



RESEARCH PAPER

Trans-Recognition: A Growing Venture on the World Stage and Pakistan

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PAPER INFO

ABSTRACT

Received:
November 10, 2018
Accepted:
December 24, 2018
Online:
December 30, 2018

Keywords:
Fundamental Right
Gender,
Identity,
Transgender

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This paper explores the historical, social, political and cultural circumstances within which sexed and gendered identities are formulated and designated. It also explores the space between conventionally stereotyped gender identities and the fluid and anomalous social dynamics. Although, much has been written on what sex, sexuality and gender are, and what they are not. The importance of the heterosexual matrix as the source of sexual designations and gender conventionalization is underplayed on the world social stage generally and the political stage in specific. This paper is an attempt at trying to understand how transgender identities are created and are embodied in the socio-historical context. In doing so one should tried to reassess the contemporary treatment of genders and to what extent they can be justified generally on the whole and in the Pakistani context in specific.

Introduction

Gender typically refers to the conventional stereotypical socially constructed ideas of a characteristic female and male. Such stereotypes, granted roles and conventional norms associated with women and men vary from society to society and are usually viewed upon as being subjective. Upon birth, most people are taught gender appropriate norms and behaviors and are impressed upon to lead their lives according to a set parameter of gender notions. These notions include how they are supposed to interact with others of the same gender or the people of the opposite genders and encompass their behaviors not only within households but also intra communities and places of work. While conventionally viewed our gender might seem to initiate with the assignment of our specified gender identity it doesn't end there. The sex of a person according to

a famous derivation is the intricate amalgamation of three complex dimensions (Greenberg, 1999).

The physical anatomy (The body)

This involves the physicality of the body and experience associated with it and the treatment of others directed towards the anatomical aspect of the body.

The expressive manifestation and expression of our internal sense of being (The expression)

The gender expression is how we demonstrate our gender in the outside world, keeping in mind the social, cultural, communal and familial aspects regarding our gender and how they try to shape us.

All these dimensions and their dictation of our being is also related to the gender specific roles assigned to us by the society and how the society employs these roles to dictate and obligate upon us conformity to the conventional gender system.

Here it must be mentioned that each of these dimensions are dynamic and can vary immensely across a wide range of anomalies. A person's level of comfort towards his or her designated gender norm is associated with the degree to which these three dimensions of his are comfortable with each other.

There come incidents when people or groups of people do not comfortably even out with the conventional gender binary and hence become a victim of the stigma of discrimination and become social outcasts. Over the course of history, it can be seen on numerous occasions that sensitive contradictions between these three parameters as stated above or even any two of them have been seen giving birth to several different identities that do not necessarily fit into the conventional male or female binary. This notion then gives birth to what is now the 'contemporary and growing question of gender anomaly and ambiguity' (Cole & Samons, 2000).

The growing enigma of 'Gender Ambiguity' and the LGBT spectrum

People and groups who have been defiant to the conventional bi-nominal gender norms can be seen throughout the history in every ethnic and racial setup. However, the designation of the label namely LGBT to the whole community and in specific the rise of the term "transgender" is relatively new, dating only back to as near as the mid-1990s. Often the term transgender on paper and the transgender people on the social scene are misunderstood by the common population.

The LGBT umbrella

It is better if the term “LGBT” is seen as an umbrella term that overall on the whole embraces and takes under its head a diverse kind and number of people who claim to hold within themselves an innate sense of gender-association that does not fit in with the gender assigned to them on birth. This umbrella takes under its realm trans-sexual, queers, people who identify themselves as cross-dressers and all those people who feel like their conventionally socially designated or biologically assigned sex does not truly mirror their internal innate gender (Catalpa & McGuire, 2018).

Trans: as a concept

A transsexual in specific is described as someone who is in discord with his/her anatomical gender and are convinced upon their belief of ridding off their genitals with a wish to completely live as a member of the opposite gender.

Terminologies

Referring to someone who identifies themselves as Trans it is important to employ the following terminologies:

FTM

Someone who by the virtue of their anatomy was previously identified as a woman and who now after the exercise of their choice when it comes to gender identify themselves as male are known as FTM (female-to-male) transsexual. Basically, they are what we call a Trans man, or a transgender man.

MTF

In the same way when previously by the way of their anatomy someone was identified as a man and who now by choice identifies as a woman, they are called MTF (male-to-female) transsexuals or Trans- woman, or a transgender woman.

