of children about it. As per the recommendation of Meghna Mehra, All-India Queer Association, it was mentioned that teachers needed to be sensitised towards the LGBTQ members at the B.Ed. level. (Kumar & Bhanj, 2022)

Students of Primary classes are aware of their own sexuality as well as diverse sexualities. However the teachers in Primary classes at teacher education level need to be aware of gender and sexuality. Further they need to be well trained in making a dialogue with students on the theme of gender and sexuality. An online article The Hindu.com critically pointed towards role of the Teacher Education institutions towards achieving LGBT inclusion. It was stressed that Teacher Education Institutions are expected to train teachers to create safe spaces and contribute towards creating safe and inclusive classrooms. Teachers could be trained to design lesson plans based on the theme of LGBT inclusion. (Sarda, A., 2020)

There is a need for having safe inclusive schools which accept the LGBTQ students. The school experiences of LGBTQ kids are traumatising for them. According to an online article Indianexpress.com, it mentioned about UNESCO survey on school experiences of LGBTQ students in school. 60% of transgender kids complained about high school experiences of physical harassment, 43% students expressed sexual harassment at elementary school level. Out of all only 18% of students reported school authorities on harassment faced at school. Children face lot of issues like reduced peer interactions, depression and anxiety. (Tulsyan, 2021)

The recent policy NEP 2020 recommended of providing "equitable quality education" to transgender and girls student. The policy expected to have gender inclusion fund for better access of transgender kids but completely ignores the school experiences of LGBTQ kids. The policy misses to note the UNESCO survey data where LGBTQ students come across negative experiences in the form of getting bullied and become victim at hands of heterosexual students. In the online article The quint.com which was related to NEP 2020 it is suggested that kindergarden is a right age to have healthy conversations around sex and sexuality. This was recommended as an aim to reduce bullying, social isolation and discrimination based on sexuality. (Sharma S. & Babbar K., 2020)

LITERATURE REVIEW**Exclusion of LGBT in Society**

Homes are not safe for LGBTQ members. One of the gay men in Chennai feared that his family would be abused, attacked and ridiculed after he came out as a gay man preferring male partner in Chennai. However he felt safe due to the support of community organisations. Swasti health centre mentioned in a survey that almost 52.4% men faced violence, 55% of the men faced physical sexual abuse and 46.5% of men came across emotional torture by their parents after being in the closet (Chaturvedi, 2018)

Even basic rights are denied to the transgender people in India. As per the online article by indianmasterminds.com, Palghar witnessed cases where in case of deaths of transgenders the local people denied them the rights of cremation as they viewed this community as social outcast. Here the District Collector of Palghar, Dr. Manik Gursal, worked towards the inclusion of transgenders by fighting back for the cremation rights of transgender. (Goyal, 2022)

The Koramangala case has shown that the torture faced by the LGBT members begins at home. The recent times of India article mentioned of one of the members of the lesbian couple who went missing since she faced domestic violence from the father. Even after she complained this to police officials the matter was not addressed. Finally she left home (TNN, 2017)

Another such incident of right violation could be seen when a transcouple was denied right to dignity as they were not allowed to adopt a child. As per Newsminute.com, Akkai Padmashali and her spouse Vasu faced discrimination when they struggled two and half years to adopt a child. Not only this Akkai had suffered discrimination when trying to find a house on rent or get a bank loan. (Kurian, 2019)

LGBT Harassment and Bullying

LGBT harassment in India begins very early at school. In an online article The Times of India, it points towards the ground reality of the LGBTQ students at school. 60% and 50% of the respondents in a survey said that they faced physical bullying when they were in middle/high school and higher secondary school respectively, while 43% of respondents admitted about being sexually harassed as a student in primary school. The article stressed on the school authorities harassing the LGBT students. 18% of LGBT students who were bullied as well as 53% of LGBT students reported incidents of bullying to school authorities who further took disciplinary actions on the person who bullied. (Menon, 2019)

According to another article Businessinsider.in, it is mentioned that nearly 70% of the Indian LGBTQ students who face bullying face psychological problems like anxiety as well as depression. Students in primary class face bullying from the peers due to which they are not able to focus on the studies. Regarding the cases of bullying at high school as well as middle school we can witness almost 60% of the students facing physical bullying. The article stressed on UNESCO's work on the LGBTQ students facing harassment, over 73% students avoid social activities as well as disclosing the sexual orientation. (Sindwani, 2019)

LGBT Discrimination is seen even at Kolkata where ten students were asked to confess that they were lesbians. The students were made to write a letter which the parents of the students did not accept as they felt that the students were blamed into signing the letter. The school justified saying that this action would enable students aimed to come on the "right course". This act clearly points towards humiliation caused by the school as the students were singled out in the class. (Biswas P., 2018)

Bullying is an issue faced by LGBT student in day to day life. This was witnessed in one of the cases in Tiruchirappalli when a 15-year-old student of a private school committed suicide due to constant bullying by his classmates. The boy was teased for his manner of walking which the friends described as feminine. Due to frustration the boy committed suicide. The parents of this child were not satisfied with the attitude of school teachers towards the issue of bullying. ("15-yr-old Boy commits Suicide after Friends tease his Behaviour as Feminine", 2018)

Why LGBT Inclusive Curriculum?

According to an article on American Bar Association, school experiences of adolescent students can impact the academic growth as well as social-emotional growth. Physical health as well as overall mental well-being is also related to the school experiences. For the LGBTQ youths we need to have a positive school climate as well as social and emotional support so as to achieve their full potential. Academic motivation of the LGBTQ students is affected in case positive school climate is missing. This further impacts on psychological health resulting due to feelings of disconnectedness and sadness. Not only this it may also result in suicidal ideation. (Bittker, 2022)

LGBTQ students face issues at school which affect them psychologically. The students who belong to the sexual minority groups generally face homophobia as they have no supports at their family level, among their peers, as well as at their school. Thus they have greater risk of having suicidal thoughts (Espelage, Holt, & Poteat, 2010; see also Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006; Hershberger & D'Augelli, 1995). To address the sexual minorities we need to create safer environments and positive outcomes for the LGBTQ youth through the Bullying prevention programs where discussions about sexual orientation and sexual identity can be incorporated (Robinson & Espelage, 2011).

In a survey of LGBTQ and straight middle and high school students from California, it was found that the students perceived the LGBTQ-inclusive curricula as a supportive curricula. It made them feel more safer as well as it created an awareness of bullying faced by the LGBTQ members at the individual and school levels.

The literature review clearly points out towards exclusion faced by the LGBTQ in society as well as school. The LGBTQ community face a lot of discrimination even when trying to avail basic rights. They face harassment and bullying right from childhood. They also develop psychological problems like anxiety, depression or even committing suicides. They need to get fair treatment like the other members in society. The discrimination that they come across should be addressed through an LGBT inclusive curriculum. It makes the students feel same and aware of bullying faced by LGBT students.

Theoretical Underpinings

LGBT students are the most marginalised ones in Indian context as we have seen them dropping out or else committing suicides. They face issues like name calling, rumours, obscene notes, social isolation, physical and sexual assault, and even death threats (UNESCO, 2012). Cummins' empowerment theory proposes that the LGBT students who belong to the marginalised minority groups in India could be empowered or even discouraged by peer relationships as well as interactions with their teachers. The theory suggests that the school leaders are responsible in bringing practices such that the LGBT students could be either empowered or disabled (Cummins, 1986). Thus the researcher thought of using this framework to know whether how the Teachers as school leaders perceive the initiative of such a pedagogical practice of infusing LGBT inclusive elements into the existing curriculum.

Objectives

- To analyse the perceptions of teachers towards implementation of LGBT inclusive curriculum in India.
□□ To provide recommendations for teachers willing to create LGBTQ inclusive curriculum for safe inclusive classrooms.

Research Questions

What are the perceptions of Teachers towards implementation of LGBT inclusive curriculum?

METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN

Here the researcher uses qualitative research method since the study aims to know the perceptions of teachers towards implementation of LGBTQ inclusive curriculum. The researcher tried to present the need for LGBTQ inclusion through the blog written on e-blogger site. Further a question was posed to know how the teachers perceived infusion of LGBTQ inclusive concepts. The teachers could write their opinions as well as perceived challenges in response to the blog.

Participants

11 teachers who are working at different schools of Mumbai were taken as a sample for the study.

Sampling technique

Due to availability of teachers convenient sampling was done. Random teachers were picked up to know what the existing teachers think about implementing LGBTQ inclusive curriculum at Primary level. Also Purposive sampling was used since the sample was deliberately identified as teachers since if the teachers perceived the implementation of LGBT inclusive curriculum at Primary level positively they would contribute their best towards creating a safe environment through the LGBT inclusive curriculum.

DATA COLLECTION: TOOL

A blog was used as a means for connecting with the teachers as the research subjects and to generate opinions in the form of data. The researcher wrote an article based on implementation of LGBT inclusive curriculum and posted it on the blog page. As the researcher planned of raising an opinion in most of the teachers who come across the article, so at the end of the article a thought provoking question was posted by the researcher. The researcher thought of using a blog as a tool for data collection as it has

always been an effective tool for identifying perspectives, biases, and reflective findings. Blog as a tool for data collection helped the researcher so as to provide the teachers freedom to express their opinion on a very controversial topic and this was possible more on an online mode rather than offline face to face mode. Also the researcher used a blog since it was possible for the teachers to comfortably express their opinions in the online mode for such a topic which has not been discussed earlier.

DATA ANALYSIS

The responses of the participants collected through the blog were analysed using axial coding

Themes	Constructs/Codes	Participants opinions
Overcoming Psychological barriers	Identifying biases	<i>“Unless education system includes success stories, inspiring life journeys, or even day-to-day activities of queer people, the citizens of the next generation will not have a chance to think about their immoral biases towards certain sections of the society.”</i>
	Working on mind- set Developing Equality	<i>“Including these in the curriculum, will start a dialogue about the rights of this community and encourage students to develop an open mind-set towards changing their perspective to create a truly equal societal structure.”</i> <i>“Including these in the curriculum is the need of the hour so as to create right perspective about</i>
		<i>LGBTQ in the minds of students.”</i> <i>It is difficult although not impossible to change the mentality of people I think the right step would be give them the due representation in movies, ads, TV, and school curriculum as well</i>
	Moving towards Acceptance	<i>“In a country like India, one is bound to face some conservative thoughts but let's focus on the bright side that acceptance isn't far away. It takes a small initiative to go a long way.”</i> <i>“Acceptance is the road to all change”.</i>
	Feeling closeness	<i>Normalising people coming from different sexual orientations or gender identities are important. Once we normalise it, they won't grow up to see it differently.</i>
		<i>Mentioning LBGTO in curriculum will establish the sense of belongingness and sense of familiarity in the people.</i>
Achieving Social Justice	Protection of rights	<i>“This community have right to live with dignity and pride, hence they shouldn't be punished because of the ignorance of many.”</i> <i>I personally feel it is a great idea to not only share knowledge about this community but we can give them their rights and the respect they deserve</i>
	Respect their identity	<i>In the same manner it's very important to make them understand that LBGTO community is no different than them and every single individual deserve the same dignity on this planet.</i>
	Humanistic approach	<i>This article highlights the importance of imparting education in such a way as to make global, humane and responsible citizens out of little children, the ones who will respect and accept differences</i>
	Making students as change makers	<i>Teaching them while they're young is crucial because they grow up to change the world.</i>

Accommodating	Catering to the needs	<i>I believe that schools should educate kids about LGBT+ individuals and issues, not just because they are a vital part of society, but also because the LGBT+ population has challenges that must be addressed.</i>
	Platform to voice	<i>There should be scope of LGBTQ in our education system so that everyone can openly feel free to express their own identity.</i>
Challenge in implementing LGBT inclusive curriculum	Narrow mindedness as an obstacle	<i>But there is also a disadvantage; still today many Indians have narrow minded thinking which may not have courage to accept the truth.</i>
	Inability to see relevance	<i>Examples in the textbook should be added but it will have major obstacles considering how in India there exist restrictions for same-sex couples to adopt a child. Hence, the example here can be considered irrelevant cause it's sad how it's not allowed in India</i>

CONCLUSION

The study helped the participant teachers to perceive the implementation of LGBTQ inclusive curriculum as something which helps in **Overcoming psychological barriers, achieving social justice, Accommodating**. The challenges perceived by the teachers pointed towards **Narrow mindedness as well as inability to see relevance**.

IMPLICATIONS

For Teachers

- Teachers can read literature to know about the need for LGBT inclusive curriculum in today's context
- Advocacy programs can be organised by teachers so as to change mindset of people and achieve LGBT acceptance in Indian society. The reason is that teachers are the most influential members of the society.
- Teachers need work towards developing the skills of designing lesson plans and worksheets based on LGBT inclusion.
- Teacher can join learning communities where LGBT inclusive lesson plans can be shared.

For Administrators

- Administrator need to organise workshops for parents as well as teachers so that these stake holders develop acceptance towards the LGBT inclusive curriculum.
- Administrator must equip library with books based on the LGBT inclusive curriculum so that teachers can design lesson plans to achieve a safe school climate for the LGBT students.
- Staff training should be conducted so as to create a safe climate in the school for the LGBT students.

For Curriculum Developers

- Textbook writers need to develop a handbook with lesson plans infusing LGBT inclusive elements in the existing curriculum as a support for the in-service teachers
- Curriculum developers should bring in a component of LGBT inclusion across all the disciplines as a separate subject might not be taken with right attitudes

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LGBTQIA+ समूहाच्या सर्वंकष स्वीकाराचा विचार मांडणाऱ्या चार निवडक मराठी कादंबऱ्यांचा आशयानुगामी अभ्यास

(सतीश प्रधान ज्ञानसाधना महाविद्यालय, ठाणे आयोजित एक दिवसीय 'Being Me- Understanding Different Dimensions of LGBTQIA + community' या विषयावरील आंतरराष्ट्रीय चर्चासत्रासाठी(२०/०९/२०२२) सादर केलेला शोधनिबंध.)

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सहयोगी प्राध्यापक, मराठी विभाग, गोखले एज्यु. सोसायटीचे डॉ.टी.के.टोपे कला आणि वाणिज्य वरिष्ठ रात्र महाविद्यालय, परळ, मुंबई- १२.

मानवी संस्कृतीच्या जडणघडणीत सत्तासंबंधांनी मूलभूत कामगिरी बजावली आहे. वर्ण, जात, धर्म, लिंग, वर्ग, भाषा, प्रांत आदी स्तरांवर जे सत्तेत आहेत त्यांच्याकडून अन्य समूहांचे सर्रास शोषण होत राहिलेले आहे. सत्ता अबाधित राखणाऱ्या कल्पना आणि धारणा माणसाला केवळ जखडून टाकत नाहीत तर त्यांना अन्य माणसांचा द्वेष करायला शिकवतात. ही द्वेषमूलकता माणसांच्या मनाचे खच्चीकरण करते, जगण्याची उमेद संपवते, परिस्थितीशी दोन हात करून उभे राहण्याचे सामर्थ्यही हिसकावून घेते. पारंपरिक अर्थाने स्त्री आणि पुरुष यांना परस्परांविषयी वाटणारे लैंगिक आकर्षण हेच नैसर्गिक मानल्या जाणाऱ्या समाजात तृतीयपंथी, समलिंगी किंवा भिन्न लैंगिक जाणवा असणाऱ्या व्यक्तींचे माणूसपण न स्वीकारल्याने त्यांना सामाजिक दर्जा व प्रतिष्ठा नसणे, अर्थार्जनाची साधने उपलब्ध नसणे, त्यांचा लैंगिक वापर होत राहणे, मानसिक कोंडमारा होणे, कौटुंबिक सुखापासून वंचना होणे, त्यांचे एकूणच नागरी हक्कांपासून वंचित राहणे अशा भिन्न-भिन्न स्तरांवर शोषण होत राहिलेले आहे. भारताच्या संदर्भात अस्पृश्य, आदिवासी, भटके, सर्व जातवर्गातील स्त्रिया यांच्या शोषणाचे भान प्रबोधनकाळाने दिले. मानवी हक्कांसाठी केल्या गेलेल्या या लढ्यांच्या आणि भारतीय संविधानाने दिलेल्या मूलभूत अधिकारांच्या पार्श्वभूमीवर तृतीय पंथीयांच्या न्यायहक्कांची लढाई उभी राहिली. या सोबतीनेच समलिंगी आणि बहुविध प्रकारच्या लैंगिक जाणवा असणाऱ्या मानवी समूहाच्या ज्यास इंग्रजीत LGBTQIA+ समूह (३१ हून अधिक प्रकारच्या भिन्न लैंगिक जाणवा आहेत - डॉ. लीस दास) म्हणतात त्यांच्या हक्कांचाही प्रश्न पुढे आला. 'एलजीबीटी' हा शब्द गेल्या काही वर्षांत भारतात सतत कानावर पडू लागला आहे. 'लेस्बियन', 'गे', 'बायसेक्सुअल' आणि 'ट्रान्सजेन्डर' यांचे 'एलजीबीटी' हे लघुरूप आहे. समलिंगी स्त्रिया व पुरुष, स्त्री-पुरुष दोघांशी समागम करणारे आणि स्त्री -पुरुष यापैकी एकाची जैविक लिंग ओळख आणि विरुद्ध लिंगभाव असणारे हे लोक आहेत. सत्तरीच्या दशकात अमेरिकेत मोठी एलजीबीटी चळवळ उभी राहिली. समान नागरी हक्क मिळावे, आपली ओळख जाहीर करता यावी, सन्मानाने आणि समतेने जगता यावे यासाठी हा लढा उभा राहिला. बहुसंख्य लोक हे विरुद्धलिंगी आकर्षण असणारे आहेत, असे मानले जात असल्याने समलिंगी, वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असलेले, वैचित्र्य असलेले लोक हे नगण्य म्हणूनच दुर्लक्ष करण्याजोगे असून प्रस्थापित लैंगिक बहुसंख्याना ते धोकादायक वाटतात.त्यामुळे त्यांना विकृत, अनैसर्गिक आणि घृणास्पद ठरवले जाते. परंतु जसजशी काही निवडक लोकांनी आत्मविश्वासाने आपली लैंगिक ओळख जाहीर करण्याचे धाडस दाखवले तसतसे जगाच्या कानाकोपऱ्यातून वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असलेले लाखो लोक पुढे येऊ लागले. वर्षानुवर्षे चोरून, लपून व्यवहार करणारा हा समाज कोशातून बाहेर आला. कालांतराने या सप्तरंगी चळवळीत आणखी तीन आघाक्षरे जोडली गेली. 'क्यू' 'आय' 'ए' म्हणजेच 'क्विअर'(लैंगिक वैचित्र्य असलेले), 'इंटरसेक्स' (स्त्री आणि पुरुष या दोन्ही लिंगांची ठरावीक/ निश्चित जैविक वैशिष्ट्ये नसलेले) आणि 'असेक्सुअल' म्हणजे उपजतच लैंगिक संबंध ठेवण्यास उत्सुक नसलेले लोक. म्हणजेच काही लोक स्वतःला स्त्री किंवा पुरुष मानतात. काही यापैकी एक ओळख मानण्यास नाकारतात. काहींना दोन्ही ओळखी मान्य आहेत किंवा दोन्हींच्या अधेमध्ये आहेत, असे मानतात. हे केवळ निवड आहे किंवा मान्यता आहे म्हणून घडत नाही तर वयाच्या तिसऱ्या वर्षापर्यंतच हे प्रत्येक मुलाला जाणवते, कळते पण त्यांना मारूनमुटकून स्त्री किंवा पुरुष यापैकी एका ओळखीशी जमवून घेण्यास भाग पाडले जाते. पालकांचा, समाजाचा दबाव यामुळे अनेक पिढ्या अशी ओळख नसणाऱ्या व्यक्तींनी घुसमटत आपली आयुष्यं घालवली. सनातनी, बुरसटलेल्या विचारांच्या समाजात आजही सक्तीमुळे अनेकजण खऱ्या लैंगिक ओळखीसह जगू शकत नाही. (ढमढेरे: १६७). भारतातही समलिंगी व्यक्तींच्या तसेच व भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या समूहाच्या हक्काची लढाई सत्तरच्या दशकात सुरू झाली. अशोक रावकवी, आनंद ग्रोवर, मानवेंद्र सिंघ गोहिल आदी पहिल्या फळीतील कार्यकर्त्यांच्या अथक प्रयत्नांमुळे सप्टेंबर २०१८ मध्ये समलैंगिक संबंधास गुन्हा ठरवणारे ब्रिटीशकालीन कलम ३७७ हे रद्द केले गेले आणि चार दशके सुरू असलेला लढा न्यायाच्या दिशेने पुढे सरकला. 'जगभरातील संपूर्ण लोकसंख्येच्या १० टक्के लोक स्त्री-पुरुष द्वैतापलीकडची लैंगिक ओळख असलेले आहेत,असे समजले जाते. असे वेगळे असणे ही विकृती नाही. शारीरिक व्यंग किंवा अपंगत्व नाही, हा मानसिक आजार नाही, हे अनैसर्गिक नाही हे अनेक अभ्यास, संशोधनातून सिद्ध झाले आहे(ढमढेरे: १६७). असे असले तरी सामाजिक, आर्थिक सक्षमीकरण, लैंगिक जाणवांचा पालकांकडून मोकळेपणे स्वीकार याबाबतीतले प्रश्न गंभीर आहेत. मानवी जगण्याच्या या भिन्न-भिन्न पैलूंची अभिव्यक्ती साहित्यावकाशातून कोणत्याप्रकारे झाली आहे हे पाहणे प्रस्तुत

निबंधकारास आवश्यक वाटले. त्यादृष्टीने 'भिन्न'(कविता महाजन),' निव्व्या डोळ्यांची मुलगी(शिल्पा कांबळे) , 'अधुरा'(जी.के.ऐनापुरे) आणि 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू'(सचिन कुंडलकर) या मराठी कादंबऱ्यांचा संदर्भलक्षी अभ्यास येथे केला आहे.

साहित्यकृती ही सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक वस्तू असते. समाज-संस्कृतीच्या जडणघडणीचा तिला केवळ संदर्भ असतो असे नव्हे तर या जडणघडणीत हस्तक्षेप करण्याचे सामर्थ्य ती बाळगून असते. म्हणून 'एलजीबीटीक्यूआयएप्लस' समूहाच्या प्रश्नांचे व्यामिश्र स्वरूप निवडलेल्या मराठी साहित्यकृतींमधील जगातून प्रत्ययास येते का? ते कोणत्याप्रकारे साकारते हे शोधणे आणि प्रस्थापित मूल्यव्यवस्थेविषयी प्रश्न उपस्थित करण्याचे कार्य या साहित्यकृती करतात का, हे तपासणे हा या शोधनिबंधाचा हेतू आहे.

'पुरुष' आणि 'स्त्री' या दोन जैविक लिंगधारकांना असणारे महत्त्व 'हिजडा' म्हणून ओळखल्या जाणाऱ्या माणसांना नाही. त्यांच्यासाठी उभ्या राहिलेल्या मानवी हक्कांच्या लढाईमुळे १५ एप्रिल २०१४ रोजी त्यांना तृतीयपंथी म्हणून कायदेशीर मान्यता मिळाली आहे. बहुविध लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या माणसांना आपल्या अधिकारांची जाग आणण्याची सुरुवात तृतीयपंथीय समूहाच्या लढ्याने केली, असेही दिसते. तरीही वर्ण, जात, लिंगप्रधान भारतीय समाजवास्तवात त्यांना जीवननिर्वाहाची साधने, सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा यांच्यासाठी करावा लागणारा संघर्ष अजूनही दीर्घ आहे. प्रजोत्पादनकार्यासाठी निरुपयोगी, स्त्रीवेष आणि स्त्रीभाव धारण करणारा, पुरुषी शरीराचा म्हणून एकीकडे त्यांची हेताळणी होते. दुसरीकडे देवाला सोडलेले म्हणून, देवीचे आराधी म्हणून, दैवी शक्तीधारक म्हणून त्यांचे आशार्वाद शुभ मानले जातात. वास्तवात बालपणीच कुटुंबातून हद्दपार केलेल्या, टाकून दिलेल्या किंवा हिजडा समूहास देऊन टाकलेल्या, देवाला वाहिलेल्या या माणसांच्या अस्तित्वाची दखल न घेतल्याने समाजव्यवस्थेत त्यांचे स्थान हीन राहिले आहे. २०११ च्या जनगणनेनुसार ४८८००० एवढी लोकसंख्या असणाऱ्या समूहास उदरनिर्वाहाचे कोणतेही साधन उपलब्ध नव्हते आणि आजही कमी प्रमाणात आहे. मुंबईत मोठ्या संख्येने तृतीयपंथीय समूहाने राहतात. प्राधान्याने भीक मागून जगतात. समूहाने राहत असताना त्यांची एक उपसंस्कृती घडलेली दिसते. गुरुशिष्य परंपरा निर्माण करून स्वतःचे अस्तित्व सुरक्षित करण्याचे प्रयत्न केले जातात. पण अशा अंतर्गत व्यवस्थेतही दमन, लैंगिक शोषण, मानसिक कुचंबणा होतेच. यांमुळे आजही सन्मानाच्या जीवनासाठी त्यांचा संघर्ष सुरू आहे. 'भिन्न' (कविता महाजन) आणि 'निव्व्या डोळ्यांची मुलगी' (शिल्पा कांबळे) या दोन्ही कादंबऱ्या तृतीयपंथीयांच्या या वास्तवाचा वेध घेतात. कविता महाजनलिखित 'भिन्न' ही कादंबरी एड्सग्रस्त स्त्रिया, वेश्या, त्यांची मुले, समलिंगी, तृतीय पंथीय /हिजडे यांचे एड्स या आजाराने आणि सामाजिक, कौटुंबिक बहिष्काराने छिन्नविच्छिन्न होत जाणारे भयाण जगणे दर्शवते. यांच्या एड्सग्रस्त होण्याची मूळ कारणे पुरुषप्रधान व्यवस्थेत आहेत, या वास्तवाकडे ती लक्ष वेधते. समाजात वेगवेगळ्या कारणांनी माणसांना प्रस्थापित जगापासून वेगळं पाडणाऱ्या व्यवस्थेला प्रश्न विचारते. 'भिन्न' हे शीर्षकही त्यादृष्टीने अतिशय सूचक आहे. भिन्न कादंबरीत प्रतीक्षा कमल ही एड्सग्रस्त स्त्रिया, मुले यांच्यासाठी काम करणारी संवेदनशील तरुणी आहे. प्रतीक्षाच्या कामात जमेल तशी मदत करणारे 'पार्वती' हे तृतीयपंथीय प्रातिनिधिक पात्र आहे. एका प्रसंगात मानसिक स्तरावर दुभंगलेल्या स्थितीत तापाने फणफणत असताना प्रतीक्षा ट्रेनमधून प्रवास करत असते. कोणतेच त्राण न उरलेल्या प्रतीक्षाच्या शरीराशी लगट करणाऱ्या पुरुषाला फटकारत पार्वती पुढे येते. तिला तिच्या घरी नेते; औषधपाणी करते. रात्रभर तिच्याजवळ थांबते आणि सकाळी निघून जाते. पार्वतीच्या माणुसकीचा अनुभव देणाऱ्या या घटनेत केवळ एवढेच घडत नाही. प्रतीक्षाला तिच्या घरापर्यंत हिजडा घेऊन येतो म्हणून वॉचमनचे डोळे विस्फारतात, कामवाल्या सुमाला हिजड्याने घरी येणे आवडलेले नसते, पार्वती ज्या कपातून चहा पिते तो कप ती फोडून टाकते आणि संध्याकाळी सोसायटीमधील पाच सात सदस्य येऊन प्रतीक्षाला धमकावून जातात. "आज हिजडे आणताय घरात, उद्या वेश्यांनाही आणाल, परवा दलाल आणि गुंड मवालीदेखील यायला लागतील. तुम्हाला असेच उद्योग करायचे, तर तिकडे त्यांच्यातच जाऊन राहा ना. आम्ही पोरंबाळ असलेली माणसं आहोत घरांमध्ये तरूण मुलं मुली आहेत...पोरं बिघडली, भलत्या नादाला लागली तर जबाबदार कोण? सोसायटीतलं वातावरण असं घाण करण्याचा तुम्हाला काहीही अधिकार नाही (महाजन :१७२). सोसायटीच्या सदस्यांचा हा 'आवाज' स्त्री आणि पुरुष या दोन लिंगांना व त्यांच्याच लैंगिक जाणिवांना स्वीकारणाऱ्या प्रस्थापित व्यवस्थेचा आहे. हिजडे, वेश्या, गुंड -मवाली, दलाल यांचे जग हे आपल्या सभ्यतेच्या, संस्कृतीच्या आड येणारे आहे, असा आव आणणारी ही भंपक मानसिकता याच जगाशी छुपे संबंध मात्र राखून असते, स्वतःला स्त्री मानणाऱ्या पार्वतीसारख्या तृतीयपंथीयांचे पुरुषी शरीर लैंगिक संबंधासाठी चालणाऱ्या पुरुषप्रधान समाजात तिला माणूस मात्र मानले जात नाही, हे वास्तव येथे अधोरेखित केले जाते. तृतीयपंथीसोबत रेल्वे स्थानकावरील शौचालयात शारीरिक संभोग करणाऱ्या तरुणास पोलीस पकडतात. प्रतीक्षाच्या सोसायटीत राहणाऱ्या या तरुणास त्याच्या वडिलांच्या विनवण्यांमुळे पोलिसांच्या ताब्यातून सोडवण्याचे काम प्रतीक्षा करते. पण हे गृहस्थ प्रतीक्षाच्या घरी येऊन तिला धमकावणाऱ्या 'संस्कृतीरक्षकांची' सोबत करतात. प्रतीक्षाला वाटणाऱ्या विषण्णतेतून समाजाचे हे दुटप्पी वर्तन समोर आणले जाते. 'निव्व्या डोळ्यांची मुलगी' मध्ये सुमन, आशिकी या जिवाभावाच्या तृतीयपंथी मैत्रिणी आहेत. ही आशिकी लग्नाच्या प्रेमाच्या आणाभाका देणाऱ्या पुरुषाच्या प्रेमात पडते, लग्नाच्या बायकोप्रमाणे राहू लागते पण तिचा प्रेमी मात्र तिला फसवून अन्य स्त्रीशी रीतसर लग्न करतो. आशिकी मात्र एड्सग्रस्त बनल्याने खंगून खंगून दुरावस्था होत मरणाकडे सरकते. आशिकी, पार्वती(भिन्न) यांच्या शरीरापलीकडील अस्तित्वाचा स्वीकार केला जात नाही त्यामुळे 'पितृसत्तेत पिचल्या जाणाऱ्या प्रत्येक 'स्त्री'ची ओळख त्याचे निकष नव्याने समजून घेण्याची वेळ आली आहे'(ढमढेर:१६७) याचा प्रत्यय 'भिन्न'

आणि 'निव्या डोव्यांची मुलगी' या दोन्ही कादंबरी देतात. 'निव्या डोव्यांची मुलगी'मधून सुमन आणि आशिकी या जिवाभावाच्या तृतीयपंथी मैत्रीणींच्या रूपाचे वर्णनही त्यादृष्टीने पाहता येते. उदा: 'पाच बाय सात इंचाचा हा फोटो तिचा आणि तिच्या किन्नर मैत्रीणीचा -आशिकीचा होता. या फोटोमध्ये ती आणि आशिकी चांदनी फॅशनच्या साड्या घालून हातात हात घेऊन उभ्या होत्या. आशिकीचा चेहरा पौर्णिमेच्या चंद्रासारखा गोल दुधाळ होता. केस लांब, सिल्की आणि काळेभोर होते. डोव्यामध्ये चांदणीची चमक होती. ओठाजवळचा तीळ आणि गालावरची खळी तिच्या चेहऱ्याला अप्सरेपेक्षाही सुंदर करत होती...असे सुमन आणि आशिकीचे दिवस मूलतः दुखाचे असले तरी एकमेकींच्या संगतीने सुखाचे जात होते. पण गुरूला त्यांची दोस्ती बघवायची नाही.'(कांबळे: १३०) 'निव्या डोव्यांची मुलगी' या कादंबरीतील 'सुमन' ही उल्का या प्रमुख स्त्रीपात्राची मैत्रीण आहे. उल्का सुमनशी बोलते हे पाहून तिच्या वस्तीतील लहानशी चिंगी उल्काला म्हणते, "ताई, तू कशाला सुमनशी बोललीस? ती हिजडा आहे. कुणाला पण हिजडा बनवू शकते. मम्मी बोलत होती."(कांबळे:५४) लहान मुलांना सांगितल्या जाणाऱ्या अशा अनेक मान्यतांच्या आधारे प्रस्थापित समाज आपली मूल्यरचना संवर्धित करतो. हिजड्यांचे लग्नप्रसंगी येणे, बाळाला आशीर्वाद देणे, त्यांच्याकडे अलौकिक शक्ती असणे इथपासून ते त्यांचे शाप लागणे इत्यादीपर्यंतच्या या मान्यता त्यांचे बहिष्कृतपण कायम राखतात. त्यांच्याविषयीची ही बहिष्कृतता कधी संपुष्टात येणारत? येणार की नाही? असे प्रश्न 'भिन्न'मधील प्रतीक्षा विचारताना दिसते. पार्वती घरातून निघताना आपण आता आपल्या मुलुखाला जाऊ असे सांगते कारण तिलाही एड्सची लागण होते. प्रतीक्षाला प्रश्न पडतो आपण तिला आपल्या घरातच का थांबवू शकत नाही. एवढी आपुलकी दाखवल्यावर एखाद्या स्त्री- पुरुषाला कदाचित आपण थांबवू शकलो असतो पण हिजड्याला थांबवण्यासाठी अजून आपलेही मन तयार नाही, याची जाणीव तिला पोखरते. "एड्स होण्यापेक्षाही या गोष्टी अधिक भयानक आहेत की काय? .. हिजडा असणं,वेश्या असणं...!(महाजन:१७२) उद्या या आजारावर देखील उपाय सापडेल. एड्स समूळ नष्ट करता येईल पण या 'दुखण्याचं या किडीचं काय?"(महाजन:१७२) माणूस म्हणून एकीकडे पार्वतीला नाकारणे तर दुसरीकडे कचरा पेटीत फेकून दिलेल्या बाळाला पार्वतीने उचलून आपल्यातील माणुसकीचे दर्शन घडवणे, अशा प्रसंगांच्या रचनेतून ही कादंबरी समाजबाह्य ठरवलेल्या, भिन्न लिंग ओळख असणाऱ्या माणसांना बेदखल करता येत नाही,याचे भान देऊ पाहते. पार्वती ही म्हातारा हिजडा आहे. आयुष्य मुंबईत गेले आहे. प्रतीक्षाच्या कामात आपल्या परीने ती मदत करते. नुकत्याच जन्माला आलेल्या मुलीला कचरापेटीत टाकून दिलेले असते. कावव्यांनी टोचून टोचून रक्तबंबाळ झालेले बाळ पाहून पार्वती अस्वस्थ होते. आपण काही पाहिले नाही असे दर्शवत अनेकांच्या घराची दारे बंद होतात. पार्वती मात्र बाळ वाचावे म्हणून हालचाली करते. कासावीस होते. मृत बाळाचे सोपस्कार करण्यासाठी स्वतः हॉस्पिटलमध्ये थांबते. माणुसकीचा हा प्रत्यय 'निव्या डोव्यांची मुलगी'मधूनही येतो. उल्काला आर्थिक मदत हवी असते तेव्हा तृतीयपंथी सुमन पुढे येते. सुमनचे दिसणे, बोलणे उल्काला मोहक वाटते. तसेच उल्काचे खडतर परिस्थितीत शिक्षण घेणे सुमनला भावते, सुमनही दहावी पर्यंत शिकलेली असते. शिक्षणाची आवड असल्याने शिकलेल्या मुलींचे तिला भरपूर कौतुक असते. पण तिचे शिक्षण मात्र सुटते. या दोन्ही कादंबऱ्यांमधून पार्वती, आशिकी, सुमन ही तृतीयपंथी पात्रे आणि प्रतीक्षा, उल्का ही स्त्रीपात्रे यांच्यात घडणारे दैनंदिन व्यवहार, मैत्री यांमधून तृतीयपंथी माणसे ही सर्वसाधारण माणसे म्हणून स्वीकारण्याची गरज प्रतिपादित करतात. हे घडणार नाही तोपर्यंत या समूहातील उपसंस्कृती, त्यातील दमन, शोषण, उदरनिर्वाहासाठी भीक, लैंगिक कर्म यांचे मार्ग, फसवणूक, हिंसा या घटना रोखल्या जाणार नाहीत हेही वास्तव 'निव्या डोव्यांची..मधील मधून सुमनला सोसाव्या लागणाऱ्या गुरूच्या हिंस्त वर्तनातून येते. गुरूचे घराणे सोडले तर आशिकीसारखे हालहाल होऊन मरणे; सुमनला मान्य नसते 'मेल्यानंतर स्मशानात न्यायला हिजड्यांना हिजडा कम्युनिटीच लागणार,या विचाराने सुमन तिच्या घराण्याला धरून (कांबळे: १२७) असते. हिजडा समूहात होणाऱ्या शोषणाचे चित्रण येथे प्रातिनिधिक स्वरूपात पाहता येते. 'भिन्न' आणि 'निव्या डोव्यांची मुलगी' या दोन्ही कादंबरी तृतीय पंथीय समूहाचे अंतर्गत आणि बाह्य अशा द्विस्तरीय व्यवस्थेत होणारे शोषण आणि शारीरिक, मानसिक स्तरावरील विटंबना यांच्या वास्तव स्वरूपाला समोर आणतात.

'स्त्री' आणि 'पुरुष' हे दोन जीवशास्त्रीय लिंग, त्यानुसार समाजरचित लिंगभाव आणि परस्परविरुद्ध लिंगाप्रती आकर्षण असणारी एकच लैंगिक जाणीव एवढ्या मर्यादित लिंगभानाला मानवी हक्कांच्या विविध चळवळींच्या पार्श्वभूमीवर सत्तरच्या दशकात जगभर आव्हान दिले गेले. एलजीबीटीक्यूआयएनएस चळवळीमुळे 'स्त्री - पुरुष ही शारीर, जैविक ओळख ते भावनिक स्त्रीत्व आणि पुरुषत्व हे आता फक्त द्वैत राहिलं नाही. त्याला अनेक पदर आहेत आणि या पदराला आणखी पातळ पापुद्रे आहेत.'(ढमढेरे: १६७)हे लक्षात आले. समलिंगी असणे, एकाचवेळी स्त्री-पुरुष दोघांविषयी लैंगिक आकर्षण असणे तत्सम भिन्न- भिन्न प्रकारच्या लैंगिक जाणीवा असणे यात विकृती नाही, मानसिक व्यंगत्व नाही, हे संशोधनाने सिद्ध केले गेले. आज धीम्या गतीने परिस्थिती बदलत असली तरी आपल्या मुलाच्या भिन्न लैंगिक जाणिवेचा स्वीकार बाईच्या आणि पुरुषाच्या वर्तनाचे साचे निश्चित झालेल्या समाजात सहज केला जात नाही. स्त्री-पुरुषाच्या मिलनातून जन्माला येणारे हे सर्वसाधारण बाळ म्हणून कुटुंबात या अपत्याचा स्वीकार होत नसल्याने अशा व्यक्तीस विकृत मानून त्याची हेटाळणी केली जाते. एलजीबीटीक्यू समुदायाच्या बाबतीत सर्व प्रश्न इथून सुरू होतात. त्यांचे कुटुंब त्यांना सर्वसाधारण मूल म्हणून स्वीकारत नाही. सामाजिक दबावांचा पगडा एवढा असतो की कुटुंब गरीब असो की श्रीमंत; मुलांना घराबाहेर पडावे लागते. भारतातील एलजीबीटीक्यू चळवळीचे अग्रेसर कार्यकर्ते आणि १३७० मधील गुजराथमधील

राजघराण्याचे आजचे वारस मानवेंद्र सिंघ गोहील समलिंगी आहेत हे २००६ मध्ये लक्षात आल्यावर त्यांनाही घराबाहेर काढले गेले. त्यांनी भारतातील ८० टक्के समलिंगी पुरुषांची लग्ने ही स्त्रियांशी झालेली आहेत, या वास्तवाला समोर ठेवून आपले संघटनात्मक काम सुरू केले (Shahani:133.) आपल्या पाल्याची भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख न स्वीकारता पारंपरिक ओळखीच्या जवळ जाणारे त्यांचे लिंग पालकच निर्धारित करतात आणि त्यांचे लग्न लावून मोकळे होण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. 'निव्व्या डोव्यांची मुलगी' मधील सुंदर दिसणाऱ्या तृतीयपंथी सुमनचे तिच्या इच्छेविरुद्ध पुरुषाशी लग्न लावण्याचे प्रयत्न होतात. तिचे वडील तिचा राग राग करतात. आई सांभाळू पाहते. पण सुमन सांगत असलेली स्वतःची ओळख कुटुंब, समाज स्वीकारताना दिसत नाही. जी.के.ऐनापुरे लिखित 'अधुरा' या कादंबरीतील धामापूरकर हे केंद्रवर्ती पात्र समलिंगी आहे. सामाजिक चौकटीच्या प्रभावात त्यांचे लग्न स्त्रीशी झालेले आहे, त्यांना मुले आहेत, नोकरी आहे, चारचौघांप्रमाणे संसार करत आहेत पण त्यांचे समलिंगी असणे हा कुचेष्टेचा विषय बनवला जातो, धामापूरकर यांच्या नैसर्गिक गरजांना येथे अनैसर्गिक ठरविले जाते. त्यांना हिंस्त्र बनायला प्रवृत्त करून त्यांचे मानसिक स्वास्थ्य उद्ध्वस्त केले जाते. काय नैसर्गिक आणि काय अनैसर्गिक हे कोणी ठरवायचे, असा गंभीर प्रश्न कादंबरीत उपस्थित होतो. पत्नी, मुले यांच्या सांसारिक जीवनातल्या 'धामापूरकरला मुले कशी झाली,' असे विचारणे हा कार्यालयातील सहकाऱ्याचा चेष्टेचा विषय असतो. कारण धामापूरकर समलिंगी आहे म्हणजे नपुंसक आहे, आणि नपुंसक आहे म्हणजे निरुपयोगी आहे असेच ठरवले जाते. धामापूरकर म्हणतात, "माझ्या पोराला विचारा मी त्यांना कोण लागतो ते. तो तुम्हाला माझ्याबद्दल सगळं सांगेल. माझ्या पुरुषपणाला आव्हान देताना तुम्ही कशाचा आधार घेताय? माझ्या सवयीचा. माझ्यासारखी सवय कितीतरी लोकांना असेल. याचा अर्थ असा होत नाही की तो पुरुष नाही. आणखी काही दिवसांनी पुरुषार्थाच्या संकल्पना नक्कीच बदलतील. माझ्या वाचनाच्या सवयीनुसार सांगतो. गुणसूत्रं अस्तित्वात राहणार नाहीत. गुणसूत्रं नसलेला मानव शिल्लक राहील. त्याला तुम्ही काय म्हणणार? माझ्यात गुणसूत्रं आहेत. म्हणजे पुरुषपणा माझ्यात आहे." (ऐनापुरे: ६६) धामापूरकर माणूसपणाची अवहेलना करणाऱ्या हिंसक समाजाला सडेतोड उत्तर देताना दिसतात. मला मुलं कशी झाली? सांगतो ना...मला देवाचा प्रसाद खाऊन मुलं झाली नाहीत. बायकोबरोबर संभोग केल्यावर मुलं होतात. मला मुलं अशीच झाली. मला म्हणजे माझ्या बायकोला." (ऐनापुरे:६६) धामापूरकरांचे हे प्रत्युत्तर समाजाच्या अविवेकी कल्पनांवर प्रहार करतानाच लिंगविषयक प्रस्थापित धारणांच्या सत्तेचे व त्यांतील क्रूरतेचे दर्शन घडवते. समाजरोषामुळे त्यांना आपल्या बालपणापासूनचे चाळीतले घर सोडावे लागणे, कोणतेच भावबंध नसणाऱ्या विरारसारख्या ठिकाणी बंद खोल्यांत धामापूरकरांना विस्थापित व्हावे लागणे आदी घटनांच्या रचनेतून या माणसांच्या हक्कांचे नाकारले जाणे तीव्रतेने व्यक्त होते. विशिष्ट लिंगजाणिवांच्या सत्ता सर्वांसाठी असणाऱ्या विशाल अवकाशाचा संकोच घडवतात, आपल्या दिशेने पूर्णपणाकडे जाऊ पाहणाऱ्या जीवांना अधुरे ठरवून अधुरेपण लादतात. लिंगाधारित सत्ता आणि सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा यांना असणारे हे विभिन्न स्तर 'अधुरा' ही कादंबरी प्रखरतेने समोर आणते.