Ze/hir/hirs

Some Transgender choose the employment of gender-neutral pronouns which include “ze or hir or hirs’. To sum up their sexual orientation Transgender people can identify themselves as either lesbians or bisexuals or gays or heterosexuals or can show some other queer sexual association. Having faced a lot of socio-political discrimination, tyranny, horror and abuse over the years the trans-community now chooses to associate themselves with the LGB people under the common heading of ‘the outcasts’.

Cisgender

The contrary term to the trans-people i.e. the people who are comfortable with identifying themselves with their by-birth designated genders is “cisgender”.

The term 'cisgender' means people who are in perfect comfort with their biological and socially associated genders (Testa & Rankin, 2014).

Studying gender ambiguity through the lens of history

Everywhere on this earth, we will find people who question their personal gender limitations. By the virtue of this paper we do not mean to highlight the trivial aspects of gender 'queering' for example the likes of which could be seen in the 1970s lesbian separatists who wore dungarees. The important side to be highlighted in our opinion is not just the gender queering aspect, but the important crossing aspect of gender. By which we mean the belief that makes people risk entirely their everything to stand up for owning a gender that they feel is their own even if it is in contrast to and is very different from the social, cultural and legal gender expectations that were associated with them at the time of their birth. In every culture from one side of the globe to the other, in every country or period of time that you pick up to study, you will find a number of individuals who, if were alive today would have been labelled as gender ambiguous (Doorn & Verschoor, 1994).

Early sexologists

It has to be seen keenly that the historical sexologists' classified sex and gender association in terms of a cultural matrix in which it was embedded and that mirrored both the social context of the specific sex and gender along with the sexologists' own personal belief system regarding it. Although, the comparison of sex and gender associated attitudes from one epoch to another is warned against because of the reasons of language and meaning comprehension barriers cross culturally and historically, in mapping the early sexologists' study regarding sex and gender variation, we find a significant classification in the concepts that can be defined as a shift of sex related paradigms from physiology to psychology and back to physiology (Nuttbrock & Becker, 2009).

The evolution of the contemporary sex paradigm

The eighteenth century lay the foundation for the naturalization of gender classifications, particularly, that there were two contradicting genders and that gendered conduct involved science. Medical science set up a double arrangement of gender by underscoring the physical contrasts amongst men and women. Herdt (1994) takes note of how, by the nineteenth century, regulating sex and gender qualifications were well set up and it is inside this setting the multidisciplinary field of sexology got created. The present worldview of sexed and gendered contrasts was solidly settled as a western philosophy only by the late nineteenth century (Herdt, 1994).

- 1. Development of gender-binary in association with power exercise and socio-political power oriented motives:**

As various sex roles were created for males and females, familiarity with biological contrasts developed which is the way "common" imbalances were built. Messerschmidt refers to Lacqueur (1990) when he brings up that the two-sex demonstrate grew only, "until such differences became politically important" and "sex" therefore became "explicable only within the context of battles over gender and power."

As it were, Messerschmidt (2007) appears to recommend that Lacqueur was making the point that a two-sex demonstrate was not the after effect of logical rationales, but instead was a result of the re-assessment of the body as per a specific social and cultural setting. This disparity was forced on bodies all things considered, not from within but from without. And to be a gentleman or a lady was to have a particular place in the public arena in a conventional manner that was said to have been decided and outlined by God (Messerschmidt, 2012).

The contemporary notion

Systems for dissecting and deciphering sex, gender and want have experienced broad changes in the most recent century and all the more they have created stereotypical cultural conditions inside which sexed and gendered identities are developed. Over the most recent fifty years, women's activist and gay hypothetical grant has delivered a considerable collection of work concerning the classes of "sex" and "gender" which educates this proposition. Customarily sex has by and large been viewed as biological and natural, and gender as social and cultural. All the more as of late, the possibility that both sex and gender are typified and developed has turned out to be vital. It is now being investigated how transgenderism is an idea that has added on to the continuous discussions on the issues of biology and social constructionism, and the degree to which sex and gender are rigid or dynamic. In other words, the manner in which the parallel structure of heterosexuality has been looked upon until now is being questioned and is being scrutinized by transgendered identities, bodies, and desires.