सचिन कुंडलकर लिखित 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' कादंबरीमधील तनय या समलिंगी पात्राच्या आयुष्यात त्याचा प्रियकर येण्यापूर्वी भेटलेल्या एका समलिंगी व्यक्तीच्या सहवासातील घटनादेखील या माणसांच्या कुचंबणेवर झगझगीत प्रकाश टाकते. आर्थिकदृष्ट्या संपन्न, उत्तम शरीरयष्टी, गाडी-बंगला अशी सर्व भौतिक सुखे असताना एक स्थिर नाते नसणे, भावनिक देवाणघेवाण होईल असे माणूस नसणे, वात्सल्याची भूक न शमणे, तनयसारखे 'आपलं मानणारं, काळजी घेणारं' कुणीच नसणे यामुळे एकटा पडलेला हा चाळीशीतला तरुण आत्महत्या करतो. त्यास प्रेम, वात्सल्य, विश्वास यांवर आधारलेले एक दृढ नाते हवे असते, जे मिळत नाही. लैंगिकता ही प्रवाही असल्याने आजची लैंगिक ओळख कायम तशीच राहिल, असेही नसते या शारीरिक, भावनिक स्तरावरील गुंतागुंतीच्या बदलांना सामोरे जाताना होणारी दमछाक कादंबरी अधोरेखित करते. लिंगाधारित स्त्री-पुरुष वर्तनाचे साचे निश्चित असल्याने त्यापलीकडच्या लैंगिक जाणिवांचे दमन 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' या कादंबरीतही प्रत्ययास येते. यामधील समलिंगी तनयला या लिंगभावांच्या चौकटीचा ताण सोसावा लागतो. चालत जाणाऱ्या तनयला पाहून त्याचा एक भाऊ सुनील त्याच्या पायावर मारतो आणि म्हणतो, "नीट चाल, दोन पायांमध्ये अंतर ठेवून शांतपणे. बायकांसारखा तुरुतुरु चालायला कशाला पाहिजे?" (१८) तन्या छाती पुढे काढता, ताठ चाल, खांदे सरळ ठेव!' (१८) तनयच्या कपाटात पावडर, क्रीम असणे, तनयने मैत्रिणीच्या मागे बसून गाडीवर जाणे, आईला स्वयंपाकात मदत करणे हेही खटकणारे असल्याने त्याला वेळोवेळी पुरुष कसा हवा? हे ऐकवले गेलेले असते. 'पुरुष ओठांवरून जीभ फिरवून कोरडे झालेले ओठ ओले करत नाहीत, पुरुष सारखं स्वयंपाकात आयांच्या मागंमागं करत नाहीत, पुरुष तोंडाला पावडर लावत नाहीत...प्रवासाला गेल्यावर पुरुष झाडामागे जाऊ शकतात...वर्गात बाईंनी पट्टी मारल्यावर पुरुष रडत नाहीत, पुरुष शाळेबाहेरच्या चिंचावालीकडून चिंचा घेऊन वाटत बसत नाहीत, अशा अनेक गोष्टी मला लहान असल्यापासून सगळे सांगत आले होते.' (कुंडलकर:१८) असे तनय म्हणतो. अनेक सामाजिक -सांस्कृतिक धारणांना प्रश्न विचारणारी, छेद देण्याचा प्रयत्न करणारी 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' ही कादंबरी तनय या समलिंगी पात्राचे तरल भावविश्व अलगदपणे उलगडवून दाखवणारी आहे. तनय हा मनस्वी, लिहिण्या-वाचण्याची आवडणारा कलावंत आहे. आपल्या शरीर मनाच्या वेगळ्या हाका त्याला लहानपणापासून जाणवत असतात पण त्या व्यक्त करण्याचे मोकळे मार्ग नसतात. शाळकरी जीवनातील एका प्रसंगाद्वारे आपल्या लैंगिक ओळखीविषयीचे संभ्रम येथे दर्शवले जातात. तनयचे सर्व मित्र एकत्र चोरून पोर्न पाहतात पण तनयला त्या कृती उत्तेजित करत नाहीत. कथन येते, 'कॅसेट बघताना मी उगाचच कसनुसं हसत होतो. सगळ्यांना वरवर प्रतिसाद देत

होतो. मी कपाटातून कपडे काढून दार लावलां आणि आरशात स्वतःला बघितलां. कमरेभोवतीचा ओला टॉवेल सोडला. स्वतःचं शरीर नीट असं पहिल्यांदा न्याहाळलां. मी कुठं वेगळा होतो ते काहीच कळत नव्हतं. (कुंडलकर :८) पाल्यांना आपले असे संभ्रम सोडवण्यासाठी पालकांची, त्यांच्या आधार-प्रेमाची गरज लागते, याचे भान कादंबरी देते. आपल्या प्रियकराचे पालक आणि आपले पालक यांत त्याला अंतर जाणवते. आपल्याला काय वाटते हे आपण आपल्या पालकांना सांगू शकत नाही कारण ते समजू शकत नाहीत, ही तनयची खंत प्रातिनिधिक आहे. तनयची बहीण अनुजा देखील ही खंत मांडताना दिसते. तनयचा प्रियकर हा त्यांच्या घरी पेईंगेस्ट म्हणून राहणारा, बायसेक्सुअल असणारा मनस्वी कलावंत आहे. त्याच्या दहाव्या वर्षी पालकांचे छत्र हरवल्यानंतर एकटाच राहिलेला, बुद्धिमान, उत्कटतेने, स्वतःच्या अटींवर आयुष्य जगलेला आणि परिस्थितीशी दोन हात करत स्थिर झालेला असा आहे. तनयप्रमाणे त्याची बहीण अनुजादेखील त्याच्या प्रेमात पडते. तनय आणि नंतर अनुजा या दोघांवर तो नितांत सुंदर प्रेम करतो. 'बाईपणा'च्या पारंपरिक कल्पनांना नाकारणाऱ्या अनुजासह तनयला न सांगता घर सोडतो. सहा महिन्यांनी अनुजालाही मागे ठेवून पुढच्या प्रवासाला निघून जातो. अनुजा विस्कटलेल्या मानसिकतेत परतते तेव्हा तिच्यासाठी मानसोपचारांची तजवीज केली जाते. तिने मागचे विसरून पुढे जीवन सुरू करावे म्हणून प्रयत्न होतात. तिच्या स्वच्छंदी स्वभावामुळे तिने 'परपुरुषाचा हात धरून पळून जाणे, पुन्हा येणे' हे समजून घेतले जाते. पण अनुजा सांगेपर्यंत अनुजासोबत आपला प्रियकर निघून गेला हे मान्यच नसलेल्या तनयचे मन मात्र दुभंगून गेलेले असते. तनय समलिंगी, अनुजा मुलगी आणि तनय अनुजाचा मोठा भाऊ असीम हा मान्यताप्राप्त सामाजिक चौकटीचा वाहक. त्यामुळे असीमच्या लग्नात काही अडथळे येऊ नयेत यासाठी आई वडील धडपडताना दिसतात. तनयला काय होतंय, त्याच्या काय गरजा आहेत, तो दुःखी का आहे याचा फार वेगळा विचार करील असे कुणीही नसते. अनुजाला स्वतंत्र राहायचे आहे तर राहू देतात. यावेळी अनुजाचे कथन येते 'तनयचा विचार आई बाबांनी नक्की केला का? मुंबईत तो कसा, कुठं राहतो, काय खातोपितो, याच्या पलीकडे जाऊन करायचा विचार...तो करणं आम्हा कुणालाच झालं नाही. मी घरातून निघून गेल्यामुळे तो अतिशय अस्वस्थ झाला, हे ठरवून आम्ही सगळे आपापल्यातच राहिलो. (कुंडलकर:९०) समाज दखल न घेत असलेल्या समलिंगी जगाची कोंडी व्यक्त करणारे हे विधान आहे. तनयच्या घरी पेईंगेस्ट म्हणून आलेल्या व्यक्तीच्या प्रेमात तो पडेपर्यंत त्याच्या समलिंगी संबंधांच्या इच्छेला शारीरिक प्रतिसाद देणाऱ्या या शहरातल्या काही व्यक्तींच्या संबंधात येतोच. पण पेईंगेस्ट प्रियकरासोबत प्रथमच त्यास त्याचे अवघे भावविश्व व्यापून टाकणारा उत्कट प्रेमानुभव येतो. 'आयुष्यभर जपावं असं नातं' निर्माण करण्याची इच्छा निर्माण होते. आपल्यासारखे वाटणाऱ्या माणसांना भेटून एकत्र राहणे समजून घ्यावेसे वाटते. कादंबरीत अरिंदम हे पात्र भिन्न लैंगिक जाणीवा असणाऱ्या समूहाची एकत्र चळवळ उभी करू पाहणारे कार्यकर्ता पात्र आहे. या पात्राच्या अनुषंगाने कादंबरीत न्यायाची मागणी करण्याच्या जाणिवेचे प्रकटीकरण केले आहे. या चळवळीअंतर्गत असणारे भिन्न मतप्रवाह, चळवळीसाठी एकत्र आलेल्या तरुणांच्या सर्वसाधारण मानसिकता आणि वर्तन यांचे ओझरते चित्र येते. तनय आपल्या प्रियकरास घेऊन या सभांना जातो. 'आशिष' आणि 'सॅम्युअल' हे समलिंगी जोडपं त्यांस तिथेच भेटते. अरिंदमच्या सहवासात अशा चळवळींची गरज तनयला वाटते. एकत्र येऊन एकमेकांशी प्रोब्लेम्स शेअर करणे आवश्यक वाटते. पण त्याच्या प्रियकरास वाटत नाही. तो म्हणतो 'वेला! मस्त जगत जाऊ रे आहे तसं. प्रोब्लेम्स आले तर लेट्स फेस देम. खरं म्हणजे मी तुझ्यासारखा फॅमिलीत वाढलेलो नसल्यानं नाहीच आहेत मला फार प्रोब्लेम्स...निदान मी स्वतः त्यांना अॅक्सेप्ट केलं आहे- आहेत तसे' (कुंडलकर:३०) तनयच्या प्रियकराचे हे कथन मुक्त, शांत, निवांत जगण्याला कौटुंबिक, सामाजिक निर्बंध हेच अडसर असतात याचे अप्रत्यक्ष सूचन करणारे आहे. असे समाजवास्तव, सामाजिक चौकटी बदलण्याची आणि सर्वांना सुखाने जगता येईल असा समाज निर्माण करण्याची गरज तनयला, अरिंदमला वाटते. आपले 'स्वतंत्र जग असावे' की 'प्रस्थापित समाजात आपला सामान्य माणसे म्हणून स्वीकार व्हावा,' याविषयी एल जी बी टी क्यू चळवळीतील मतभेद येथे अरिंदम आणि तनय यांच्यातील मतभेदांच्या चित्रणातून येतात. आपल्या मुव्हमेंटचा 'आमची स्वतंत्र वृत्तपत्रं, आमचे स्वतंत्र पब्स, आमची स्वतंत्र थिएटर्स, आमचं हे, आमचं ते' हा 'फर्स्ट अजेंडा'च तनयला मान्य नसतो. 'आपण सगळे इतर जगापासून तोडून घेऊन इकालिटी मागू शकणार नाही. आम्ही कुठल्याही पद्धतीनं वेगळे नाही, चारचौघांसारखेच आहोत, हे शांतपणे मानणाऱ्या, पाळणाऱ्या विचारांचा प्रसार व्हायला हवा' (कुंडलकर:३५) असे ठामपणे तनय अरिंदमला सांगतो. एरवी आपल्या प्रियकराच्या प्रेमात खोलवर बुडालेला, आपल्या प्रेमभावात रमणारा तनय आपल्या या नात्याला स्थिरता देऊ पाहतो. आपल्या स्नेहातील सुंदरता ही कोणीही अवैध, अनैतिक, विकृत ठरवू नये, त्यात छुपेपणा, चोरटेपणा असू नये यासाठी न्यायाची लढाई लढण्यास तनय तयार असतो, हे सर्व चित्रणच बहुविध लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या माणसांच्या बाजूने व्यवस्था परिवर्तनाचा विचार मांडणारे असे प्रातिनिधिक स्वरूपाचे आहे. भारतासारख्या धर्मप्रधान देशात आपल्या हाकेला प्रतिसाद मिळायचा असेल तर असे अनेक प्रकारच्या लैंगिक संबंधांच्या शक्यतांची केवळ ऐतिहासिक पुरावे सादर करून उपयोगाचे नाही तर अशी उदाहरणे पुराणात शोधायला लागतील, हे तनयचे म्हणणे धर्मकेंद्री समाजव्यवस्थेला पुरते चपराक मारणारे आहे. 'पुराणकाळापर्यंत मागं जाऊन पुरावे शोधून आपल्या आजूबाजूच्या माणसांना 'आम्ही नॉर्मल आहोत' असं सांगावं लागेल. रामायण-महाभारतात, किंवा न्यू टेस्टामेंटमध्ये आठवा आठव्या कमांडमेंट मध्ये आपल्यासारख्यांचे काही उल्लेख नसतील तर आपलं कोण ऐकणार बाबा! निदान लक्ष्मणला, बायकापोरं मागं टाकून, रामाच्या मागं वनवासात का पळावस वाटलं, याचा मानसशास्त्रीय अभ्यास झालाच पाहिजे रे! (कुंडलकर:३४) सांस्कृतिक हस्तक्षेप करणारे तनयचे हे

विधान मानवी अस्तित्वाची गळचेपी करणाऱ्या व्यवस्थेच्या विरोधात उभे राहणारे मूल्याविधान आहे. तनय या समलिंगी पात्राच्या जाणीवविश्वाद्वारे मानवी संबंधांची रचना ही मैत्री, प्रेम, करुणा, न्याय,सहभाव या मूल्यांच्या आधारे व्हावी, अस्तित्वाचे जे जे प्रकार आहेत त्यांचा कोणत्याही धारणा,मान्यता यांच्या चौकटींशिवाय स्वीकार व्हावा, याचे भान तीव्रतेने इथे व्यक्त केले जाते. '... आपण एकत्र राहायचं ठरवलं तर ते फार अवघड होणार नाही. आजूबाजूला किती तरी माणसं मिळून मिसळून थोडंफार सोसत राहत होती. लिव्ह इन रिलेशनशिप मधली मुलं- मुली होती. लग्न वगैरे न करता कुणाही बरोबर न राहता खरोखर एकटे राहणारे लोक होते. आमच्या वॉर्डच्या नगरसेवकाने तर एकाच वेळी दोन बायकांशी लग्न केलं होतं. मंडईच्या मागच्या बाजूला भलीमोठी वेश्यांची वस्ती होती. सिंगलला उभे राहणारे हिजडे होते. ह्या सगळ्यांविषयी लोकांना पुरेसं कौतुक नसलं तरी माहिती होती. आणि गेल्या काही वर्षांपासून मला खरोखरच कळलं नव्हत की आपण असे काय वेगळे आहोत?(कुंडलकर:१७) कादंबरीत प्रारंभी पुन्हा पुन्हा येणारे 'अनेकदा आपण एकमेकांना बोलून दाखवलेला तो क्षण मी आता अनुभवला.' (कुंडलकर:१) हे कथन सर्वांना मुक्तपणे आणि मुख्यतः शांतपणे जगता येईल असा निवांत अवकाश उपलब्ध असला पाहिजे या मूल्याविचाराची अत्यंत तरलतेने मांडणी करते.

थोडक्यात असे म्हणता येते की निवडलेल्या मराठी साहित्यकृतींनी- परस्परविरुद्ध लैंगिक आकर्षणाच्या जाणीवेच्या सत्तेमुळे अन्य बहुविध लैंगिक ओळख आणि लैंगिक जाणीव असणाऱ्या मानवी समूहाचे प्रचलित अवकाशात सामाजिक,आर्थिक, भावनिक,लैंगिक शोषण होत आहे,याचे भान दिले आहे.

स्त्री आणि पुरुष हे दोन जैविक लिंग, त्यांच्याशी निर्धारित लैंगिकता आणि लिंगभाव यांच्याद्वारे समाजातील सर्व मानवी समूहाच्या लैंगिक जाणिवांचे वर्णन आणि ठोकळेबाज वर्गीकरण करता येत नाही,याकडे लक्ष वेधले आहे.

बहुसंख्य माणसांना विरुद्धलिंगी लैंगिक आकर्षण वाटते म्हणून अन्य माणसांच्या लैंगिक जाणिवा अनैतिक, अवैध, असंस्कृत,अनैसर्गिक, विकृत ठरत नाहीत, हे अधोरेखित केले आहे.

स्त्री-पुरुष यापलीकडे भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असणारे सर्वजण हे स्त्री आणि पुरुष यांच्या मिलनातून जन्माला आलेले जीवच असतात, त्यांच्या अस्तित्वाचा कोणत्याही धारणा,मान्यता यांच्या चौकटींशिवाय, विनाअट, प्रेमपूर्वक सहजस्वीकार कुटुंबातून व समाजातून केला पाहिजे आणि अस्तित्वाचे जे जे प्रकार आहेत त्यांना मुक्तपणे व शांतपणे जगण्याची मोकळीक असली पाहिजे, त्यादृष्टीने व्यवस्थापरिवर्तन व्हावे, हा मूल्यात्मक विचार पुढे आणला आहे.

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भारतीय दंड संहिता कलम ३७७ विरोधी संघर्ष एक समाजशास्त्रीय अभ्यास**प्रा. सर्जेराव बोराडे**

सतीश प्रधान ज्ञानसाधना महाविद्यालय, ठाणे

लेखसार

जगामध्ये लिंगभेदाचे वर्गीकरण सामान्यपणे स्त्री आणि पुरुष या दोन गटातच केले जाते. परंतु समाजामध्ये काही घटकांसाठी लिंग ही बाब गुंतागुंतीची असल्याचे दिसून येते. म्हणजे एखादी व्यक्ती शरीराने स्त्री असून मानसिकतेने पुरुष असतो. तर एखादी व्यक्ती शरीराने पुरुष असून मानसिकतेने स्त्री असते तर काही व्यक्तींना जन्मजात मिळालेले लिंग आवडत नसल्यामुळे लिंग बदल करून घेतात. परंतु समाज, धर्म आणि कायद्याने त्यांना आपले लैंगिक आचरण स्वेच्छेने न करता, ठरवून दिलेल्या दुहेरी लिंग व्यवस्थेप्रमाणेच करावे लागते. त्यामुळे अशा LGBTQ समुदायाला मानवतेचा दर्जा नाकारला जात आहे. भारतीय दंडसंहिता कलम ३७७ ने देखील त्यांच्या मानवतावादी दर्जाला नाकारले होते. परंतु कायद्याने मान्यता मिळूनही LGBTQ समुदायाला समाजामध्ये का स्वीकारत नाही? हे अभ्यासण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे.

प्रस्तावना

विषम लैंगिकतेचा उपयोग स्त्री-पुरुषांमधील दुहेरी लैंगिक प्रथांचा संदर्भ देण्यासाठी केला जात होता. जसे की तोंडी आणि गुह्वारासंबंधीचा संभोग सामान्य प्रजननक्षम संभोगाच्याविरुद्ध समलैंगिकता हा शब्द एकोणिसाव्या शतकाच्या उत्तरार्धात युरोपमध्ये आला. हा शब्द समान लिंगाच्या सदस्यांमधील लैंगिक उत्कटतेचे वर्णन करण्यासाठी वापरला जातो. वसाहतवादी कायद्याने समलैंगिक संबंध अनैसर्गिक घोषित केले गेले. अनैसर्गिक लैंगिक संबंधांवर बंदी घालणारे कायदे ब्रिटिश वसाहतवादी शक्तीद्वारे जगभर लादले गेले. ख्रिश्चन बायबलच्या "सेक्स इज सीन" भूमिकेचा त्यावर खोलवर परिणाम होता. सामान्यतः सहाव्या शतकात दगडात कोरून हिंदू मंदिरे बांधण्यास सुरुवात झाली. बाराव्या आणि चौदाव्या शतकाच्या दरम्यान बांधकामाने कळस घातला. जेव्हा पूर्व आणि दक्षिण भारतातील पुरी आणि तंजोरसारखे भव्य पॅगोडा अस्तित्वात आले. या भव्य वस्तूंच्या भिंती आणि प्रवेशद्वारावर विविध प्रकारच्या प्रतिमा दिसतात. देव, देवी, राक्षस, अप्सरा, ऋषी, योद्धा, प्रेमी, पुजारी, राक्षस, डॅगन, वनस्पती आणि प्राणी यासंबंधी महाकाव्य आणि दंतकथा यांमधील कामुक प्रतिमा आढळतात. ज्यांना आधुनिक वसाहतवादी कायदा अनैसर्गिक मानतो आणि समाज अश्लील मानतो. कुतूहलाची गोष्ट म्हणजे तत्सम प्रतिमा एकाच वेळी बांधलेल्या बौद्ध आणि जैन धर्मासारख्या मठातील प्रार्थनागृहे आणि गुहा मंदिरेदेखील सुशोभित करतात अर्थ आणि निर्णय बाजूला ठेवून या प्रतिमा आढळतात पण समलिंगी संबंधांची कल्पना आणि वसाहतवादी राज्यकर्त्यांनी ज्याला अनैसर्गिक संभोग म्हटले ते भारतातही स्वीकारले होते.

संशोधन पद्धती

१) संशोधन आराखडा - प्रस्तुत शोध निबंधांसाठी वर्तनात्मक व अन्वेषणात्मक संशोधन आराखड्याचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे.

२) तथ्य संकलनपद्धत - i) प्राथमिक तथ्य संकलन - निरीक्षण, ii) दुय्यम तथ्य संकलन - संदर्भ पुस्तके, संशोधन पेपर, विविध वेबसाईट अशा दोन्ही तंत्रांच्या साहाय्याने प्रस्तुत विषयाच्या संदर्भात तथ्य संकलन करण्यात आले आहे.

३) संशोधन पद्धत - प्रस्तुत शोध निबंधांसाठी गुणात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे.

संशोधनाचा उद्देश

१) LGBTQ या समुदायाचा अर्थ अभ्यासणे/समजून घेणे.

२) LGBTQ समुदायाच्या समस्यांचा समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोनातून अभ्यास करणे.

३) LGBTQ समुदायाच्या मानवतेचा हक्क नाकारणारा भारतीय दंड संहितेतील कलम ३७७ अभ्यासणे.

४) LGBTQ समुदायाच्या पुनर्वसनातील शासनाची भूमिका अभ्यासणे.

विषयाचे विश्लेषण

संशोधनासंबंधी संकलित तथ्यानुसार भारतीय दंड संहितेचे कलम ३७७ असंवैधानिक असल्याचा युक्तिवाद करणाऱ्या नाज फाउंडेशन आणि एचआयव्ही/ एडसग्रस्तांसाठी काम करणाऱ्या एनजीओने न्यायालयासमोर जनहित याचिकेनी केली. १८६१ पासून समलैंगिक संबंधांना अनैसर्गिक ठरवून गुन्हा मानणारे कलम ३७७ कायद्याच्या पुस्तकात आहे. समलिंगाच्या व्यक्तीमधील संमतीचे लैंगिक कृत्याचे गुन्हेगारीकरण म्हणून प्रभावीपणे व्याख्या करण्यात आली होती. नाझ फाउंडेशनने जनहित याचिकेत सादर केले, की हे कलम भारतीय संविधानाच्या कलम १४, १५, १९ आणि २१ अंतर्गत हमी दिलेल्या मूलभूत अधिकार्यांचे उल्लंघन करणारे आहे. कलम ३७७ मुळे समलिंगी समुदायाने अनुभवलेल्या भेदभावामुळे एचआयव्ही/एडसचा प्रसार रोखण्याच्या कामात अडथळे येत असल्याच्या कारणास्तव सार्वजनिक हितासाठी ही कारवाई

करण्यात आली हा भेदभाव याचिकाकर्त्यांनी सादर केला. मूलभूत मानवी हक्क नाकारण्यात गैरवर्तन छळ आणि सार्वजनिक अधिकाऱ्यांकडून हल्ले अशाप्रकारे समलिंगी समुदाय भूमिगत होऊन त्यांच्या मूलभूत अधिकाराचे उल्लंघन करण्यासाठी त्यांना आजही असुरक्षिततेचा सामना करावा लागत आहे.

निष्कर्ष

- १) कलम ३७७ हे समलिंगी समुदायाबरोबर बालकांशी संमतीविना गैरवर्तन आणि प्राण्यांबरोबर केलेले लैंगिक संबंधांना लागू होते.
- २) २४ ऑगस्ट २०१७ रोजी पुट्टस्वामी विरुद्ध भारत सरकारच्या महत्त्वपूर्ण निकाल पत्रात खाजगी आयुष्याचा घटनात्मक अधिकार मान्य केला.
- ३) एखाद्याने निसर्ग नियमाच्या विरोधात जाऊन कोणतीही लैंगिक कृती केल्यास त्याला जन्मठेप किंवा दहा वर्षांची शिक्षा देण्याची तरतूद करण्यात आली होती.
- ४) लैंगिक अल्पसंख्याकांना प्रत्यक्ष किंवा अप्रत्यक्ष भेदभावाला सामोरे जावे लागत असेल तर त्यापासून त्यांना संरक्षण देणारा कायदा उपाय आहे पण अंमलबजावणी होत नाही.
- ५) समलिंगीकांना अनेकदा पोलिसांकडे आपल्या तक्रारी घेऊन जाता येत नाही, कारण ३७७ कलमामुळे पिडीतावरही कारवाई होण्याची भीती होती कारण जनजागृती झाली नाही.
- ६) अनेक राजकीय पक्षांनी समलैंगिकांच्या विरोधात भूमिका घेतली होती.
- ७) काहींना समलैंगिक विवाहासाठी लढावे लागत आहे, काहींना पालकत्वासाठी तर काहींना भेदभावविरुद्ध त्यामुळे LGBTQ समाजात सुसूत्रता नाही.
- ८) कलम ३७७ रद्द झाल्यामुळे संपूर्ण LGBTQ समाजाला बांधून ठेवत होती ती चळवळ आता राहिली नाही.
- ९) सुप्रीम कोर्टाच्या निकालानंतर संपूर्ण समुदायाला संघटीत ठेवूणे आव्हानात्मक आहे यामुळे सामाजिक विरोधाचा सामना करणे कठीण जात आहे.
- १०) भारतात विवाह करणे, आणि आपल्या समलैंगिक जोडीदाराची देखभाल करणे या नैसर्गिक हक्कांबाबत आजही LGBTQ समुदायाला समाजाकडून मान्यता मिळाले नाही.
- ११) ३७७ कलम फक्त समलैंगिकांशीच संबंधित होता हा गैरसमज होता त्यामुळे मानवी हक्कांना विरोध केला जात होता.

उपाय

समलैंगिकांसंबंधित सुधारित कायद्याची काटेकोरपणे अंमलबजावणी केली पाहिजे. LGBTQ समुदाय समाजाचा अविभाज्य घटक आहे म्हणून मानवतेच्या दृष्टिकोनातून त्यांचा स्वीकार होणे गरजेचे आहे. भारतीय संविधानातील विविध तरतुदींचा आदरपूर्वक स्वीकार करून LGBTQ समुदायाविरुद्ध कोणतीही अपमानजनक कृत्य करू नये. सेवाभावी संस्था आणि विविध सामाजिक चळवळीने LGBTQ समुदायाच्या सन्मानासाठी पुढे येऊन कार्य करणे गरजेचे आहे. भारतीय न्यायव्यवस्था सर्व समाजाला न्याय देत असते म्हणून LGBTQ समुदायाच्या दृष्टिकोनातून ६ सप्टेंबर २०१८ रोजी दिलेल्या ऐतिहासिक निकालाचा सर्वांनी सन्मान करणे आवश्यक आहे. आरोग्यसेवा किंवा निवासाची ठिकाणी, शिक्षण आणि रोजगार वगैरे संबंधी सर्वसमावेशक असा (अँटी डिस्क्रिमिनेटरी) कायदा करून LGBTQ समुदायाला न्याय दिला पाहिजे. भेदभावविरहित समाज व्यवस्था निर्माण करणे प्रत्येक नागरिकाची जबाबदारी आहे याची जाणिव जागृत करणे महत्त्वाचे आहे.

सारांश

कलम ३७७ च्या अस्तित्वामुळे भारतातील समलिंगी आणि ट्रान्सजेंडर समुदायाचा छळ आणि भेदभावामुळे भारतीय घटनेतील मूलभूत अधिकांतील समानतेच्या अधिकारासह दिलेल्या हमीवर समलिंगी समुदायाच्या अधिकारावर परिणाम झाला. भेदभाव न करण्याचा अधिकार, वैयक्तिक गोपनीयतेचा अधिकार, जगण्याचा अधिकार, स्वातंत्र्याचा अधिकार आणि आरोग्याचा अधिकार यापासून वंचित झाला आहे. कलम ३७७ रद्द झाल्यानंतर समलैंगिकता हा गुन्हा न ठरवता त्यांना दुहेरी लिंगाप्रमाणेच त्यांनादेखील कायदेशीरपणे स्थान मिळाले आहे परंतु त्यांना समाजात समान दर्जा व समान वागणूक अजूनही मिळाली नाही ही वस्तुस्थिती आजही समाजात आहे.

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LGBTQIA+ समुदायाचे हक्क आणि भारतीय समाज व्यवस्था यांचा समाजशास्त्रीय अभ्यास**डॉ. जान्हवी सुबोध थोरात**

समाजशास्त्र विभाग, सतिश प्रधान ज्ञानसाधना कॉलेज ठाणे, मुंबई

१. प्रस्तावना

समान गरजांच्या पूर्ततेतून समुदायाची निर्मिती होते. एकूण मानवी समुदायाचे तीन विभाग पडतात. जसे आदिवासी समुदाय, ग्रामीण समुदाय आणि शहरी समुदाय. या तिन्ही समुदायाचा सखोल अभ्यास केल्याशिवाय मानवी समाजाचा अभ्यास पूर्णत्वाकडे जात नाही पण हे पूर्णत्व अपुरे आहे कारण चौथा समुदाय समाजात अस्तित्वात येत आहे तो म्हणजे LGBTQIA+ समुदाय. LGBTQIA+ म्हणजे लेस्बियन, गे, बायसेक्सुअल आणि ट्रान्सजेंडर. काही वेळा Queer साठी Q, Asexual साठी A, Intersex साठी I आणि ट्रान्सस्पिरिटसाठी + जोडले जाते.

'L' लेस्बियन

एक स्त्री जिथे शारीरिक व मानसिक आकर्षण ही दुसरी स्त्री असते.

'B' समलैंगिक

एक पुरुष मनाने शरीराने दुसऱ्या पुरुषांकडे आकर्षला जातो.

'G' उभयलिंगी

शी व्यक्ती ज्याला दोन्ही लिंगांच्या सदस्यांबद्दल शारीरिक, मानसिक आकर्षण असते.

'T'

ट्रान्सजेंडर ज्या लोकांची ओळख लिंगाशी होते किंवा लिंग अभिव्यक्ती जन्मतः निश्चित होते.

Q-Queer

क्वीकर याचा अर्थ प्रश्न करण्यासाठी असू शकतो जसे की, अजून ही एखाद्याच्या लैंगिकतेचा शोध घेणे. स्व पृष्ठी करणारी संज्ञा आहे.

काही लोकांमध्ये वापरले जाणारे विश्लेषण आहे. ज्यांचे लैंगिक प्रवृत्ती केवळ भिन्न लिंगी किंवा सरळ नसते. अम्ब्रेला टर्ममध्ये याचा समावेश होतो.

I- इंटरसेक्स

तर्गत प्रजनन अवयव आणि गुणसूत्रांसह एक किंवा अधिक जन्मजात लैंगिक वैशिष्ट्ये असल्याने त्यांचे विश्लेषण नर किंवा मादी या पारंपरिक संकल्पनेच्या बाहेर जाते.

A- अलैंगिक (Asexual)

ज्यांना लैंगिक आकर्षण कमी असते किंवा नसते. लैंगिक संबंध निर्माण करण्याची इच्छा होत नाही.

'+' प्लस

याचा अद्याप पूर्णपणे अर्थ सांगता येत नाही. सर्व लिंग ओळख आणि लैंगिक अभिमुखता दर्शवण्यासाठी प्लस '+' वापरला जातो.

२. संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे

1. LGBTQIA+ समुदायाचा अभ्यास करणे.
2. LGBTQIA+ समुदायाच्या हक्कांचा अभ्यास करणे.
3. सद्य भारतीय समाजव्यवस्था त्यांना मानवतेचा हक्क देईल का याचे चिकित्सक अध्ययन करणे.

३. संशोधन पद्धत**३.१. संशोधन आराखडा**

प्रस्तुत शोध निबंधासाठी वर्णनात्मक व अन्वेषणात्मक संशोधन आराखड्याचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे.

३.२. संशोधन प्रकार

मिश्र संशोधन पद्धतीचा वापर म्हणजे संख्यात्मक व गुणात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे.

३.३. नमुना निवड

गैरसंभाव्य नमुना निवड पद्धतीतील सहेतूक नमुना निवड पद्धतीचा वापर करून महाविद्यालयातील ०५ प्राध्यापकांच्या मुलाखती घेऊन तथ्य संकलन करण्यात आले.

३.४. तथ्य संकलन (Data Collection)**i) प्राथमिक तथ्य संकलन**

मुलाखत, मुक्त प्रश्नावलीच्या माध्यमातून माहिती संकलित करण्यात आली.

ii) दुय्यम तथ्य संकलन

संदर्भ पुस्तके, मासिके, इंटरनेट, संशोधनात्मक लेख इत्यादींचा वापर करून तथ्य संकलित करण्यात आले.

४. सैद्धांतिक दृष्टीकोन

LGBTQIA+ समुदायाचे हक्क आणि भारतीय समाजव्यवस्था अभ्यासत असताना "सामाजिक वंचिततेचा सिद्धांत तंतोतंत लागू होतो कारण सामाजिक, आर्थिक, राजकीय, कार्यपद्धतीमध्ये सहभागी होण्याची अक्षमता म्हणजे सामाजिक वंचितता होय." ही सामाजिक वंचितता LGBTQIA+ समुदायात दिसून येते. कुटूंब, समाज, कायदा त्यांना विकासाच्या मुख्य प्रवाहापासून जाणीवपूर्वक वंचित ठेवत असल्याचे लक्षात येते. म्हणून त्यांना समाजाच्या मुख्य प्रवाहात आणण्यासाठी अभिमानाने, समानतेचे माणुसकीचे जीवन त्यांना प्राप्त होण्यासाठी सामाजिक वंचिततेचा सिद्धांत याचा सखोल विचार करणे उचित ठरते.

५. LGBTQIA+ समुदायाचे हक्क

प्रस्तुत संशोधन विषयाचा मूळ हेतू प्राप्त होण्यासाठी त्यांच्या परिस्थितीची योग्य पडताळणी व मूल्यमापन करता येण्यासाठी मानवी सामाजिक व आर्थिक निर्देशांक घटकांची मांडणी करून या समुदायाची स्थिती व हक्क यावर योग्य अभ्यासपूर्ण विश्लेषण करण्यात आले आहे. सामाजिक निर्देशांक घटकांमध्ये लोकसंख्या (Population), धर्म (Religion), समानता (Equality), जीवनासंबंधी अपेक्षा (Life Expectancy), घराचा मालकी हक्क (Housing Ownership), आत्महत्यांचा दर (Suicide Rate), सामाजिक सुरक्षा (Public Pretention) हे घटक प्रमाणभूत मानून सामाजिक स्थिती या समुदायाची लक्षात येते की, या समुदायाची लोकसंख्या कमी आहे. परिणामी हे लोक एकत्र येऊन मोठा लढा आपल्या हक्कांसाठी देत नाहीत. समानता, सामाजिक दर्जा, सामाजिक सुरक्षा नाही. शैक्षणिक स्तराचा विचार कसा या समुदायात उच्च शिक्षणाचा अभाव आहे. या शिक्षणाबरोबर तांत्रिक शिक्षण, व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण याबाबत हा समुदाय वंचित असलेला दिसून येतो. आरोग्य सुविधांचा अभाव ते राहात असलेल्या वडिलोपार्जित घर त्याचा हक्क नाही. प्रत्येक स्तरावर हीन वागणूक मिळत असल्याने या समुदायात आत्महत्येचे प्रमाणही दिसून येते.

या समुदायाची ही सामाजिक स्थिती सुधारण्यासाठी सामाजिक निर्देशांक घटकांतील सर्व घटक प्राप्त करण्याचा त्याचा हक्क आहे.

सामाजिक निर्देशांक घटकांबरोबर आर्थिक स्थिती सांगणे काही आर्थिक निर्देशांक घटक ही आहे. जे या समुदायाच्या आर्थिक स्थितीवर प्रकाश टाकते यात खर्च, दरडोई मासिक खर्च Per Capita Monthly Expenditure), अर्थ उत्पादनाची साधने (Income Sources), दारिद्र्य (Poverty), व्यवसाय (Labour Employment), साक्षरता गुणोत्तर (Literacy Ration), प्राथमिक गरजांची पूर्तता सुविधा (Primary Needs Facilities) या घटकावरून आर्थिक स्थिती लक्षात येते. सर्व आर्थिक घटकात LGBTQIA+ समुदाय मागे आहे. परिणामी हा समुदाय उपेक्षित वंचिताचे जीवन जगत आहे ही आर्थिक स्थिती सुधारण्याचा त्यांना मुलभूत हक्क आहे. कायदा न्यायव्यवस्था ही या समुदायाची भक्कम आधार देणाऱ्या असाव्यात.

६. भारतीय समाजव्यवस्था

लिंगभेद, जातीवाद, धर्मवाद, पितृसत्ताक कुटूंब पद्धती, प्रादेशिकवाद, सांप्रदायिकता असलेला भारत देश या समुदायाला समानतेची वागणूक देण्यात यशस्वी होईल का हा प्रश्न उपस्थित राहतो. गुन्हेगारी, भ्रष्टाचार, दहशतवाद, बेकारी, महागाई, जागतिक महामारी, युद्धाचे सावट असलेला भारतीय समाज जो विकसनशील देशात मोडतो. तो देश या समुदायाला माणूस, व्यक्ती म्हणून कसा स्वीकारेल ही शंका येते.

निष्कर्ष

१. LGBTQIA+ समुदायातील लोकांनी आपल्यावर होणाऱ्या अन्यायाविरोधी आवाज उंचावला पाहिजे.
२. एकजुटीने एकत्र येऊन हक्कासाठी संघर्ष केला पाहिजे.
३. समाज, सामाजिक संस्था, पोलिस कायदा, न्यायव्यवस्थेने ही या समाजाला योग्य न्याय व वागणूक देणे गरजेचे आहे.
४. या समुदाय कुटुंबांनी त्याचा स्वीकार करून आत्मबल त्याच्यात वाढवले पाहिजे.

५. राजकीय क्षेत्रात उच्च पद प्राप्त करून हक्कांसाठी सत्तेवर येणे गरजेचे आहे.
६. या समुदायातील लोकांचे योग्य पद्धतीने मानसिक समुपदेशन झाले पाहिजे.
७. समाजातील प्रत्येक व्यक्तीने या समुदायाच्या लोकांमध्ये एकात्मतेची भावना रूजवली पाहिजे.
८. सर्व क्षेत्रात मानवतेचा दर्जा देऊन त्याचा ही कार्याचे कौतुक करावे लागेल.
९. शैक्षणिक, आरोग्य, नागरी सुविधा मुबलक प्रमाणात मिळून त्यांच्यात आत्मविश्वास निर्माण होणे गरजेचे आहे.
१०. समानतेची वागणूक मिळाली पाहिजे.

समारोप

सर्व समावेशक भारतीय समाजाची निर्मिती करण्यासाठी LGBTQIA+ समुदायातील लोकांनी हक्कासाठी संघर्ष करावा ही काळाची गरज आहे. लिंगभेद, जातिभेद, धर्म भेदामध्ये गुंतलेला समाज त्यांना कितपत न्याय देतो हे जाणून घेणे महत्त्वाचे ठरते.

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समलिंगी अनुभवाचे अंतःप्रवाह उलगडणारी - मित्राची गोष्ट

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लेखसार

समलिंगी संबंधाचे मराठी साहित्यामध्ये चित्रण १९७४-७५ साली विजय तेंडुलकरांनी आपल्या *मित्राची गोष्ट* नाट्यसंहितेमध्ये केलेले आहे. ज्या काळात समलिंगी संबंधाबद्दल उघड बोलणं शिष्टसंमत मानलं जात नसे तेव्हा प्रथमच इतक्या विस्ताराने *मित्राची गोष्ट* या नाटकात तेंडुलकरांनी याविषयावर नाट्यरूपात मांडणी केलेली आहे. समलिंगी ही नैसर्गिक अवस्था आहे. काही व्यक्तींना समलिंगी व्यक्तीचं आकर्षण वाटू शकते. समलिंग असणाऱ्या दोन व्यक्तींच्या लैंगिक संबंधांना समलिंगी संबंध असे म्हणतात. सर्वसामान्यपणे स्त्री-पुरुषांना एकमेकांबद्दल आकर्षण वाटते म्हणजेच तो त्यांचा लैंगिक अग्रक्रम असतो. त्याचप्रमाणे स्त्रीला स्त्रीबद्दल आकर्षण वाटते. सहवास आणि पुढे सहजीवन व्यतीत करावेसे वाटते. ही एक शरीराची व मनाची अवस्था आहे. त्याकाळी समाजाने या संबंधाला मान्यता दिलेली नसल्यामुळे अशा व्यक्तींची सामाजिक, मानसिक आणि कौटुंबिक घुसमट झाली त्याचे चित्रण विजय तेंडुलकर यांनी १९८२ साली या नाटकात केलेले आहे.

१९८१ साली रंगमंचित झालेल्या *मित्राची गोष्ट* झालेल्या नाट्यसंहितेचा चिकित्सक अभ्यास करण्याचा प्रयत्न केलेला आहे. *मित्राची गोष्ट* हे नाटकही काळाच्या खूप पुढे होते. या नाटकातील पात्र-पात्रसंबंध, निवेदनपद्धती, प्रोटॅगॉनिस्ट पात्र आणि पात्रविशिष्ट भाषा या घटकांच्या आधारे प्रस्तुत नाटकात विजय तेंडुलकरांनी समाजचौकटीपेक्षा वेगळी कृती करणाऱ्यांच्या जगण्याचा घेतलेला वेध आणि प्रस्थापित समाजाचा त्यांच्याकडे बघण्याचा असलेला दृष्टिकोन यांचा शोध घेण्याचा प्रस्तुत शोधनिबंधात प्रयत्न केलेला आहे.

केंद्रवर्ती संज्ञा: समलिंगी संबंध, प्रोटॅगॉनिस्ट पात्र, निवेदनपद्धती, नाट्यगत घटना, पात्र-पात्रसंबंध.

विजय तेंडुलकर यांनी आपल्या लेखनप्रवासात अनेक नाटके, एकांकिका, बालवाङ्मय, अनुवादित साहित्य लिहिले. तरीही त्यांनी आपले लेखन विशिष्ट, तात्कालिक, प्रचलित प्रश्नापुरतेच सीमित ठेवलेले नाही तर आपल्या साहित्यकृतींतून मानवी जीवनातील मूलभूत झगड्याकडून त्या झगड्याच्या सामाजिक, कौटुंबिक, मानसिक पाळामुळांपर्यंत ते खोलवर जातात. माणसाला दुभंगून टाकणाऱ्या दुःखभोगातील अटळपणाचे चित्रण करतात. प्रस्तुत शोधनिबंधात दोन मैत्रिणींच्या समलिंगी अनुभवांची कहाणी, समलिंगी सहवास आणि त्यातून निर्माण होणारी भयाण शोकांतिका म्हणजे 'मित्राची गोष्ट' या त्यांच्या नाटकाचा चिकित्सक अभ्यास केलेला आहे.

समलिंगी संबंधाबद्दल उघड बोलणे ज्या काळात दुरापास्त होते तेव्हा मराठीत प्रथमच इतक्या विस्ताराने १९७४-७५ साली 'मित्राची गोष्ट' हे नाटक विजय तेंडुलकरांनी लिहीले. या नाटकाचा पहिला प्रयोग ऑगस्ट १९८१ रोजी गडकरी रंगायतन ठाणे येथे सादर केला आणि १९८२ साली नीलकंठ प्रकाशन, पुणे यांनी तिची पहिली आवृत्ती प्रकाशित केलेली आहे. तर दुसरी आवृत्ती २००५ साली पॉप्युलर प्रकाशनने प्रकाशित केली व पुनर्मुद्रण २०१८ साली केले. ज्या काळात समलिंगी संबंधाविषयी विचार केला जात नव्हता इतकेच नव्हे तर या विषयाची वाच्यताही केली जात नसे त्या सामाजिक परिस्थितीत तेंडुलकरांनी हे नाटक लिहिलं. सुमित्रा, म्हणजे मित्रा आणि नमा या मैत्रिणींची ही गोष्ट आहे. एका पुरूषाला स्त्रीबद्दल जे काही वाटू शकतं म्हणजे संरक्षण करण्यापासून ते शरीरसुखाच्या ओढीपर्यंत, ते सारं मित्राला नमाबद्दल वाटू लागते. दोघी जवळ येतात पण समाजाची अशा संबंधांना स्वीकारायची मानसिकता नव्हती. मित्राची प्रचंड घुसमट होते आणि शेवटी सर्व संपवण्यावाचून तिच्यासमोर अन्य कुठला पर्याय उरत नाही, असे या नाटकाचे थोडक्यात आशयसूत्र आहे.

रचनाबंध

मित्राची गोष्ट मध्ये 'कथन' व 'प्रक्षेपण' (नॅरेशन व प्रोजेक्शन) असा कथनात्मक नाट्यबंध वापरलेला आहे. नाटकातील घटनाक्रम बापूच्या प्रेक्षकांशी होणाऱ्या संवादातून उलगडत जातो. सादर नाटकाची रचना तीन अंकी असून ते सकृतदर्शनी कॉलेजमधील एका प्रेमकहाणीचे रूप वाटते. प्रस्तुत नाटकात बापू, मित्रा, नमा ही केंद्रवर्ती पात्रे असून मन्या आणि पांडे ही साहाय्यक पात्रे म्हणता येतील. या पाच पात्रांच्या उक्तिकृतींतून अभिव्यक्त होणारं हे नाटक 'दोन स्त्री-पात्रांचे समलिंगी लैंगिक संबंध' या सूत्राभोवती गुंफलेले आहे. अर्थात, माणूस, त्याचे शरीर व मन, त्याचा अहंभाव पण त्याचबरोबर त्याचे कुटुंब, कुटुंबियांबरोबर असलेले नातेसंबंध आणि प्रसंगी दिसणारी निरर्थकता आणि पर्यायाने येणारा एकाकीपणा या सान्याचे चिंतन नाटककार नाट्यगत घटनाप्रसंगातून साकार करतात.

प्रस्तुत नाटकात केंद्रस्थानी मित्रा (सुमित्रा देव) ही निर्भिड मुलगी, पुरूषी वृत्तीची आहे. मित्राचा जिवाभावाचा सखा बापू (श्रीकांत मराठे) आणि नमा ही नाजूक, लाजरी अगदी तिच्या विरुद्ध स्वभावाची स्त्रीप्रतिमा आहे. या तीन पात्रांभोवती नाटकाचे मुख्य कथानक गुंफलेले आहे. (सुमित्रा)मित्रासाठी हपापणारा पांडे, जो बापूचा रूम पार्टनर आणि नमावर प्रेम असणारा दळवी (मन्या) ही साहाय्यक पात्रे असून या पात्रांच्या क्रियाप्रतिक्रियांतून नाट्यरूप साकार होते. मानवी लैंगिक

नातेसंबंधातील गुंतागुंत आणि माणसाचे व्यक्तिगत सत्त्व, त्याचे सामाजिक अस्तित्व, या दोहोंतील ताण – तणाव याविषयीचे चिंतन नाटकात येते. बापू हा या नाटकातील सर्वसाक्षी पात्र. किंबहुना त्याच्या नजरेतूनच आपल्या नाट्यगत घटना कळतात, दाखवल्या जातात.

मित्राच्या अपारंपरिक स्वत्वाचा शोध

नाटकाच्या आरंभी बापू (श्रीकांत मराठे) हे अठरा ते वीस वर्षांचे पात्र वाचक-प्रेक्षकांना मित्राची (सुमित्रा) प्रेमकहाणी सांगण्यास सुरुवात करते. तिच्या देहवैशिष्ट्यांपासून ते स्वभाववैशिष्ट्यापर्यंत तिचे संपूर्ण व्यक्तीचित्र रेखाटतो. पहिल्या अंकातच दोघांची मैत्री झालेली दिसते. मित्रा ही बापूला जास्त खरी आणि वेगळी वाटते. तिला पडणारे प्रश्न ती बापूला विचारते, किंबहुना ती स्वतःलाच विचारत असते – *आपल्याला कोण घडवून पाठवतो? आपण असतो तसे का असतो? काय म्हणून आपण आपलेच गुलाम असणार?* (पृ.७) आणि तिच्यातील प्रश्नांची उत्तर तिलाच शोधावी लागणार याची जाणीवही तिला होते – *आपली आपल्यालाच उत्तरं शोधावी लागतात. कुणी नाही मदत करू शकत. एकट्यांचं असायचं असतं.* (पृ.८) या संवादातूनच मित्राला तिच्यातील वेगळ्या शारीर-मानसिक भावनांची जाणीव झाली आहे हे स्पष्ट होते. त्या शोधाच्या पहिल्या पायरीवर असतानाच ती लग्नाचा विचारही करून बघण्याचा प्रयत्न करते. पण आपण यासाठी नाही हे तिला पुनः पुन्हा जाणवते. याच काळात मित्रा आत्महत्या करण्याचा अयशस्वी प्रयत्न करते. बापूला मात्र त्याचा अर्थ लागत नाही. बापूचा रूम पार्टनर, स्वतःला त्याचा गार्डियन समजणारा पांडे, त्याला मित्रावरून चिडवतो. सर्व कॉलेजलाच त्यांच्या मैत्रीचं आश्चर्य वाटतं. पांडेच बापूला मित्राच्या आत्महत्येच्या प्रयत्नाची बातमी देतो. बापू हतबुद्ध होतो. त्याचा विश्वास बसत नाही. तो तिला पाहायला नर्सिंग होममध्ये जातो तेव्हा त्याला तिचा चेहरा 'अर्भका'सारखा भासतो. नंतर काही दिवसांनी मित्रा पुन्हा बापूला भेटते. वरकरणी तिच्यात काहीही बदल दिसत नाही, पण ती बापूला नॉर्मल वाटत नाही.