Opening up the gender concept in the light of biology and psychology

Biological question

There are expanding discussions being made in the medicinal and psychological journals about intersexuality, and support associations for intersexual originating from an assortment of ethnicity and societies. By far most of the intersexed individuals recognize themselves as male or female as opposed to transgender or transsexual. By and by, it gives the idea that one focal point that can be agreed upon is that the individuals are developing in ways that are challenging the conventional parallel arrangement of gender, sex and sexuality. Van Lenning aggregates it all up when she doubts whether the intersexed body is a therapeutic

crisis or an intriguing option: "Is it an abnormality or a possibility, a gender disorder or a gender variation (Vanwesenbeeck & Van Lenning, 1998).

Gender transformation surgeries

Some transgender individuals report feeling that they were conceived in the wrong body. Hence, some transgender individuals have surgeries to take the physical type of their coveted sex. This individual is in some cases called a post-operative transsexual. Somebody can likewise be pre-operative, or can pick never to have surgery (for this situation, she or he may be known as "non-operation"). Hormones are utilized to advance optional sex attributes, for example, bosom tissue or facial hair. Regularly, "changing" is utilized to depict the time of moving far from one's allocated sex. Physical progressing may portray surgical, hormonal, or different changes to one's body. Socially progressing may portray lawfully changing one's name, requesting that companions utilize a picked pronoun, and different demonstrations of disclosure (Zimmermann & Papadopulos, 2006).

Mental condition

Transgender experience and expression have generally been related with mental diseases and diagnosis and so to acquire cure, the determination of "gender personality issue" is taken as a transgendered individuals' "affirmation ticket" to hormonal and surgical medications. In other words, the current demonstrative framework demands that an individual must be analysed as mentally sick with a specific end goal to be endorsed for treatment. The historical development of the medical model of diagnosis in such cases is actually built upon the conventional binary gender system, and is greatly influenced by the traditional heteronormative assumptions that have been affecting the medical transsexual narrative since long. Although, this attitude is being subjected to changing day by day, there still remains very less room for the development of an alternative transgender narrative against the current classification system.

No fixed parameters as yet identified

There is not sufficient research proof to demonstrate how or why a 3-years-old male kid may distinguish as a young girl, and no outer factors like child rearing or youth injury has been turned out to be a reason for gender dissention. For a few kids, this gender dissention is just a phase and passes yet for others, it proceeds and bonds itself in the high school years. Individuals accusing transgender identities upon parents' or guardians' demoralization of a child's conduct is additionally wrong as there is no proof that child rearing is in charge of a child having a gender personality that isn't in accordance with his or her biological sex. Hence, until now, no logical way has been discovered to fix or suppress the gender identity of a person (Levitt & Ippolito, 2014).

Gender: A Question under the light of the UNO charter of fundamental rights

The procedure is more or less general: when a child is conceived, a specialist, parent, or birth chaperon reports the birth of a "young girl" or a "young boy." That brief instant designation dictates most of the parts of our lives. It is likewise something that the majority of us never question. In any case, some people's genders advance in an unexpected way, and refuse to fit into the inflexible conventional thoughts of female or male. But that should not make any difference to whether somebody can or cannot enjoy the fundamental rights. But sadly for transgender individuals such is not the case it does and they are subjected to the discrimination of mortifying, vicious and once in a while deadly, degree. Countless instances of viciousness and victimization of transgender individuals have been documented, whose existence is subjected to prohibition in various parts of the world. In Malaysia, state religious authorities capture Trans individuals for the basic demonstration of strolling down the road wearing apparel regarded unseemly to their relegated sex. Comparative arrests have been made in Indonesia, Nigeria, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. Police have captured Trans individuals in Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia under laws that criminalize same-sex lead. Trans individuals are killed at shockingly high rates, most quite in Latin America and the United States. Methodical marginalization adds to high rates of suicide and HIV.

In spite of this reiteration of their rights, Trans individuals have made huge walks as of late towards accomplishing lawful gender acknowledgment, an essential advancement towards controlling the abuse and injustice.

Indeed, even in nations that view themselves as reference points on LGBT rights, including some European and Latin American nations and the US, transgender individuals are as yet compelled to experience humiliating procedures to change their records, including gender reassignment surgeries, constrained cleansing, mental assessment, lengthy waiting periods in case of documentations, and divorces (Swiebel, 2009).