मित्रा बापूला तिच्यातील तिला जाणवलेले वेगळेपण म्हणजे स्त्री म्हणून तिला पुरुषांविषयी काहीच वाटत नाही – ना शारीरिक ना मानसिक हे मोकळेपणाने सांगते. पुरूष मित्र असावा असं वाटतं पण त्यापलिकडे काहीच नाही. आणि तिला हे काहीतरी चौकटीबाहेरचं, चाकोरीबाहेरचं आहे याची जाणीव नाटकाच्या पहिल्या अंकातच झालेली दाखवलेली आहे. ती जेव्हा जेव्हा अस्वस्थ होते तेव्हा सिगारेट ओढते. समाजमान्य चौकटीला नाकारणं हेच नाटककाराला या उक्तिकृतीतून दाखवायचं आहे. हे समाजमान्य स्त्रीप्रतिमेला छेद देणारे आहे. तेंडुलकरांनी निर्मिलेले सुमित्रा हे प्रोटॅगॉनिस्ट स्त्रीपात्र हे पारंपरिक समाजचौकटीतील नाही. तिला पुरूषांबद्दल कोणतेही आकर्षण वाटत नाही. तिला मुलांचे खेळ आवडतात, मुलांबरोबर खेळण्यात तिला कोणताच संकोच किंवा पुरुषांविषयी स्त्रीसुलभ भय वाटत नाही. हे सगळे प्रस्थापित पुरुषप्रधान समाजव्यवस्थेच्या विरुद्ध होते. याची जाणीव तिला आणि तिच्या कुटुंबियांना झालेली होती. पण त्याच्याशी सामना कसा करायचा किंवा त्यावर मात करून त्यातून 'सहीसलामत' बाहेर कसं पडायचं हे त्यांना कळत नव्हतं. सुमित्रापेक्षाही त्यांना हे जास्त चिंताजनक वाटतं. किंबहुना 'लोक काय म्हणतील?' हा बागुलबुवा कायम तिच्यासमोर उभा केला गेला. नाटकाच्या पहिल्या अंकात ती या प्रश्नांच्या उत्तरांचा शोध घेण्यास सुरुवात करते. बापूला सांगत असताना जणू ती स्वतःशी पुनःपुन्हा ती सर्व घटनाक्रम, मानसिक गुंता उलगडण्याचा प्रयत्न करते. बापू म्हणजे जणू तिची नेणीव आहे. ज्याच्याजवळ ती आपल्या सर्व मानसिक आणि लैंगिक भावभावनांचे पापुद्रे पुन्हापुन्हा तपासून पाहते. आणि तोही फक्त साक्षीदार होतो त्या तिच्या शोधप्रवासाचा, अस्वस्थतेचा!

मित्राच्या या घुसमटीला गॅदरिंगच्या नाटकातील पुरूष पात्राच्या भूमिकेने वाट मिळते. पुरूष पार्ट करायला उफाड्याची मुलगी हवी असते आणि त्यांना ती मित्रामध्ये सापडते. पांडेला ती आवडत असते. पांडे तिला भूमिकेविषयी विचारतो आणि ती होकार देते – *एवीतेवी सगळ्या जगण्याचंच नाटक झालंय, मग सरळ नाटक का नको?* (पृ.२२) असा विचार करून मित्रा घरापासून लांब राहण्याच्या निमित्ताने नाटकात पुरुषपात्र साकारते. पुरूषवेशातील मित्रा आणि नायिका नमा देशमुख यांच्यातील प्रणयप्रसंगानंतर मित्रा नमामध्ये गुंतत जाते. तिला नाजूक, बाहुलीसारखी नमा आवडू लागते. पण तिचा प्रियकर-मित्र असलेल्या मन्या दळवीला ती खटकते. पांडेला मात्र मित्रा *कलेजेका फालुदा करनेवाली* वाटते. पण मित्राला मात्र – *पुरूषाबद्दल वाटायला पाहिजे – तसं काहीतरीमलाच एका मुलीबद्दल वाटलं – (पृ. २७)..... लुट्टपुटीचा लव्हसीन चालला होता ! त्या रात्री मला सर्व लख्ख दिसलं. मला पुरूष नको. मला स्त्री हवी. मी निराळी आहे. निराळी.* (पृ. २८) पहिल्या अंकाच्या अखेरीस तिला तिच्यातील या वेगळेपणाची पूर्ण जाणीव होते इतकेच नव्हे तर ती बापूकडे नमासोबत एकांतात काही काळ घालवण्यासाठी खोलीची मागणी करते.

मित्राचा स्वसुखाच्या पूर्णत्वाचा ध्यास आणि प्रवास

दुसऱ्या अंकात मित्राच्या लक्षात येते, की तिच्या मनात नमाविषयी असणारी भावना अधिकाधिक तीव्र झालेली आहे. आणि आता तिला तशी सुटू देणार नाही. बापूला मित्राविषयी मैत्रीभावनेच्या पलिकडे जास्त काहीतरी वाटते, मित्रा नमाच्या बाबतीत आक्रमक होते आणि पांडे मित्रासाठी तडफडत होता. मन्याला नमाला गमवायचं नव्हतं. असा सगळा नात्यांचा गुंता, मानसिक ताण-तणाव दुसऱ्या अंकात टिपेला जातात. बापू पांडेला सांगतो – *ती होमो आहे. म्हणजे मुलीच आवडणारी* - (पृ. ४७). मित्रा आणि नमा यांच्यातील नात्याला बापूच्या खोलीत आकार येऊ लागतो. खरं तर मित्राच तो आपल्या मनाप्रमाणे देत असते. मन्याला कळतं आणि तो नमाला घेऊन जाण्यासाठी खोलीत येतो आणि जाता जाता मित्राला – *यू ब्लडी लेस्बियन*

बिच यू... आय विल किल यू! (पृ. ४९) असं म्हणतो. मऱ्या दळवी प्रस्थापित समाजव्यवस्थेचं प्रतीक आहे. एखादी स्त्री आपल्या प्रेयसी-मैत्रिणीला आपल्या डोळ्यादेखत हिरावून नेते आणि आपल्या पुरुषी अहंकाराला डिवचते हे त्याला सहन होत नाही. यामुळे मऱ्या हिंसक आणि आक्रमक होतो. वेगळी कृती करणाऱ्यांना, वेगळा विचार करणाऱ्यांना आजही समाजात जागा नाही. माणसाचं माणूसपणच समाज नाकारतो. त्याला माणूस म्हणून त्याचं जीवन त्याच्या पद्धतीनं जगण्याचा पूर्ण अधिकार आहे, हे समाज लक्षातच घेत नाही. वेगळे विचार ऐकून घेण्याचीच मुळी समाजाची तयारी नसते. मग ते समजून घेण्याची बातच सोडा. मऱ्या दळवी हे प्रस्थापित समाजव्यवस्थेचं प्रतीक म्हणून नाटकात येतो. तेंडुलकर यांनी दाखवलेलं वास्तव स्वीकारण्याची आजही समाजाची फारशी तयारी नाही. काळाच्या अंतरानं समाज अजूनही बदललेला नाही. वास्तविक या नाटकात तीन पुरूषप्रतिमा येतात - बापू (श्रीकांत मराठे) - जो मित्राला सतत साहाय्य करत असतो, दुसरा मित्रासाठी हपापणारा पांडे आणि नमावर प्रेम असणारा मऱ्या दळवी, जो सतत मित्राचा द्वेष, राग करणारा. समाज-संस्कृतीचा रक्षक. जे स्त्रीकडे एक वस्तू म्हणूनच बघतात.

मऱ्याच्या या प्रतिक्रियेमुळे मित्राच्या नजरेत श्वापदाची चमक दिसते. मित्रा अक्राळविक्राळ रूप घेते. स्वतःचे डोके आपटून घेते, कपडा टराटरा फाडते. आणि अखेर विकल होते. नमा मऱ्याच्या मागे निघून गेल्याने मित्राला वाईट वाटतं, तिची किळस वाटते. पण तरीही मित्रा आणि नमा पुनःपुन्हा मऱ्याच्या नकळत भेटत राहतात. नमा मऱ्या आणि मित्रा दोघांबरोबरही संबंध जपण्याचा केविलवाणा प्रयत्न करतच राहाते. मित्राची सत्यस्थिती समोर आल्यावर पांडे दूर निघून जातो. मऱ्या आणि मित्रा दोघांही बापूची खोली वापरतात. अखेर बापू स्वतःची खोली सोडून निघून जातो. आणि कणखरपणे मित्राला सांगतो. ज्याला ती दगड, कासव, घुबड अशी संबोधने लावत असते. दुसऱ्या अंकाच्या शेवटी बापूमध्ये होणारा बदल मित्रालाही जाणवतो. तेंडुलकरांच्या नाटकांतून प्रकटलेल्या जीवनमूल्यांनी तत्कालीन पारंपरिक जीवनमूल्यांना आव्हान दिले. त्यांनी जे नातेसंबंध चितारले त्यांमधून परंपरागत नातेसंबंधापुढे प्रश्नचिन्ह उभे केले.

मित्राचा अंताकडे प्रवास

तिसऱ्या अंकात नमाला मित्रापासून सुटका हवी आहे. कारण मित्रा स्वतःला हवं तसं नमाशी वागते. स्वामित्वाच्या भावनेने तिला वापरते. तिच्या मनाचा विचारच करत नाही. इथे मित्रा आता पितृसत्ताक व्यवस्थेचेच एक रूप होते. आणि जसं मऱ्या वागतो तसंच मित्रा नमाबरोबर वागते. दोघांमध्ये काहीच फरक नमाला जाणवत नाही. हे नमाला असह्य होतं आणि ती तिच्याशी असलेले नातेसंबंध तोडून निघून जाण्याचा निर्णय घेते. मित्राला हे कळतं तेव्हा ती - *नमाला आता माझ्यापासून सुटणं शक्य नाही. मनात आणलं तर मी तिचं कितीही नुकसान करू शकेन.* (पृ. ६७).

या उद्गारांतून मित्राला नमाविषयी वाटणाऱ्या विचित्र, अनावर ओढीचे, आक्रमक स्वामित्व-भावनेचे, नमापायी होणाऱ्या मित्राच्या तडफडीचे, तगमगीचे, तिच्या उन्मत्त उफाळण्याचे व विकल कोळपण्याचे संमिश्र दर्शन घडते. एकीकडून अक्राळविक्राळ दर्शन तर त्याचवेळी श्रांत खिन्न दर्शन वाचकप्रेक्षकांना हतबुद्ध करते. बापूलाही आता मित्राबद्दल आस्था वाटत नाही कारण त्याला हेच कळत नाही की, कुणीही कुणाला वस्तू समजून खेळ कसं मांडू शकतं.

बापूसुद्धा मित्राबरोबरचे सर्व संबंध तोडून टाकतो. या त्याच्या वर्तनाने मित्रा दुखावली जाते. तिला कॉलेजमधून रस्टिकेट करण्यात येतं. ती तिच्या कुटुंबापासून तुटते. पण जेव्हा बापूही तिला दुरावतो तेव्हा ती खऱ्या अर्थाने खचते. कारण बापू हा केवळ मित्र नसतो तर तो तिच्यासाठी 'आई' झालेला असतो. जे मित्रा इतर कोणाशीही बोलत नाही ते ती बापूजवळ बोलत असे. अखेरीस बापूनेही दूर केल्यावर मित्रा खऱ्या अर्थाने एकटी पडते. ती अखेर ऑफिसर्स क्लबमध्ये जाते.... तिथे विलायती पिणं आणि ऑफिसर्ससोबत जाणं हा तिचा जीवनप्रवास होतो. हे पांडेच बापू आणि मऱ्याला सांगतो आणि मित्राचे बदललेले रूप दाखवतो तेव्हा मित्राच्या या वर्तनाला आपण तर जबाबदार नाही ना? या विचाराने बापू विमनस्क, बेचैन होतो. आपल्यामुळे मित्राची अधोगती झाली हा विचार तो निकाराने मनातून बाहेर काढायचा प्रयत्न करतो व स्वतःच्या नव्या दैनंदिन जीवनाला सुरुवात करतो. पण जेव्हा मित्रा आत्महत्या करते आणि कायमची संपून जाते. तेव्हा मात्र बापू अस्वस्थ होतो. आणि अखेर गुडघ्यात डोकं खुपसून बसतो अशी रंगसूचना येते.

समारोप

मित्राइतकेच इतर पात्रांचे अवस्थांतर आणि त्यांच्या रौद्र-शांत लाटांचे दर्शन नाटककार समर्थपणे घडवितात. मित्रांकडे अनाम ओढीने ओढला गेलेला, चक्रावलेला व नंतर बांधला गेला बापू पण सुरुवातीला असाहाय्यपणे मित्राला साथ देणारा, नंतर तिच्यापासून दूर झालेला आणि अखेर आपल्यामुळे मित्राचा हा सर्वांगीण न्हास तर झाला नाही ना या विचाराने उद्विग्न झालेला बापू टप्प्याटप्प्याने नाट्यगत घटनांमधून चित्रित केलेला आहे. तर मित्राच्या प्रेमात दुंभगलेला पांडे. सूडाने पेटलेला, तिचा पिच्छा पुरवणारा दळवी आणि मित्रामागे फरपटत जाणारी नमा या पात्रांच्या ताण्या-बाण्यांतून या नाटकाची एक घट्ट वीण तयार होत जाते. मित्राची एक्झिट शेवटी वाचक-प्रेक्षकांना रूतवून टाकते, मानसिक अवस्थेचा छेद घेते. विशिष्ट चौकटीबाहरेच्या मानवी वर्तनाचे, मनोव्यापारांचे दर्शन घडते. या तीन अंकी नाटकात मित्राचा अपारंपरिक असण्याचा जीवनप्रवास चित्रित केलेला आहे. वेगळी कृती करणाऱ्यांना, वेगळा विचार करणाऱ्यांना आजही समाजात जागा नाही. माणसाचं माणूसपणच समाज नाकारतो. त्याला माणूस म्हणून त्याचं जीवन त्याच्या पद्धतीनं जगण्याचा पूर्ण अधिकार आहे, हे

समाज लक्षातच घेत नाही. *मित्राची गोष्ट*मध्ये माणूस, त्याचे शरीर व मन, त्याचा अहंभाव पण त्याचबरोबर त्याचा गोतावळा, गोतावळ्याबरोबर असलेले नातेसंबंध आणि प्रसंगी दिसणारी निरर्थकता आणि पर्यायाने येणारा एकाकीपणा या साऱ्याचे चिंतन तेंडुलकर समर्थपणे नाट्यगत घटनाप्रसंगातून करतात. ते तात्त्विक चर्चा प्रत्यक्षपणे करत नाहीत पण त्यातील प्रत्येक पात्र एक तत्त्व घेऊनच वाचक-प्रेक्षकांसमोर येते. मानवी संबंध, मनातील गुंते, त्यातील ताणेबाणे या साऱ्याचे पर्यवसान भीषण रूप धारण करतात. विनाशाचे रूप जास्त तीव्र आहे. मित्राची शोकात्मिकाच होते. पण त्यापेक्षाही माणूस म्हणून स्वतंत्रपणे जगू पाहणारी व्यक्ती-मित्रा आणि अटळपणे शेवटाच्या महाप्रवासाला लागलेली व्यक्ती-मित्रा जास्त करून वाटते.

भाषेचे सहज सोपे दिसणारे पण सर्व घटनाप्रसंगाचा ठाव घेणारे रूप – व्यक्तिचित्रण आणि संवाद या दोन घटकांतून नाटक जिवंत करतात. भाषेच्या माध्यमातून तथाकथित मानवी नातेसंबंधांच्या व तत्संबद्ध कल्पनांच्या चिंधड्या उडवल्या आहेत. मानवी नातेसंबंधांच्या अनेक शक्यता तेंडुलकर नाटकातून मांडतात. जे नैसर्गिक आहे ते तेंडुलकर दाखवितात त्याला ते चांगलं, वाईट, योग्य, अयोग्य असं विशेषण लावत नाहीत. जसं आहे तसं वाचक-प्रेक्षकांसमोर ठेवतात.

'मित्राची गोष्ट' तेंडुलकरांनी ७४-७५ साली लिहीलं असावं. समलिंगी संबंधांबद्दल उघड बोलणं तेव्हा शिष्टसंमत नव्हतं. समाजात आपण समलिंगी संबंध ठेवतो, हे कोणाला आणि कसं सांगणार? अशी परिस्थिती असताना तेंडुलकरांनी हे नाटक लिहीले हे त्यांचे द्रष्टेपण! आणि अर्थात, तेंडुलकरांनंतर अनेक साहित्यिकांच्या कथा, कादंबऱ्या, नाटक-सिनेमांत समलिंगी संबंध अधूनमधून डोकावले आणि त्याबाबत अतिशय जबाबदारीनं भाष्य करण्यात यशस्वी ठरले हे आज खूपच महत्त्वाचे आहे.

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संकेतस्थळावरील संदर्भ

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डॉ. शीतल पावसकर भोसले

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कलाविषयक सैद्धांतिक व्यवहारात कलानिर्मितीप्रक्रिया, कलेचे कलावंतसापेक्ष / रसिकसापेक्ष प्रयोजन, आस्वादप्रक्रिया आणि कलेचा मानवी जीवनावर होऊ शकणारा बरा-वाईट परिणाम याविषयी सविस्तर चर्चा झालेली दिसते. संस्कृत/भारतीय आणि पाश्चात्य साहित्यशास्त्रातील चर्चा यादृष्टीने लक्षणीय आहे. निर्मिती आणि आस्वाद हे दोन बिंदू केंद्रवर्ती ठेवून कलाव्यवहाराचे स्वरूप उलगडून पाहण्याचा प्रयत्न केला, तर अनुक्रमे निर्माता आणि रसिक यांच्या प्रयोजनांचा विचार अपरिहार्य ठरतो. संस्कृत/भारतीय साहित्यशास्त्रात प्रयोजनविचाराची मांडणी 'आनंद' आणि 'बोध' या दोन सूत्रांच्या अनुषंगाने झाली आहे, तर पाश्चात्य साहित्यशास्त्रात 'आत्माविष्कार', 'जीवनभाष्य', 'सामाजिक बांधिलकी', 'कॅथार्सिस' इत्यादी संकल्पनांच्या संदर्भात झाली आहे. चित्रकला, शिल्पकला, वास्तुकला, साहित्य, संगीत, चित्रपट, नाट्य आदींचा समावेश 'कला' या संकल्पनेत होतो. मात्र या कलांचे स्वरूप आणि कार्य परस्परांहून काहीएक प्रमाणात भिन्न असल्यामुळे प्रयोजनविचाराचे सर्वसामान्यीकरण करता येत नाही. किंबहुना ते करूही नये. संगीत, चित्रकला यांसारख्या कलांचा, निर्माता आणि आस्वादक/रसिकासोबत असणारा संबंध हा साहित्यकला, नाट्यकला आणि चित्रपटकला यांच्यापेक्षा वेगळा असतो. साहित्य, नाट्य आणि चित्रपटकलेत आनंद/मनोरंजन यांच्याइतकेच बोध हे प्रयोजनही महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका बजावत असते. या कला भवतालच्या समाजवास्तवाला, रूढिग्रस्ततेला तसेच गतिमानतेला मूल्यात्मक प्रतिक्रिया देण्याचा प्रयत्न करित असल्यामुळे त्या मानवी जीवनातील सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, भाषिक, राजकीय प्रश्न आपल्या कवेत घेत असतात. साहित्य, नाटक, चित्रपट या कलामाध्यमांची आवाहनक्षमता अधिक असल्यामुळे लेख, भाषणे यांच्या माध्यमातून घडणाऱ्या प्रबोधनापेक्षा या कलांच्या माध्यमातून घडणारे प्रबोधन अधिक परिणामकारक असते. स्वाभाविकच, विशिष्ट विषयाच्या संदर्भात जनमत अनुकूल-प्रतिकूल करून घेण्यासाठी या कलांचा प्रभावी उपयोग झाल्याचे उपरोक्त तिन्ही कलांचा इतिहास तपासून पाहिला तर स्पष्टपणे पुढे येते.

प्रस्तुत लेखात वेगळा लैंगिक कल (Different Sexual Preference), वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख (Different Sexual Identity) असणाऱ्या माणसांचे जगणे अधोरेखित करणाऱ्या चित्रपटांचा विचार करावयाचा आहे. वास्तविक पाहता, जागतिक चित्रपटांच्या बरोबरीने बंगाली, मल्याळी, गुजराती इत्यादी प्रादेशिक चित्रपटांमधूनही उपरोक्त विषयाचे विविध आयाम चित्रित झाले आहेत. मात्र विवेचनात नेमकेपणा येण्यासाठी सदर लेखाची संदर्भचौकट पुढीलप्रमाणे निश्चित करण्यात आली आहे.

- अ. 'LGBTQIA+' या गटांतर्गत समाविष्ट 'LGBT' अशी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या व्यक्तींचे अनुभवविश्व आणि त्याच्याशी जोडल्या गेलेल्या विविध आयामांचा विचार प्रस्तुत लेखात करण्यात येणार आहे.
- आ. 'LGBT' या विषयाशी निगडित असणाऱ्या केवळ मराठी आणि हिंदी भाषेतील प्रातिनिधिक चित्रपटांचा विचार करण्यात येणार आहे.
- इ. 'प्रातिनिधिक' हा शब्द वर्णनात्मक अर्थाने उपयोजिला असून त्यातून कोणताही मूल्यात्मक भाव सूचित करणे अभिप्रेत नाही.
- ई. लेस्बियन, गे, बायसेक्सुअल, ट्रान्सजेंडर या पारिभाषिक संकल्पनांसाठी पर्यायी मराठी शब्द योजलेले नाहीत.
- उ. चित्रपट हे दृकश्राव्य माध्यम असल्यामुळे चित्रपटाशी संलग्न असणाऱ्या विविध तांत्रिक बाबींचा विचार करता येणे शक्य आहे; किंबहुना ते आवश्यकही आहे. मात्र सदर लेख लिहिण्यामागील भूमिका ही प्रामुख्याने आशयलक्ष्यी असल्यामुळे चित्रपटमाध्यमाशी संबंधित अनेक तांत्रिक घटक विवेचनाच्या कक्षबाहेर ठेवले आहेत.
- ऊ. 'उंबरठा' (१९८२), 'FIRE' (१९९६), 'My Brother...Nikhil' (२००५), 'थांग' (२००६), 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd' (२००७), 'अलिगढ' (२०१५), 'BIOSCOPE' मधील 'मित्राची गोष्ट' (२०१५), 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' (२०१९), 'शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान' (२०२०), 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' (२०२१), 'अजीब दास्तान' मधील 'गिली पुच्ची' (२०२१), 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' (२०२२), 'बधाई दो' (२०२२) या चित्रपटांच्या आधारे आणि या चित्रपटांच्या मर्यादित विवेचन करण्यात आले आहे.

'थांग', 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd', 'अलिगढ', 'शुभमंगल ज्यादा सावधान', 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' या चित्रपटांत 'गे' ही लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या पात्रांचा संघर्ष साकार झाला आहे. तर 'उंबरठा', 'FIRE', 'मित्राची गोष्ट', 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा', 'गिली पुच्ची' या चित्रपटांत 'लेस्बियन' स्त्रियांच्या जीवनातील अनुभवविश्व अधोरेखित झाले आहे. 'बधाई दो' हा चित्रपट 'गे' आणि 'लेस्बियन' अशा दोन्ही स्तरांवरील भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या पात्रांच्या शारीर आणि मनोविश्वाचा धांडोळा घेण्याचा प्रयत्न करतो. 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' (निनावी भाडेकरू) आणि 'थांग' (आदित्य) चित्रपटांत 'बायसेक्सुअल'

असणाऱ्या पुरुषपात्रांच्या द्विस्तरीय जगण्याचा वेध घेतला आहे, तर 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' सारख्या अपवादात्मक चित्रपटात 'ट्रान्सजेंडर'च्या जीवनातील लैंगिक ओळखीच्या संदर्भातील दाहक वास्तवाचे अधोरेखन करण्यात आले आहे.

उपरोक्त चित्रपटांतून साकार झालेल्या प्रश्नाला कथानकात दिलेले स्थान, चित्रपटाची एकूण प्रवृत्ती याला अनुसरून उपरोक्त चित्रपटांचे पुढीलप्रमाणे वर्गीकरण करता येते.

अ. 'उंबरठा' आणि 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd' चित्रपटांचा अपवाद करता उर्वरित सर्व चित्रपटांत भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असलेल्या व्यक्तींचे जगणे कथानकाच्या केंद्रस्थानी आहे. तर उपरोक्त दोन चित्रपटांत अनेक उपकथानकांपैकी एक म्हणून अनुक्रमे लेस्बियन आणि गेचे उपकथानक साकार झाले आहे.

आ. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांपैकी काही चित्रपट भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असलेल्या पात्रांचा जीवनसंघर्ष गंभीरपणे हाताळतात आणि चित्रपटाची एकूण प्रवृत्तीही गंभीर असलेली दिसते. उदाहरणार्थ, 'FIRE', 'थांग', 'अलिगढ', 'मित्राची गोष्ट', 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' इत्यादी. तर 'शुभमंगल ज्यादा सावधान', 'बधाई दो', 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी', 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' हे चित्रपट 'मुख्य धारा' (Main Stream) प्रवाहातील हिंदी चित्रपट आहेत. त्यामुळे व्यावसायिक गणितं डोळ्यासमोर ठेवून एका मर्यादित चौकटीत जनजागृती करण्याचा प्रयत्न हे चित्रपट करतात. स्वाभाविकच, कथांतर्गत ताण सुसह्य होईल अशी कथानकाची संरचना आणि रंजनप्रधान बॉलिवूड चित्रपटाचा अविभाज्य भाग असलेली गाणी याही चित्रपटांचा महत्त्वाचा विशेष आहे.

इ. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांतून साकार होणाऱ्या पात्रांचे वर्गीय स्थान हा मुद्दा समोर ठेवला, तर मध्यमवर्ग आणि काही वेळा उच्चमध्यमवर्गातील लेस्बियन, गे, बायसेक्सुअल आणि ट्रान्सजेंडर या लैंगिक ओळखींचा वेध घेणाऱ्या चित्रपटांची संख्या तुलनेत अधिक आहे, ही वस्तुस्थिती अधोरेखित होते. यासंदर्भात भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या कनिष्ठ वर्गातील स्त्रीपात्रांचे जगणे सूचित/अधोरेखित करणाऱ्या अनुक्रमे 'उंबरठा' आणि 'गिली पुच्ची' या चित्रपटांचा अपवाद करता येईल.

ई. पात्रांचे सामाजिक स्थान हे त्यांच्या भिन्न लैंगिक ओळखीमुळे निर्धारित होते हा मुद्दा 'गिली पुच्ची'चा अपवाद करता उर्वरित चित्रपटांमध्ये केंद्रस्थानी आहे. त्यामुळे पात्रांचे जातपातळीवरील सामाजिक स्थान या चित्रपटांमधून पुढे येत नाही. आर्थिक पातळीवरील भिन्नता आणि श्रेणिबद्धता हा मुद्दाही अपवाद वगळता पात्रचित्रण, कथानकाच्या संरचनेतून फारसा पुढे येत नाही. किंबहुना, पात्रांचे राहणीमान, सामाजिक स्तर या अनुषंगाने केले गेलेले पात्रचित्रण लक्षात घेतले, तर विविध लैंगिक ओळखी असणारी पात्रं आणि त्यांचे पार्टनर्स यांचे सामाजिक स्थान अपवादात्मक संदर्भ वगळता समकक्ष असावे असे दिसते. 'अलिगढ'मधील प्रोफेसर सिरस यांच्याशी लैंगिक संबंध असणाऱ्या रिक्षावाल्याच्या माध्यमातून वर्गीय ओळखीचा संदर्भ व्यक्त झाला आहे. मात्र एकूण कथानकाच्या संरचनेत हा मुद्दा बिनमहत्त्वाचा आहे. या पार्श्वभूमीवर 'गिली पुच्ची'मध्ये मात्र लेस्बियन भारती मंडलचे दलित असणे आणि प्रिया शर्मांचे ब्राह्मण असणे, याला एकूण कथांतर्गत अवकाशात घडणाऱ्या घडामोडींच्या संदर्भात महत्त्वाचे स्थान असलेले दिसते. माणसाचे सामाजिक स्थान निर्धारित करणारे जात, वर्ग, लिंग यांसारखे विविध स्तर, त्यांच्याशी निगडित असणारे आणि परस्परांना छेदणारे सत्तासंबंध 'गिली पुच्ची'मधून अत्यंत सक्षमपणे साकार झाले आहेत. जातवर्ग या सामाजिक स्तरीकरण करणाऱ्या संदर्भाना तीव्र करत भिन्न लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या व्यक्तीच्या आयुष्यातील संघर्षाची अनेकरेणीयता अधोरेखित करण्याचे आव्हान 'गिली पुच्ची'सारख्या अपवादात्मक चित्रपटात पेललेले दिसते. "Geeli Puchhi, the short film on Netflix anthology 'Ajeeb Dastaan' talks about caste, sexuality, privilege and patriarchy in a powerful way" (Roy 2021). हे मत सामाजिक स्थानाशी निगडित असणाऱ्या अनेकस्तरीयतेचा मुद्दा अधोरेखित करणारे आहे.

'अलिगढ' चित्रपटातील प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्राची (प्रो.सिरस) जातपातळीवरील ओळख (ब्राह्मण असणे) केवळ एका दृश्यात अतिशय स्पष्टपणे अधोरेखित होते. या दृश्यात प्रो. सिरस यांच्या बाजूने ठामपणे उभा राहणारा दीपू सेबेस्टियन मांसाहारी असल्यामुळे त्याने हात लावलेला शाकाहारी पदार्थ प्रो. सिरस खाऊ शकत नाहीत असा संदर्भ व्यक्त झाला आहे. मात्र हेच प्रो. सिरस मुस्लीमधर्मीय इरफानशी लैंगिक संबंध ठेवू शकतात हा मुद्दा नोंद घेण्याजोगा आहे. 'स्वातंत्र्य', 'आत्मसन्मान', 'मानवी अधिकार' या संकल्पनांचा दायरा आणि त्यांच्याशी जोडली गेलेली विशिष्ट सामाजिक स्थानसापेक्षता पृष्ठपातळीवर आणणारे हे संदर्भ उपरोक्त पार्श्वभूमीवर अर्थपूर्ण ठरतात.

'उंबरठा' आणि 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd' चित्रपटांचा अपवाद करता उर्वरित सर्व चित्रपटांमध्ये लेस्बियन/गे/बायसेक्सुअल/ट्रान्सजेंडर पात्रं ही प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रं आहेत. उदाहरणार्थ, सीता-राधा (FIRE), आदित्य (थांग), प्रो. रामचंद्र सिरस (अलिगढ), सुमित्रा (मित्राची गोष्ट), कार्तिक सिंग, अमन (शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान), तनय (कोबाल्ट ब्लू), भारती मंडल, प्रिया शर्मा (गिली पुच्ची), शार्दूल-सुमी (बधाई दो), मानवी (ट्रान्सवुमन - चंदिगढ करे आशिकी), इत्यादी. 'उंबरठा' आणि 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd' चित्रपटांमध्ये अनेक उपकथानकांपैकी एक उपकथानक वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या पात्रांचे आहे. स्वाभाविकच, चित्रपटांतर्गत अवकाशात या पात्रांच्या जगण्यातील संदर्भ अत्यंत त्रोटकपणे व्यक्त होतात. या पार्श्वभूमीवर उर्वरित सर्व चित्रपटांमध्ये कथांतर्गत अवकाश प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रांच्या विशिष्ट लैंगिक

ओळखीमुळे निर्माण होणाऱ्या परिस्थितीकडे निर्देश करतो. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांतील लेस्बिअन/ गे/बायसेक्शुअल पात्रांचे या संकल्पनांशी असलेले नाते एकरेषीय नाही. उदाहरणार्थ, दोन निनावी स्त्रीपात्रं (उंबरठा), सीता-राधा (FIRE), आदित्य (थांग) ही पात्रं नैसर्गिकपणे लेस्बिअन किंवा गे नाहीत. परंतु भिन्नलिंगी शारीर संबंधांची अनुपलब्धता आणि त्यातून होणारा शारीरिक भावनांचा कोंडमारा त्यांना समलिंगी संबंधांपर्यंत घेऊन जातो. 'उंबरठा' आणि 'FIRE' चित्रपटांतील स्त्रीपात्रांचा यासंदर्भात उल्लेख करता येईल. वैवाहिक जीवनात समाधानी असणारा 'थांग'मधील आदित्य त्याच्या सहवासातील गे असलेल्या उदयच्या संपर्कात येतो. उदयच्या आर्जवी प्रेमाला नाकारता न आल्यामुळे गोंधळलेल्या मानसिक स्थितीत आदित्य आणि उदयमध्ये समलिंगी संबंध प्रस्थापित होतो. या पात्रांचा अपवाद करता अन्य चित्रपटांतील वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणारी पात्रं निसर्गतः तशी आहेत. वयात येताना आणि त्यानंतरही आपण इतरांपेक्षा वेगळे आहोत, आपल्याला भिन्नलिंगी व्यक्तिविषयी आकर्षण वाटत नसून समलिंगी व्यक्तीविषयी शारीर ओढ वाटते ही जाणीव असलेली ही पात्रं आहेत. 'मित्राची गोष्ट', 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' या चित्रपटांमधून 'Flash Back' तंत्राचा वापर करत पौगंडावस्था ते तारुण्य या कालावधीत स्वतःच्या लैंगिक ओळखीविषयी पात्रांच्या मनात निर्माण झालेला गोंधळ आणि ती ओळख पटवून घेण्यासाठी त्यांची सुरू असणारी अविरत धडपड चित्रित करण्यात आली आहे. आरशाच्या माध्यमातून स्वतःतील भिन्नत्व शोधण्याचा सुमित्राचा (मित्राची गोष्ट) प्रवास दोन - तीन प्रसंगांतील विशिष्ट दृश्यप्रतिमांमधून (पुरुषी हावभाव करणे, पुरुषांचे मानले जाणारे कपडे घालणे, मिशी काढणे, इत्यादी.) अत्यंत प्रभावीपणे साकार झाला आहे. 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा'मधील स्वीटीच्या डायरीतील संवाद आणि मुलीमुलींचा विवाह होतानाचे काढलेले चित्र या प्रतिमांची पुनरावृत्ती करणारे दिग्दर्शन या शोधप्रवासाचे ऐतिहासिक परिप्रेक्ष्य सिद्ध करणारे आहे. 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी', 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' या चित्रपटांमध्ये प्रत्यक्ष दृश्यप्रतिमांऐवजी पात्रांमधील संवादांमधून भूतकाळातील घटनांचा पट उभा केला आहे. मानवीचा मनूशी होणारा संवाद (चंदिगढ करे आशिकी) आणि तनयच्या प्राध्यापकाचा तनयशी होणारा संवाद (कोबाल्ट ब्लू) अशा संवादसाखळीचा कलात्मक वापर करत पात्रांचा शारीरिक-मानसिक प्रवास उलगडण्यात आला आहे.

समलिंगी संबंधांची अत्यंत गंभीरपणे हाताळणी करणारा 'अलिगढ' चित्रपट अलिगढ विद्यापीठातील मराठी विषयाचे प्राध्यापक आणि आधुनिक भाषा विभागाचे प्रमुख प्रो. रामचंद्र सिरस यांच्या आयुष्यावरील बायोपिक आहे. स्वाभाविकच, प्रो. सिरस या प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्राला वास्तवाचा थेट आधार आहे. "A subtle, sensitive take on a controversial real-life court case involving the victimization of a gay college professor, Aligarh underscores the growing strength and diversity of Indian independent cinema (Halligan 2015)." हे अवतरण इथे आवर्जून नोंदविता येईल. विद्यापीठीय राजकारणात मध्यमवयीन प्रो. सिरस यांच्या गे असण्याचा गैरवापर करत, त्यांना नोकरीवरून निलंबित करण्याचा मुद्दा चित्रपटात केंद्रस्थानी ठेवण्यात आला आहे. 'मित्राची गोष्ट' आणि 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' हे चित्रपट अनुक्रमे विजय तेंडूलकर यांच्या 'मित्राची गोष्ट' (नाटक) आणि सचिन कुंडलकर यांच्या 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू'वर (कादंबरीवर) आधारित आहेत. 'मित्राची गोष्ट'मध्ये स्वातंत्र्यपूर्व काळात लेस्बिअन ही ओळख जगणाऱ्या सुमित्राच्या आयुष्यातील कोंडमारा त्या काळाच्या वैशिष्ट्यांसह साकार झाला आहे. 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' चित्रपटातील तनयच्या प्राध्यापकाचे पात्र मूळ कादंबरीत उपस्थित नाही. मात्र माध्यमांतर करताना या पात्राची निर्मिती करत समलिंगी संबंधातील गुंतागुंत पृष्ठपातळीवर आणण्याचा सक्षम प्रयत्न झालेला दिसतो.

'LGBT' हा विषय हाताळणाऱ्या चित्रपटांतील प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रांच्या बरोबरीनेच त्यांच्या कुटुंबातील सदस्य, मित्रमैत्रिणी आणि समाजातील अन्य घटकांच्या रूपात साकार होणारा पात्ररचनाबंध विशेष अर्थपूर्ण आहे. वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या पात्रांकडे पाहण्याचे विविध दृष्टिकोन आविष्कृत करण्याचा प्रयत्न या रचनाबंधातून घडताना दिसतो. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांमधून साकार झालेल्या कुटुंबाच्या वर्तनधर्माचा यासंदर्भात अप्रक्रमाने विचार करता येईल. प्रस्थापित व्यवस्थेत 'नॉर्मल' मानल्या जाणाऱ्या लैंगिक प्रवृत्तीपेक्षा वेगळी प्रवृत्ती व्यक्त करणाऱ्या पाल्याकडे पाहण्याचा कुटुंबाचा दृष्टिकोन हा मोठ्या प्रमाणावर पारंपरिक मूल्यसंकेतांनी भारलेला आहे. त्यामुळे वेगळी ओळख अधोरेखित करणारे पाल्याचे वर्तन नाकारण्याकडे पालकांचा कल असलेला दिसतो. पाल्याच्या वर्तनासंबंधी नकारात्मक विधाने करणे, टीका करणे, प्रसंगी शारीरिक हिंसा करणे, अबोला धरणे, निकोप संवादाच्या सर्व शक्यता खुंटवून टाकत येन-केन प्रकारेण त्याला/तिला प्रस्थापित चौकटीत बसविण्याचा प्रयत्न करणे इत्यादी मार्गांचा मोठ्या प्रमाणावर अवलंब करणारा वर्तनधर्म चित्रपटांतील पात्ररचनाबंधातून अधोरेखित करण्यात आला आहे. 'अलिगढ'मधील प्रो. सिरस यांचा त्यांच्या कुटुंबाशी दीर्घ काळापासून असलेला दुरावा, 'मित्राची गोष्ट'मधील सुमित्राला आईने दिलेला मार, 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू'मधील प्राध्यापकाला त्याच्या वडिलांनी डॉक्टरकरवी दिलेले इलेक्ट्रिक शॉक्स, 'FIRE' चित्रपटात सासूची अविरत सेवा करणाऱ्या राधाचे समलैंगिक वर्तन कळल्यावर सासूने राधाच्या तोंडावर थुंकून व्यक्त केलेली नापसंती, 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' चित्रपटात ट्रान्सवुमन मानवीकडे पाहण्याचा तिच्या आईचा असंवेदनशील दृष्टिकोन, ही आणि अशी कितीतरी उदाहरणे उद्धृत करता येतील.

वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या व्यक्तीमध्ये विकृती आहे किंवा तिला काही तरी गंभीर आजार झाला आहे हा दृष्टिकोन कुटुंबाप्रमाणे कुटुंबाच्या बाहेरही मोठ्या प्रमाणावर कृतिशील असतो. अशी ओळख असणाऱ्या व्यक्तीपासून अंतर ठेवून वागणे, शक्य असल्यास तिला सर्वसामान्य सामाजिक व्यवहारामधून बहिष्कृत करणे ही प्रवृत्ती रूढ झालेली दिसते. या वर्तनधर्माचा आढळ चित्रपटांतून साकारणाऱ्या मित्रमैत्रिणी, शेजारची कुटुंबे, सहकारी इत्यादी रूपातील पात्ररचनेतून साकार

झाला आहे. 'उंबरठा' चित्रपटात समलैंगिक संबंध ठेवणाऱ्या पात्रांच्या संदर्भात अर्वाच्य शब्द उच्चारत त्यांना आश्रमशाळेतून हाकलून देण्यासंबंधी इतर निराधार स्त्रियांनी आणि व्यवस्थापनातील लोकांनी धरलेला आग्रह, 'अलिगढ' चित्रपटात विद्यापीठीय राजकारणाचा बळी ठरलेल्या प्रो. सिरस यांच्याकडे सहकाऱ्यांचा, उच्चपदस्थांचा पाहण्याचा अपमानास्पद दृष्टिकोन, 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' चित्रपटात मानवीचे ट्रान्सवुमन असणे लक्षात आल्यावर मनूच्या मित्रांनी तिची केलेली अवहेलना, ही यासंदर्भातील काही ठळक उदाहरणे आहेत.

वेगळा लैंगिक कल असणाऱ्या पात्रांच्या संदर्भातील उपरोक्त नकारात्मक वर्तनधर्माच्याबरोबरीने सकारात्मक, विवेकवादी वर्तन करणाऱ्या पात्रांचा आकृतिबंधही चित्रपटांमधून साकार झाला आहे. 'उंबरठा' चित्रपटातील आश्रमशाळेच्या अधीक्षक सुलभा महाजन, 'अलिगढ' चित्रपटातील पत्रकार दीपू सेबेस्टियन आणि प्रो. सिरस यांच्या बाजूने लढणारा वकील विजय ग्रीव्हर, 'My Brother... Nikhil' मधील निखिलची बहिण अनु आणि अनुचा नवरा, 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' मधील लेखकपात्र साहिल मिर्झा आणि स्वीटीचे वडील, 'मित्राची गोष्ट' मधील सुमित्रावर प्रेम करणारा विनायक जोशी आणि 'बधाई दो' मधील शार्दुलची आई, इत्यादी पात्रांची आश्वासक सोबत वेगळा लैंगिक कल असणाऱ्या पात्रांचा संघर्ष सुसह्य करताना दिसते.

वरील विवेचनावरून भिन्नलिंगी लैंगिक संबंध 'नैसर्गिक' आणि 'प्रमाण' मानणाऱ्या समाजव्यवस्थेत समलिंगी संबंध ठेवणाऱ्या / ठेवण्याची इच्छा असणाऱ्या व्यक्तींचे, ट्रान्सजेंडर आणि बायसेक्सुअल व्यक्तींचे अनुभवविश्व/प्रश्न मांडणाऱ्या चित्रपटांत पात्ररचनेचे विविध 'टाइप्स' वापरले गेले आहेत, ही बाब स्पष्टपणे पुढे येते. समाजमान्य लैंगिक संबंधांच्या पलीकडे जाऊन संबंध ठेवणाऱ्या व्यक्तींकडे पाहण्याचा कुटुंबांचा/समाजाचा नकारात्मक, तुच्छतादर्शक दृष्टिकोन तसेच अशा अपारंपरिक संबंधांकडे 'नैसर्गिक दैहिक तथ्य' म्हणून पाहण्याचा समाजातील काही लोकांचा सहिष्णू व विवेकवादी दृष्टिकोन आणि पात्रांचा स्वतःच्याच लैंगिक ओळखीकडे पाहण्याचा संमिश्र दृष्टिकोन यांचा कोलाज, हा उपरोक्त चित्रपटांमधून साकारणाऱ्या पात्ररचनाबंधाचा महत्त्वाचा विशेष म्हणून नोंदविता येईल.

'LGBT' या विषयसूत्राशी निगडित उपरोक्त सर्व चित्रपटांतील (हिंदी 'मुख्य धारे'तील रंजनप्रधान चित्रपट असोत किंवा गंभीर वृत्तीचे मराठी किंवा हिंदी चित्रपट असोत.) प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रांचे चित्रण (Characterization) करताना ती स्वतःच्या लैंगिक कलाबाबत काही वेळा गोंधळलेली असली तरी, उथळ, मौजमजा करण्यात मशगुल असलेली, लैंगिक स्वातंत्र्याच्या नावाखाली समलिंगी संबंध ठेवण्याचा प्रयत्न करणारी, चंचल मनोवृत्तीची, जबाबदारी नाकारणारी दाखवलेली नाहीत, ही बाब आवर्जून नोंद घेण्याजोगी आहे. प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रांच्या वृत्तिसंबंधी हा रचनाबंध उपयोजिल्यामुळे आस्वादप्रक्रियेत त्या पात्रांविषयी 'सहवेदना' (Empathy) निर्माण होण्याची शक्यता वाढते. 'बधाई दो', 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा', 'शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान' सारख्या चित्रपटांची शैली विनोदी असली तरी यातील वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणारी पात्रं या समाजात स्वीकारार्ह नसलेल्या गोष्टीमुळे बावरून गेलेली आहेत, मानसिक कोंडमारा सहन करणारी आहेत.

पारंपरिक कौटुंबिक अवकाशात लैंगिकता हा विषय एरवीही मुक्तपणे चर्चिला जात नसल्यामुळे समाजव्यवस्थेच्या चौकटीत बसणाऱ्या लैंगिक कलाविषयी, लैंगिक गरजांच्या पूर्ततेविषयीही निकोप संवाद निर्माण होण्याची शक्यता धूसर असते. स्वाभाविकच, समाजमान्य चौकटीत बसू न शकणाऱ्या लैंगिकतेविषयी विश्वासाने सांगण्याची मुभा पारंपरिक कुटुंबव्यवस्थेत अपवादानेच उपलब्ध होऊ शकते. कुटुंबसंस्थेच्या या विशिष्ट स्वरूपामुळे उपरोक्त सर्वच चित्रपटांतील प्रोटोगोनिस्ट पात्रांना स्वतःचा संघर्ष मूकपणे आणि एकाकीपणे सहन करण्याव्यतिरिक्त दुसरा पर्यायच उपलब्ध असलेला दिसत नाही. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांत प्रस्थापित समाजव्यवस्थेतील पारंपरिक कुटुंबसंस्थेची replica उभी करून 'LGBT' ओळख घेऊन जगणाऱ्या पात्रांचे मानसिक पातळीवरील अनाथ असणे अत्यंत प्रभावीपणे अधोरेखित केले आहे.

समलिंगी संबंध ठेवणे, ट्रान्सजेंडर असणे ही विकृत बाब आहे अशी समाजाची धारणा असल्यामुळे समलिंगी संबंधात 'पार्टनर' मिळणे ही बाब आव्हानात्मक असते. याचे एक स्पष्ट कारण स्वतःची लैंगिक ओळख उघडपणे मान्य करण्याइतका खुलेपणा व्यवस्थेत उपलब्ध होत नाही हे आहे. अर्थात त्यामुळे अत्यंत छुपेपणाने सुरू असणारा लैंगिक व्यवहार असे या संबंधाचे स्वरूप असते. पार्टनर न मिळणे, काही वेळा पार्टनर उपलब्ध असूनही समलिंगी सहजीवन जाहीरपणे जगण्यासाठी आवश्यक असणारा सामाजिक अवकाश उपलब्ध न होणे, पार्टनर सोडून गेला तर त्याचे दुःखही उघडपणे व्यक्त करता न येणे, कुटुंबापासून भावनिक नाळ तुटल्यामुळे आधारासाठी आश्रस्त जागा उपलब्ध नसणे, इत्यादी बाबींमुळे टोकाचे एकाकीपण घेऊन या व्यक्ती जगताना दिसतात. उपरोक्त सर्व चित्रपटांमधून हे जीवघेणे समाजवास्तव त्यातील गुंत्यासह कधी गंभीर तर कधी विनोदी शैलीत पृष्ठपातळीवर आणण्याचा प्रयत्न केलेला दिसतो.

वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख घेऊन जगणाऱ्या माणसांचा समाजापासून, स्वतःपासून विलग होत जाण्याचा प्रवास अधोरेखित करणाऱ्या घटना-प्रसंगांची शृंखला, हे या चित्रपटांतर्गत कथानकाच्या संरचनेचे महत्त्वाचे वैशिष्ट्य ठरते. 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' मधील तनय, प्राध्यापक आणि 'अलिगढ' मधील प्रो. सिरस, 'मित्राची गोष्ट' मधील सुमित्रा या पात्रांच्या भंगलेल्या भावविश्वाच्या मुळाशी असणाऱ्या कथांतर्गत परिस्थितीचा (घटना-प्रसंगांच्या गुंफणीतून साकार होणाऱ्या) या संदर्भात विचार करता येईल.