Narrowing in on Pakistan

The concept of the third gender in Pakistan:

Transgender (additionally alluded to as Khusra) mirrors a gathering of individuals who get to enjoy the minimal measure of regard or rights in Pakistan. Because of the questionable nature and common mentality of individuals, the subject of Transgender rights in Pakistan is not discussed openly in refined circles. A great many people don't considerably think about them as a part of their community; enormous dismissals are often faced by transgender in every part of the country.

Current Situation

As indicated by the latest research led on the topic of transgenderism, it has been found that roughly one out of every 50 youngsters are related to a transgender inclination/potential. At the end of the day, around 2 percent populace of Pakistan is influenced by transgenderism.

In our general public, transgender are normally first distinguished by the families. The community people often mistake them as pre-homosexuals out of denial and most Pakistani families wind up being forceful towards them. For instance, strict notices are given to them to change their state of mind and the vast majority of them are dismissed by their respective groups of friends and family.

The Stereotypes

A myth appears to have shaped around the transgender community in Pakistan that they cannot do any work aside from singing and dancing. I wonder who began this downwards winding of their dignity. Presently, they are not regarded as equivalent, they live in disengaged groups with their own kind, regularly in outrageous destitution. Most are uneducated as the thought of a transgender child being raised in an ordinary family and in a standard school isn't a worthy reality for the majority.

Example

Riffie Khan, a transgender person who holds a Double Master's degree from Shah Abdul Latif University in Shikarpur in Economics and Political Science respectively is still unemployed. Despite her academic bearings, Khan has been unable to grab onto a job regardless of her numerous efforts for wanting to do so. In 2003, she was forced to quit the job that she had at the National Medical Centre in Karachi, where she used to work as a front desk officer on the account of the notion that she did not fit in well.

Khan is just one example out of the many transgender people in the Pakistan who pay the price of their existence in both their professional and personal lives due to prejudices and biases that the society shows towards them. "It's the educated people that upset me the most," she says. "When they discriminate against people like me, it hurts even more" (Sultana,& Kalyani, 2012).

The contemporary standing of Pakistanis on the issue

The Khawaja Sira community in Pakistan is one of the most tyrannized and prejudiced community in the socio-political orbit. This bias against them originates initially from within their families who abandon them from their homes only because they do not fit in according to them and are different. They have to pay a hefty price of not conforming to the gender norms defined by the society. These

kicked out, disowned and abandoned people are then taken in by the *Guru-Chela system* that functions conventionally in the Khawaja Sira community. Under the virtue of this framework, the transgender individual referred to as a "Hijra" is answerable to and is headed by a head elder figure called a Guru under the supervision of whom they work as road-side beggars, prostitutes and wedding and party dancers to earn money.

In Pakistan, when a 5-year-old kid plays with cosmetics, strolls around in his mother's dupatta, talks delicately and makes expound hand signals, these behavioural examples are scolded by the guardians, some of the time entirely. Numerous of them are taken to their neighbourhood pirs, specialists and therapists. At the point when this conduct proceeds and the kid begins to distinguish as a female and expects that gender, the typical Pakistani family does not endure it and that is the place where the Khawaja Sira group comes in. Abused, kicked out and running away from mishandle both inside and outside of home, the transwomen or transmen locate a place of refuge in the *Guru-Chela* framework. Numerous individuals demand inquiring as to why the transgender group does not get education or why do they not tilt towards a more engaging and better paying profession as opposed to begging, prostitution and dancing to this. The appropriate response lies in the economic reality of Pakistan and its socio-political structuring.

What an average Pakistani knows about the transgender community in his/her vicinity is just the surface. Many of the things commonly believed are not even true and are just fabricated or long-believed stereotypes showing our ignorance towards the trans-community. In order to understand the transgender community and involve them in the productive spectra of life it is important to understand what it really means to be a transgender and for that we need to recognize the difference between the concepts of "sex" and the concept of "gender" and only then can we move further in addressing the question of trans-reality (Saddique & Gang, 2017).

Suggested Solutions to what is considered an abomination to the religion and culture

The solutions for breaking these conventions of discrimination and oppression begin with their acknowledgment. The motivation behind why the transgender group is side lined is a direct result of the principal dismissal that begins from their homes.

1. Fix your family frameworks, teach guardians and families around you that manhandling or counselling your kid in the light of being distinctive is in no way to shape or form them both ethically and religiously. A transman/lady who is not denied of an adoring family and a home will never want to enter a *Guru/Chela* framework.