'LGBT' शी निगडित चित्रपटांतील समलिंगी संबंध प्रस्थापित करणाऱ्या जोडीदारांच्या परस्परांच्या जवळ येण्यामागील प्रेरणा या प्रामुख्याने शारीर गरजेची संबंधित असलेल्या दिसतात. उदाहरणार्थ, प्रो. सिरस-रिक्षावाला (अलिगढ), तनय - इंग्रजीचा प्राध्यापक (कोबाल्ट ब्लू), राधा-सीता (FIRE), सुम्मी-रिमझिम (बधाई दो) आदी पात्रांमध्ये वय, वर्ग, सामाजिक पार्श्वभूमी यापैकी कोणत्या ना कोणत्या संदर्भात अंतर आहे. परंतु हे अंतर त्यांच्या एकत्र येण्यात कोणत्याही स्वरूपाचे अडथळे निर्माण करत नाही. शारीर गरजा परस्परांशी समकक्ष असणे हा त्यांना एकत्र आणण्यातील अत्यंत महत्त्वाचा दुवा आहे. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांतर्गत अवकाशात समलिंगी संबंधांमध्ये शारीर आकर्षणाच्या मुद्द्याला अधिक महत्त्व असल्यामुळे यापलीकडे एक प्रेमी युगुल म्हणून मानसिक आधार, भावनिक गुंतलेपणा आदी मुद्द्यांना अपवादात्मक संदर्भ वगळता फारसे स्थान मिळालेले दिसत नाही. 'My Brother... Nikhil' चित्रपटात निखिलला अविरत मानसिक सोबत करणारा त्याचा प्रेमिक नायजेल, 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू'मध्ये भाडेकरूच्या आकस्मिक निघून जाण्याने भावनिकदृष्ट्या कोलमडून गेलेला तनय आणि 'मित्राची गोष्ट'मध्ये उर्मिलाच्या संदर्भात पझेसिव्ह असणाऱ्या सुमित्राला, उर्मिलाचे लग्न ठरल्यामुळे आलेले वैफल्य या अपवादात्मक उदाहरणांचा येथे आवर्जून उल्लेख करता येईल.

समलिंगी संबंधातील मानसिक, बौद्धिक, शारीरिक companionship आणि त्यातील गुंतागुंत अधोरेखित करणारे चित्रपट न येण्यामागील कारणे काय असावीत, याचा गंभीर विचार होणे गरजेचे आहे. ही कारणे समलिंगी संबंधातील मर्यादांशी संलग्न आहेत का?, की ती अशा संबंधांकडे पाहण्याच्या आपल्या दृष्टिकोनाशी संबंधित आहेत?, की 'मुख्यधारा' चित्रपटाच्या व्यावसायिक गणिताशी याचा संबंध आहे?, इत्यादी मुद्द्यांचे चिकित्सक विश्लेषण करणे आवश्यक आहे. (अर्थात हा स्वतंत्र अभ्यासाचा विषय आहे.)

प्रस्तुत लेखात समाविष्ट केलेले चित्रपट गंभीर आणि रंजनप्रधान अशा दोन्ही प्रवृत्तींचे असून, या चित्रपटांची प्रमुख भूमिका 'LGBT' सारख्या संवेदनशील विषयाच्या अनुषंगाने जनप्रबोधन करणे ही आहे. मात्र या दोन्ही प्रवृत्तींच्या चित्रपटांची विषयाला भिडण्याची पद्धत भिन्न असल्यामुळे घटनाप्रसंगांच्या माध्यमातून केलेली कथानकाची गुंफण, पात्रचित्रण, चित्रपटाचा शेवट यांचे स्वरूप वेगळे होत जाते. उदाहरणार्थ, 'शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान', 'बधाई दो' या 'मुख्यधारा' हिंदी चित्रपटात वेगळा लैंगिक कल असणाऱ्या पात्रांचे चित्रण करताना ते बऱ्यापैकी 'लाईट' राहिल असा प्रयत्न असलेला दिसतो. त्यामुळे असा लैंगिक कल असलेली पात्रं तुलनेत कमी मानसिक संघर्षाला सामोरी जाताना दिसतात. किंबहुना यासंदर्भात असे म्हणता येईल की, असा दृष्टिकोन ठेवता येण्याजोगा अवकाश कथा-पटकथाकाराने पात्रांना उपलब्ध करून दिला आहे. कुटुंबीयांसमोर वस्तुस्थिती उघड झाल्यानंतरही टोकाचा ताण निर्माण करणाऱ्या घटनाप्रसंगांची गुंफण चित्रपटांत झालेली नाही. याचा अर्थ कुटुंबीयांकडून सहजपणे या लैंगिक वेगळेपणाचा स्वीकार होतो असे अजिबातच नाही. मात्र लेखनप्रक्रियेत प्रसंगनिष्ठ विनोद आणि नर्मविनोदाचा शिडकावा केल्यामुळे अन्य पात्रांच्या प्रतिक्रियेतील तीव्रता कमी होत जाते. तसेच दिग्दर्शकीय 'टेक ऑफ'ची शैलीही हसतखेळत वास्तवाचे भान (मर्यादित चौकटीत) आणून देणारी असल्यामुळे चित्रपटांतर्गत वातावरणात एक प्रकारचा सुसह्यपणा येण्यास मदत होते.

पात्रांमध्ये, वस्तुस्थितीमध्ये अपेक्षित बदल घडवून आणण्यासाठी योगायोगाचा केला जाणारा वापर हे कोणत्या लोकप्रिय कलाकृतीचे महत्त्वाचे वैशिष्ट्य असते. 'बधाई दो', 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' या लोकप्रिय चित्रपटांतील पात्रचित्रण आणि कथानकबांधणीचा या दृष्टीने विचार करता येईल. 'बधाई दो' चित्रपटात गे शार्दुलची लेस्बिअन सुमीशी भेट होणे, ओळख वाढविण्यासाठी शार्दुलने प्रयत्न करणे, लग्नासाठी घरच्या मंडळींनी सुरू केलेल्या ससेमिन्यातून स्वतःची सुटका करून घेण्यासाठी दोघांनी केवळ उपचार म्हणून परस्परांशी लग्न करण्यास तयार होणे, अशा योगायोगांची साखळी कथा-पटकथाकाराने तयार केली आहे. 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' चित्रपटात लेस्बिअन स्वीटीने नाटकाच्या तालमीत आकस्मिकपणे पोहोचणे, तिथे तिची साहिल मिर्झाशी भेट होणे, तिच्याबद्दल प्रेमभावना निर्माण झाल्यानंतरही तिच्या बाजूचे सत्य पुढे आल्यानंतर स्वतःची भावना साहिल मिर्झाने बाजूला ठेवणे, कुटुंबाकडून लेस्बिअन मुलींचा स्वीकार होतो असे नाट्यकथानक रचून त्याचा प्रयोग करणे, हा प्रयोग पाहून मतपरिवर्तन होणारे बाबा तिच्या कुटुंबात असणे, या सगळ्या घटनांच्या मुळाशी योगायोगाचे सूत्र कृतिशील असलेले दिसते. 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' चित्रपटात सत्यपरिस्थिती समोर आल्यानंतर काही काळ तणावपूर्ण वातावरण निर्माण होते. मात्र तुलनेत अत्यंत सोप्या मार्गाने मनुचे (चंदिगढ करे आशिकी) मतपरिवर्तन होते आणि तो वस्तुस्थितीकडे सकारात्मक दृष्टीने पाहू लागतो असे दाखविण्यात आले आहे. वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या पात्रांच्या सहवासात येणाऱ्या पात्रांनी गे, लेस्बिअन पात्रांना मानसिक आधार देणे, त्यांचा संघर्ष सुसह्य व्हावा म्हणून स्वतः काही गोष्टींचा त्याग करणे किंवा नव्या दृष्टीने विचार करण्याचा प्रयत्न करणे असे संदर्भ पेरण्यामागील कथा-पटकथाकाराची भूमिका या वास्तवाकडे समतोल आणि सकारात्मक पद्धतीने पाहण्याची आहे. पात्रचित्रण आणि घटनाप्रसंगांची गुंफण अशा पद्धतीने झाल्यामुळे चित्रपटाचा शेवट सुखात्मक होतो. 'एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' आणि 'शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान' या चित्रपटांतील समलिंगी संबंध असणाऱ्या पात्रांचे नाते त्यांच्या कुटुंबीयांकडून स्वीकारले जाते. 'बधाई दो' चित्रपटात तर गे आणि लेस्बिअन असणाऱ्या पती-पत्नीच्या भूमिकेतील पात्रं आणि त्यांचे समलिंगी पार्टनर्स कौटुंबिक कार्यक्रमात आनंदाने सहभागी होऊ शकतात असा शेवट रंगविला आहे. 'चंदिगढ करे आशिकी' चित्रपटात

मानवीचे ट्रान्सवुमन असणे समजल्यानंतर बिथरलेला मनु टप्प्याटप्प्याने बदलत जातो आणि चित्रपटाच्या शेवटी मानवीचा सन्मानपूर्वक स्वीकार करताना दिसतो.

उपरोक्त चित्रपटांतील पात्रांचे सकारात्मक वर्तन आणि त्यामुळे चित्रपटाचा झालेला सुखान्त एका परीने स्वप्नवत वाटतो. व्यावसायिक चित्रपटाचे गणित यासंदर्भात महत्त्वाची भूमिका बजावत असणार हे तर स्पष्टच आहे. मात्र समाजपरिवर्तन घडवायचे असेल किंवा परिवर्तनाची अपेक्षित दिशा सूचित करायची असेल तर काही वेळा अशी युटोपिअन प्रवृत्ती जाणीवपूर्वक स्वीकारली जात असते. (एकोणिसाव्या शतकातील आणि विसाव्या शतकाच्या पूर्वार्धातील मराठी नाटकांचा इतिहास यादृष्टीने तपासून पाहता येईल.) अर्थात, असे करत असताना बऱ्याच वेळा समस्येचे सपाटीकरण आणि सुलभीकरणही होत असते. उपरोक्त चित्रपटांत असे घडले आहे हे नाकारता येणार नाही.

या पार्श्वभूमीवर 'थांग', 'मित्राची गोष्ट', 'कोबाल्ट ब्लू' या चित्रपटांत समलिंगी संबंधांतील पार्टनर सोडून गेल्याची वेदना, संवादहीन जगण्यातून आलेला टोकाचा एकाकीपणा अधोरेखित झाला आहे. 'थांग' चित्रपटात आदित्यची मानसिक स्थिती पाहून त्याची पत्नीच उदयशी (आदित्यचा समलिंगी पार्टनर) संपर्क करते. उदयने आदित्यला मानसिक आधार द्यावा अशी विनंती करते. मात्र उदय परत येण्याची शक्यता नाही या नोटवर चित्रपट संपतो. 'मित्राची गोष्ट'मध्ये ऊर्मिला आपली होऊ शकणार नाही हे कळल्यानंतर सुमित्राला वैफल्य येते आणि त्यातच ती झोपेच्या गोळ्या घेऊन आयुष्य संपविण्याचा प्रयत्न करते. मात्र तिचा आत्मनाशाचा हा प्रयत्न अयशस्वी ठरतो. चित्रपटाच्या शेवटच्या दृश्यात देशाला स्वातंत्र्य मिळाल्याचा आनंद व्यक्त करणाऱ्या विनायकला सुमित्रा 'कोणते स्वातंत्र्य?, कोणाचे स्वातंत्र्य?' असे उपहासात्मक पद्धतीने विचारते. 'मित्राची गोष्ट' चित्रपटाच्या शेवटच्या फ्रेममध्ये 'After more than 67 years of independence, Mitra still looking for freedom' या ओळी दृश्यमान होतात. या ओळी लोकशाही शासनप्रणाली स्वीकारलेल्या भारतात सामाजिक प्रमाणकामध्ये न बसणाऱ्या व्यक्तींच्या न संपणाऱ्या संघर्षाकडे निर्देश करणाऱ्या आहेत. असीम छाब्रा यांनी 'अलिगढ' चित्रपटाच्या संदर्भात व्यक्त केलेले पुढील मत हा विषय हाताळणाऱ्या अन्य चित्रपटांच्या संदर्भातही अन्वर्थक ठरते. "Aligarh is a very important film, a milestone in the history of Indian cinema that should start the much-needed conversation about how India treats a visible and yet often ignored minority group" (Chhabra 2015).

'अलिगढ' चित्रपटात प्रो. सिरस यांना मिळणारी अपमानास्पद वागणूक, त्यांच्यावर टाकला गेलेला बहिष्कार पाहात असताना त्यांना न्याय मिळण्याची शक्यता जवळपास नाही अशी प्रेक्षकांची समजूत होते. मात्र सामाजिक संवेदनशीलता तीव्र असणारा खुल्या विचारांचा दीपू सेबेस्टियन आणि सेक्शन ३७७ च्या संदर्भात अविरत संघर्ष करणारा वकील विजय ग्रोव्हर यांच्या कृतिशील प्रयत्नांमुळे प्रो. सिरस यांची बाजू घेणारे मोठे आंदोलन उभे राहते. प्रो. सिरस यांना न्याय मिळावा म्हणून आंदोलन करणाऱ्या समूहाच्या पुनरावृत्त होणाऱ्या दृश्यप्रतिमांचा येथे उल्लेख करता येईल. 'अलिगढ' चित्रपटातील काही दृश्य कोर्टरूममध्ये घडतात. या दृश्यांमध्ये अलिगढ विद्यापीठाच्या बाजूने असणारा वकील आणि प्रो. सिरस यांच्या बाजूने लढणारा वकील अशा दोन पात्रांच्या माध्यमातून समलिंगी संबंधाकडे पाहण्याची विरोधी वैचारिक भूमी सिद्ध होते. या दोन वकिलांच्या वाद-प्रतिवादातून सेक्शन ३७७ चा समलिंगी संबंध ठेवणाऱ्या व्यक्तींकडे पाहण्याचा अवमूल्यनात्मक दृष्टिकोन, ३ जुलै २००९ मध्ये दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालयाने समलिंगी संबंध ठेवणे हा गुन्हा नाही असे केलेले प्रतिपादन, व्यक्तीची प्रतिष्ठा आणि त्याच्या खासगी आयुष्याच्या संदर्भातील गोपनीयतेचा अधिकार नमूद करणारा संविधानातील अनुच्छेद २१ इत्यादी कायदेशीर मुद्दे त्याच्या विविध आयामांसह अधोरेखित होतात. चित्रपटातील काही दृश्यांच्या उपयोजनातून घडविले जाणारे हे वैचारिक मंथन चित्रपटाच्या प्रयोजनमूल्याशी समकक्ष आहे, असे म्हणता येते. मीनाक्षी शेड्डे यांनी 'अलिगढ' चित्रपटाच्या संदर्भात काढलेले पुढील उद्गार याच मुद्द्याचे अधोरेखन करणारे आहेत. "Aligarh is masterfully directed: it is that rare film that courageously stands for human rights, including those of homosexuals, yet offers a quiet, distilled perspective" (Shedde 2015).

'अलिगढ' चित्रपटाच्या शेवटच्या टप्प्यावर प्रो.सिरस यांच्या बाजूने कोर्टाचा निकाल लागतो आणि त्यांचे निलंबन मागे घेतले जाते हे दृश्य पुढे येते. पत्रकार दीपू सेबेस्टियन, वकील विजय ग्रोव्हर आणि प्रो. सिरस यांना न्याय मिळावा म्हणून त्यांच्या बाजूने उभे राहिलेले आंदोलक यांच्या सामूहिक प्रयत्नातून प्रो. सिरस यांच्या बाजूने निकाल लागतो. प्रो. सिरस यांचे आयुष्य पुन्हा नियमित होणार असे वाटत असतानाच निकालाच्या दुसऱ्या दिवशी सकाळी त्यांच्या आकस्मिक आणि संशयास्पद मृत्यूची बातमी पुढे येते. प्रो. सिरस यांच्या मृत्यूचे गूढ तसेच ठेवत चित्रपट संपतो. 'अलिगढ' चित्रपट हा प्रो. रामचंद्र सिरस यांच्या आयुष्यावरील बायोपिक असल्यामुळे चित्रपटातील या पात्राचा मृत्यू हे कल्पित वास्तव नाही. हा मृत्यू नैसर्गिक असला तरी तो वेगळा लैंगिक कल असलेल्या संवेदनशील माणसाच्या वाट्याला येणाऱ्या सामाजिक वंचनेचा परिणाम असण्याची दाट शक्यता आहे. प्रो. सिरस यांची एक व्यक्ती म्हणून समाजापासून, स्वतःपासून तुटत जाण्याची प्रक्रिया या संदर्भात विचारात घेता येईल. दुसऱ्या बाजूने विचार करता हा मृत्यू नैसर्गिक नसेल, तर प्रो.सिरस यांना कोर्टात न्याय मिळाला असला तरी प्रत्यक्षात विजय प्रस्थापित मूल्यसंकेतांची पाठराखण करणाऱ्या तथाकथित संस्कृतिरक्षकांचाच झाला ही वस्तुस्थिती नाकारता येणार नाही. त्यामुळे मृत्यू नैसर्गिक असो किंवा अनैसर्गिक असो, एका मितभाषी, सौजन्यपूर्ण वर्तन करणाऱ्या, विद्वान प्राध्यापकाच्या आयुष्याचा असा शेवट होणे हे शोकगर्भक आहे.

उपरोक्त विवेचनावरून वेगळी लैंगिक ओळख असणाऱ्या व्यक्तींच्या आत्मसन्मानाची लढाई दीर्घ काळ सुरू राहणार आहे, हे स्पष्टपणे अधोरेखित झाले आहे. प्रस्थापित धारणांचे गौरवीकरण करणारी समूहमानसिकता बदलण्याची प्रक्रिया सुरू होणे ही या आत्मसन्मानाच्या लढाईतील पूर्वअट आहे. अर्थातच त्यासाठी लोकशाही मूल्यांची आणि विवेकपूर्ण विचारांची भूमी सिद्ध करण्याची नितांत गरज आहे. समाजप्रबोधनाच्या या प्रक्रियेत सामाजिक - राजकीय लढे, आंदोलने, कायदेशीर पातळीवर केल्या जाणाऱ्या तरतुदी यांच्याबरोबरीने साहित्य, नाटक, चित्रपट आदी कलांचीही जबाबदारी मोठी आहे. कलेने स्वतःचे हे सामाजिक दायित्व संस्कृत साहित्यशास्त्री मम्मटाने सुचविल्यानुसार, कधी आदेशात्मक रीतीने (प्रभुसंमित), कधी मैत्रीपूर्ण पद्धतीने (मित्रसंमित) आणि काही वेळा अत्यंत प्रेमपूर्ण भावनेतून (कांतासंमित) पार पाडणे ही काळाची गरज आहे. LGBT विषयाशी संबंधित चित्रपटांचे यासंदर्भातील श्रेय महत्त्वाचे आहे.

संदर्भ

चित्रपट

१. अजीब दास्तान

Netflix

२. अलिगढ <https://youtu.be/zBbDBiNWFDI>

३. उंबरठा <https://youtu.be/MC7dfWpQqVE>

४. एक लडकी को देखा तो ऐसा लगा

Netflix

५. कोबाल्ट ब्लू

Netflix

६. चंदिगढ करे आशिकी

Netflix

७. थांग - स्क्रिप्ट - ठाणे नगर वाचनालय.

८. बधाई दो

Netflix

९. मित्राची गोष्ट (Bioscope)

Amazon Prime Video

१०. शुभ मंगल ज्यादा सावधान <https://app.primevideo.com/detail?gti=amzn1.dv.gti.6ab8678f-008f-1118-f8ac->

११. FIRE <https://youtu.be/hHHKIX0qiRo>

१२. 'Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd' https://app.primevideo.com/detail?gti=amzn1.dv.gti.14abea38-1b48-3c09-a1f3-3bbb2aaf9662&ref_=atv_dp_share_mv&r=web

१३. My Brother... Nikhil <https://youtu.be/Um1meXhHEe4>

संकेतस्थळावरील संदर्भ

१. Chhabra, Aseem (2015): 'Why Aligarh is a very important film?' <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=> (संकेतस्थळाला भेट ७ ऑगस्ट २०२२)

२. Halligan, Fionnuala (2015): 'Aligarh: Review' <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=> (संकेतस्थळाला भेट ४ ऑगस्ट २०२२)

३. Roy, Lachmi (2021): "Geeli Puchhi", A Realistic Film on Caste and Sexuality.' <https://www.outlookindia.com> (संकेतस्थळाला भेट १२ ऑगस्ट २०२२)

४. Shedde, Meenakshi (2015): 'A different Marathi manoos.' <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEw> (संकेतस्थळाला भेट १ ऑगस्ट २०२२)

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Fox, S. (1984). Empowerment as a catalyst for change: an example for the food industry. *Supply Chain Management*, 2(3), 29–33.

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• **Multiple author journal article:**

Khan, M. R., Islam, A. F. M. M., & Das, D. (1886). A Factor Analytic Study on the Validity of a Union Commitment Scale. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 12(1), 129-136.

Liu, W.B, Wongcha A, & Peng, K.C. (2012), “Adopting Super-Efficiency And Tobit Model On Analyzing the Efficiency of Teacher’s Colleges In Thailand”, *International Journal on New Trends In Education and Their Implications*, Vol.3.3, 108 – 114.

- **Text Book:**

Simchi-Levi, D., Kaminsky, P., & Simchi-Levi, E. (2007). *Designing and Managing the Supply Chain: Concepts, Strategies and Case Studies* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

S. Neelamegham," Marketing in India, Cases and Reading, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, III Edition, 2000.

- **Edited book having one editor:**

Raine, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Crime and schizophrenia: Causes and cures*. New York: Nova Science.

- **Edited book having more than one editor:**

Greenspan, E. L., & Rosenberg, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Martin's annual criminal code: Student edition 2010*. Aurora, ON: Canada Law Book.

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Bessley, M., & Wilson, P. (1984). Public policy and small firms in Britain. In Levicki, C. (Ed.), *Small Business Theory and Policy* (pp. 111–126). London: Croom Helm.

- **Chapter in edited book having more than one editor:**

Young, M. E., & Wasserman, E. A. (2005). Theories of learning. In K. Lamberts, & R. L. Goldstone (Eds.), *Handbook of cognition* (pp. 161-182). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- **Electronic sources should include the URL of the website at which they may be found, as shown:**

Sillick, T. J., & Schutte, N. S. (2006). Emotional intelligence and self-esteem mediate between perceived early parental love and adult happiness. *E-Journal of Applied Psychology*, 2(2), 38-48. Retrieved from <http://ojs.lib.swin.edu.au/index.php/ejap>

- **Unpublished dissertation/ paper:**

Uddin, K. (2000). A Study of Corporate Governance in a Developing Country: A Case of Bangladesh (Unpublished Dissertation). Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

- **Article in newspaper:**

Yunus, M. (2005, March 23). Micro Credit and Poverty Alleviation in Bangladesh. *The Bangladesh Observer*, p. 9.

- **Article in magazine:**

Holloway, M. (2005, August 6). When extinct isn't. *Scientific American*, 293, 22-23.

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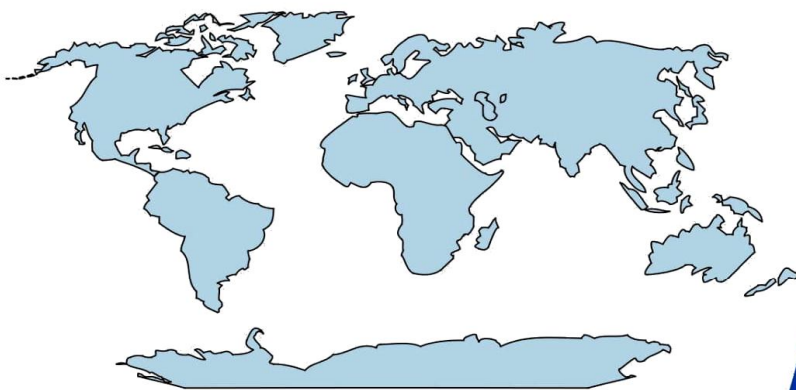
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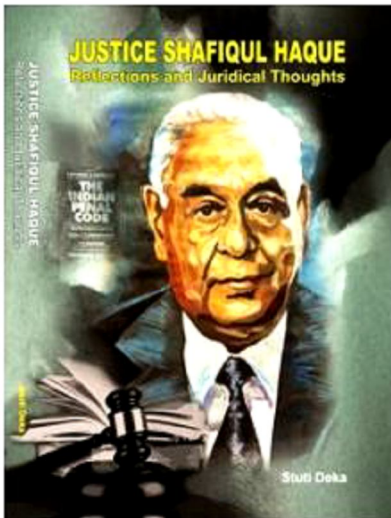


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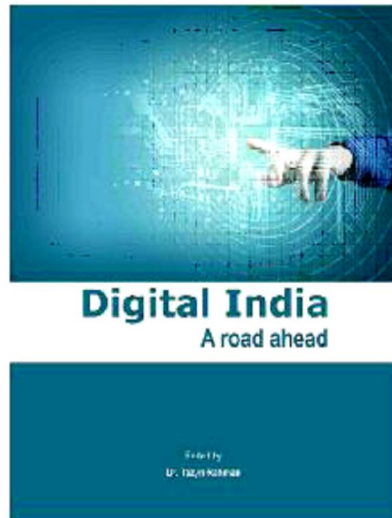
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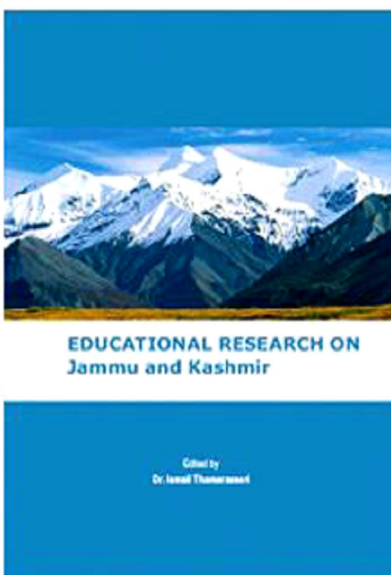
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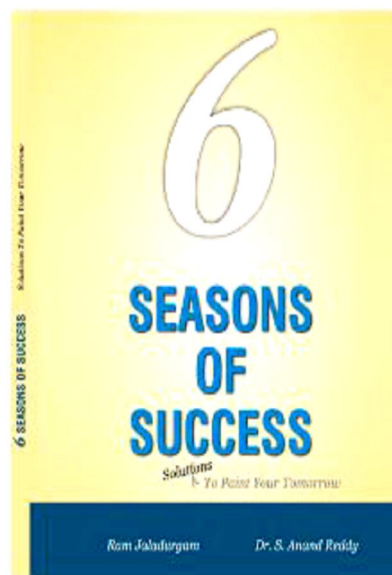
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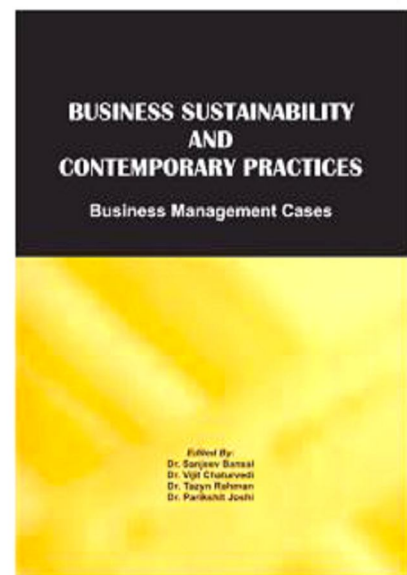
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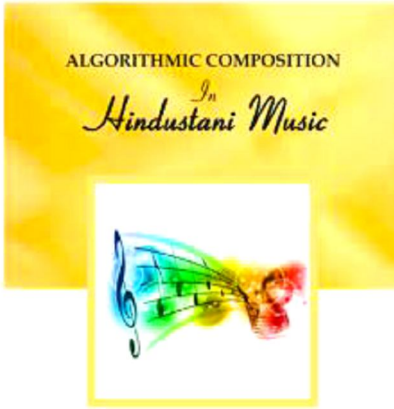
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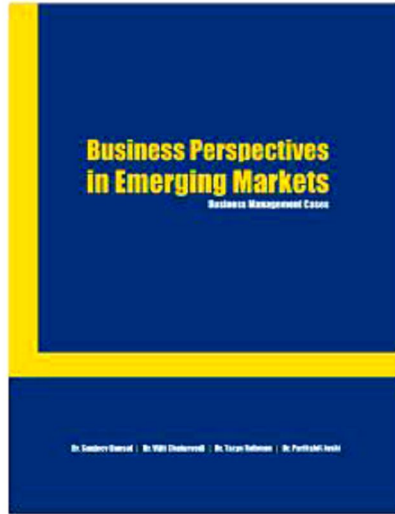
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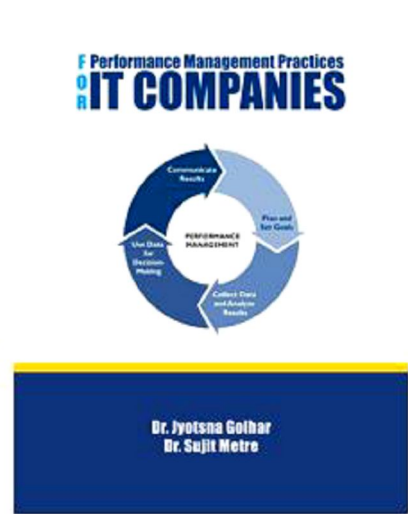
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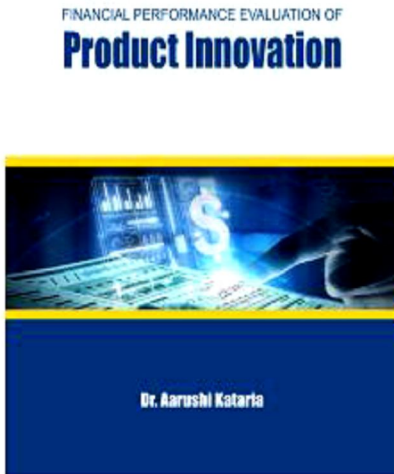


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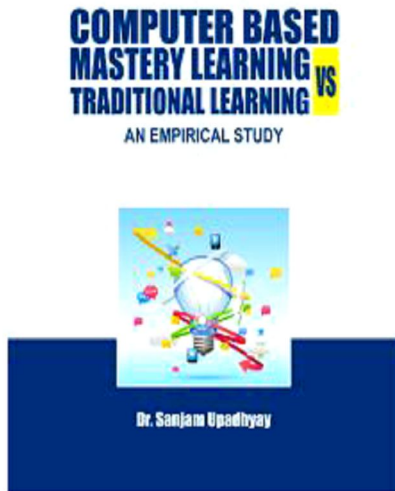
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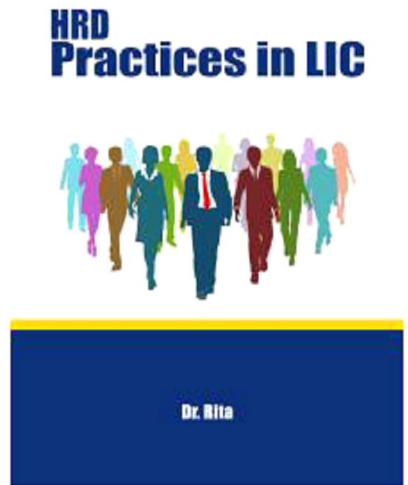
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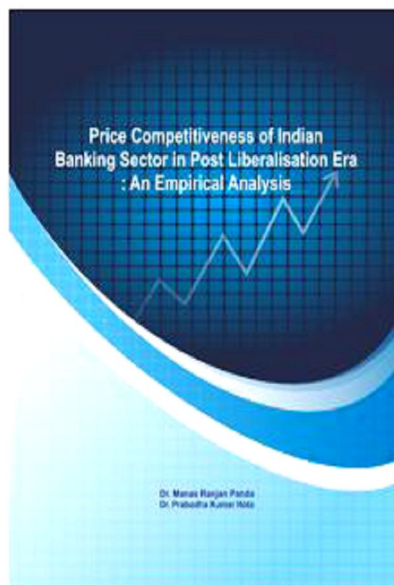
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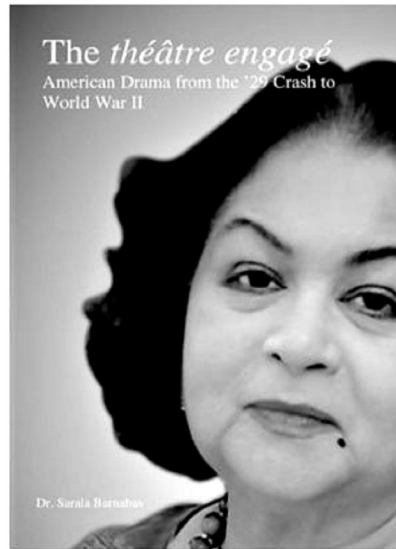
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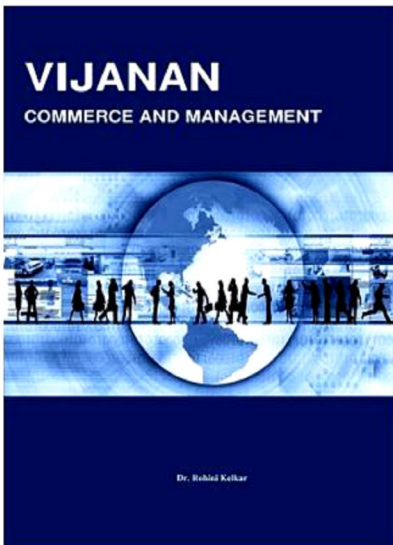
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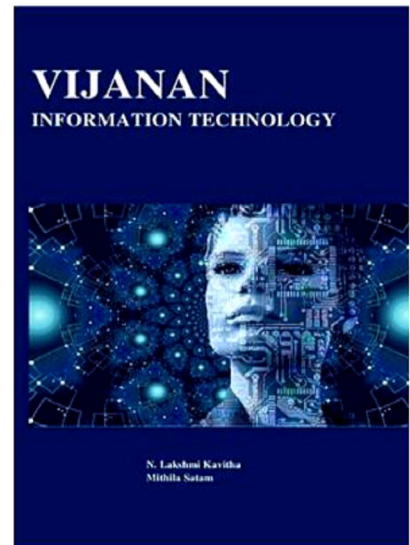
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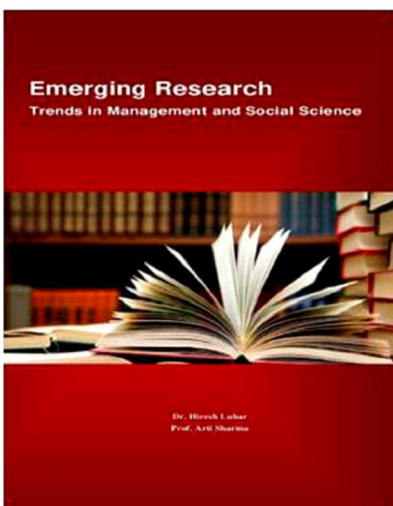
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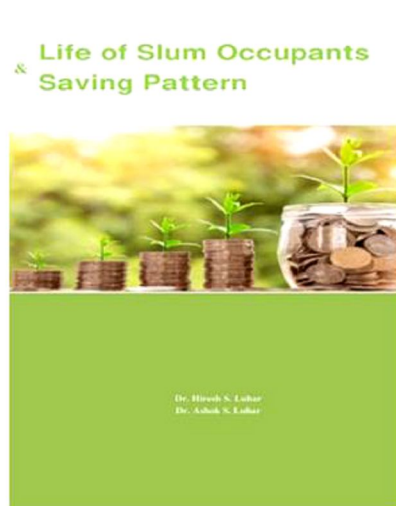
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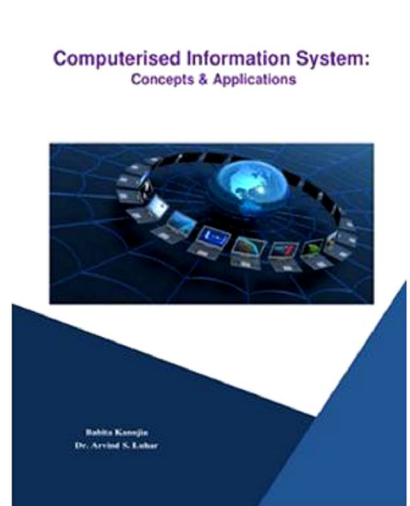
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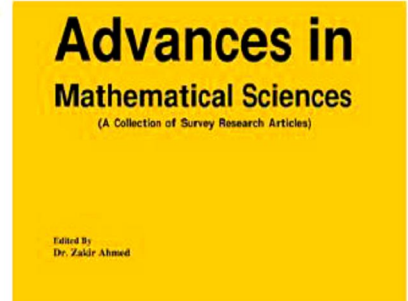
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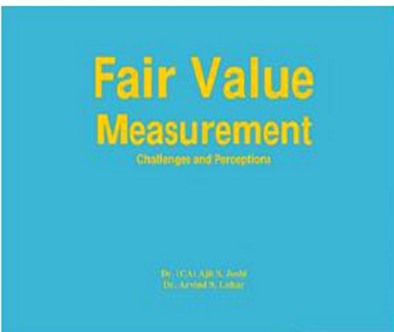
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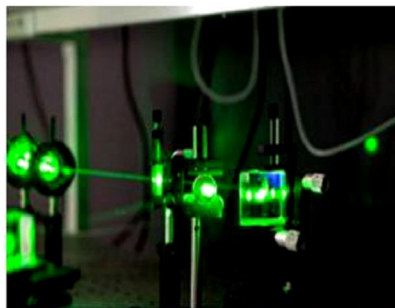
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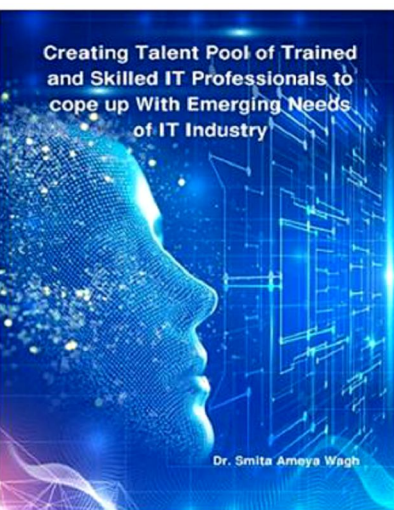


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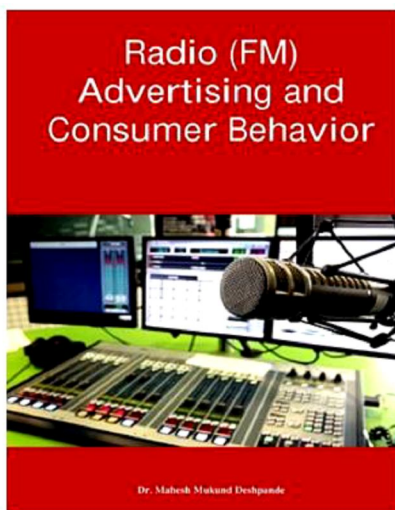
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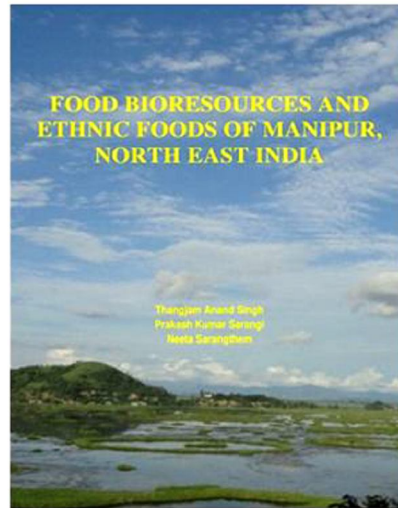
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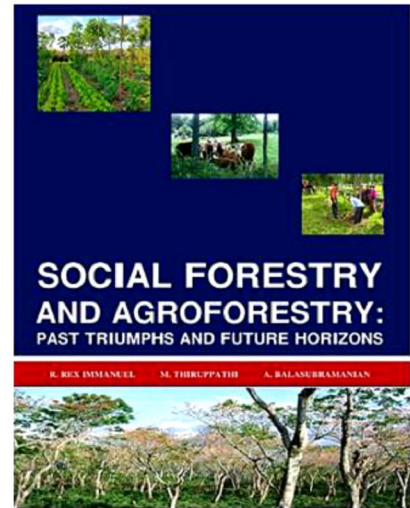
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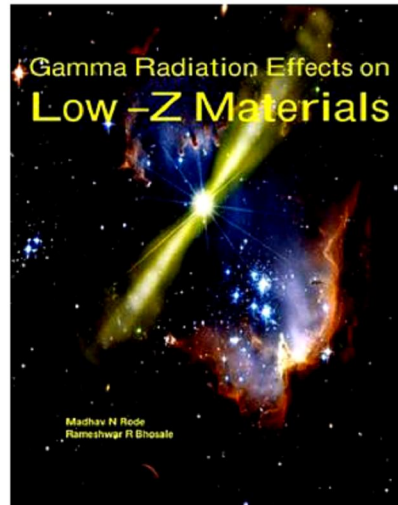
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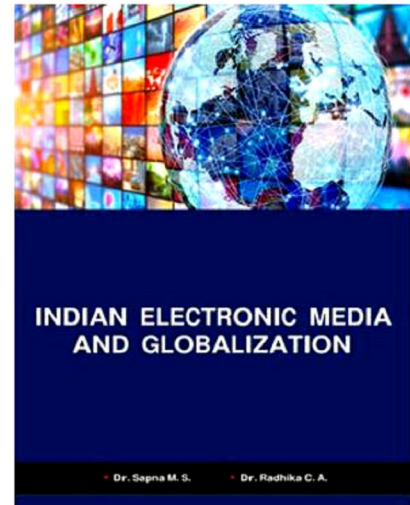
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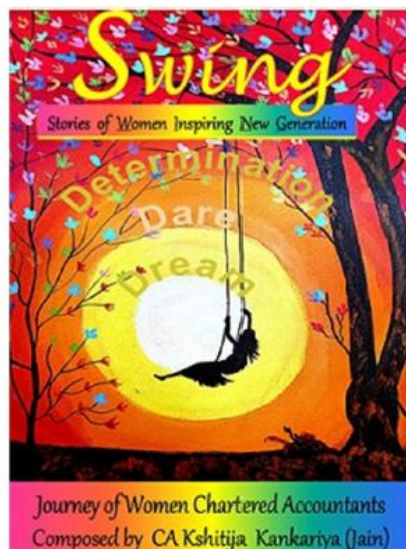
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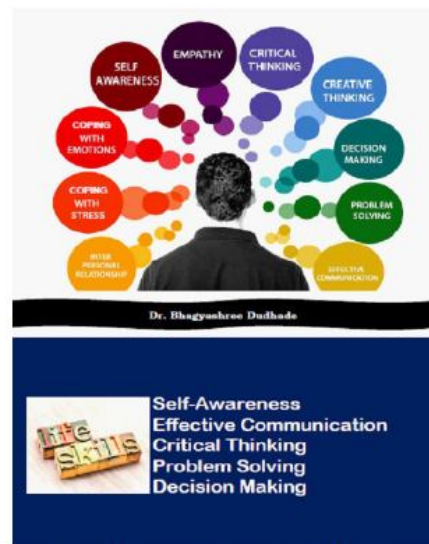
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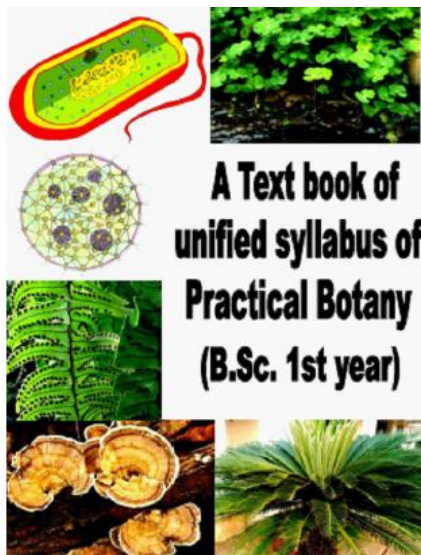
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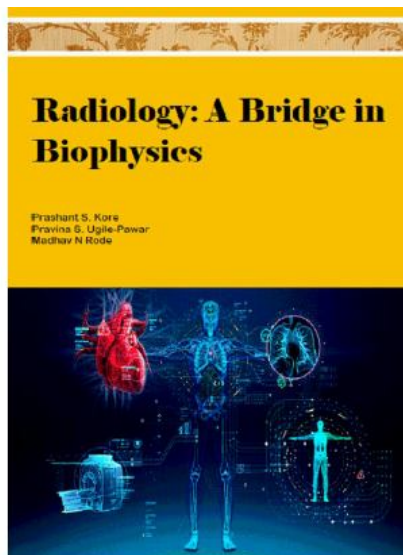


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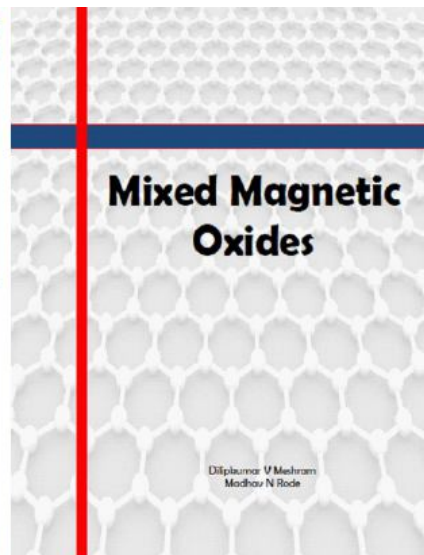
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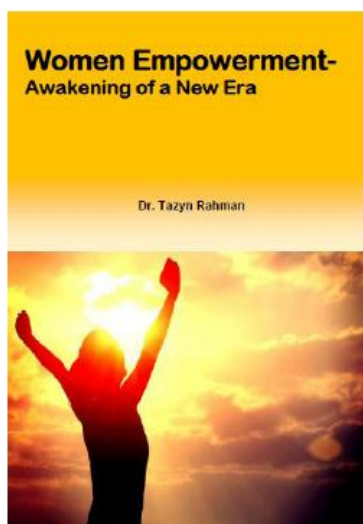
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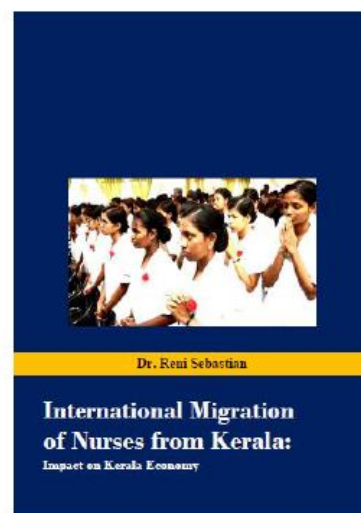
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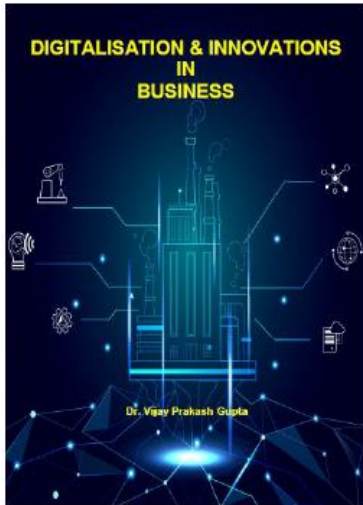
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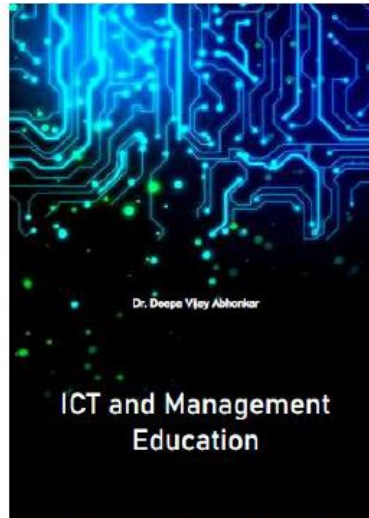
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