2. The second job is to try and settle the general public mind-set, and that change originates from you. Try not to belittle a Khawaja Sira whenever you see them, don't call your companion a "khusra" as an affront, and refuse to take part in the generalizations that sexualize trans-individuals. These are little attitudinal changes that frame a good social setup.
3. Educate yourselves about the substances and battles of the transgender group; it isn't a biological curse that they bear but rather a conscious assumption of their identities that they are suffering the aftermath of.
4. Know that gender is not a binary.
5. Talk to transwomen/men, make discussions with them, and welcome them for lunch.
6. Help them discover occupations.

This mindfulness will gradually lead to laws and strategies that secure transgender groups and provide them educational and business openings. Better laws will guarantee that work environment segregation or viciousness against a transgender individual won't go unpunished and will clear path for more secure open spaces for trans-individuals. Reconciliation of the transgender group isn't simple and it is most likely not a brisk procedure, but rather the change starts at home and the change starts with you.

Recent Movements

In the world on the whole

A few governments are starting to acknowledge that they should not be 'gender watchmen' to their people.

Argentina kicked things off in 2012 with a law that is viewed as the best quality level law for lawful gender acknowledgment. Anybody more than 18 years of age can pick their lawful gender and overhaul official reports without legal or medical endorsement. Youngsters can do as such with the assent of their lawful representatives or through outline procedures under the watchful eye of a judge.

In the following three years, Colombia, Denmark, Ireland, and Malta killed huge obstructions in the way of lawful gender acknowledgments.

In several parts of South Asia, activists are battling for the acknowledgment of a third gender class. Nepal's Supreme Court decided in 2007 that the administration must perceive a third gender in light of a person's "self-feeling." Similar advancements were followed in Bangladesh and India.

In other places, the very reason for gender markers has been investigated. New Zealand and Australia now offer the alternative of posting "unspecified" gender on official records. The Dutch parliament has started considering whether the legislature should record gender on identity distinguishing documents at all or not.

In Pakistan

The Supreme Court of Pakistan has lawfully pronounced as of late that transgender have equal rights and are ordinary nationals of Pakistan. The most recent decision on the matter puts forth uniformity for them in all perspectives and gives them right in the legacy after the demise of their parents, openings for work and enlisting in universities and so on. In 2009, Supreme Court likewise passed the request of including the class of 'third gender' in the national identity card. Truth be told, in the last elections, numerous transgender in Pakistan challenged the history by making their choice to pick their political representatives. This choice of Supreme Court was effectively presided by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhary. Other than the government, a few non-government bodies are also additionally taking up a dynamic enthusiasm for enhancing the quality of life in the transgender strata. For instance, one such name is Gender Interactive Alliance. In spite of the fact that, this is perhaps the only initiative of its kind till now taken by the Pakistani Government to shield the transgender rights in Pakistan (Redding, 2016).

Conclusion

In places where trans-individuals' identities are criminalized, a future in which they might be lawfully perceived appears to be distant. However, it is precisely the mistreatment that they confront that loans desperation to and motivates the fighting of the battle for legitimate gender acknowledgment. It is important that governments should not be involved in the matter of directing gender identities. A person's choosing of their own gender does not expect the governments to recognize any new or special rights; rather, it is a profound commitment that the state will not choose for its individuals their identity. To influence this move, the societies will have to recognize gender for what it is: a 'social build'. Gender is profoundly felt by people; governments should not be in the business of arbitrating this personal choice through oppressive conventions and bureaucratic obstacles. To end this bad dream, governments should find a way to separate legitimate and medical procedures identified with gender. In other words, individuals should be allowed to change their legitimate gender as a legal official procedure; and be given quality gender transition-related social insurance and healthcare. After this improvement the government should change every single pertinent framework—including the numerous archives we convey in our day by day lives, national databases, for example, the statistics, and other gendered spaces going from restrooms to detainment facilities. Pride on paper should be guaranteed in practical sense as well. Transgender activists have made amazing moves in making this vision a reality in a few sections of the world,

however again and again, their battle has been a desolate one. Standard human rights associations and givers ought to perceive that lawful gender acknowledgment is a fundamental human right, and should toss their weight, and their assets, into its acknowledgment. Accomplishing the privilege to lawful gender acknowledgment is critical to the ability of Trans-individuals to abandon a life of marginalization and to enjoy an existence of dignity. A simple move towards permitting individual self-sufficiency to decide how their gender is to be expressed and recorded is picking up energy but still has a long way to go.

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