

LGBT Community - An Over View

Tejaswi Avhad

Abstract: *One of the beautiful things created by god on this earth is Human beings. So are all human beings the same? The answer is yes, in the eyes of god but in reality this is not the case. Let's talk about those human beings who are treated differently because their sexual orientation is different from their sexual identity. Such people categorize themselves as LGBT Community. Such people are attracted towards same gender or they may have feelings of opposite gender which is different from their identity given to them by birth. When we talk about law, its equal for all, but this is not the case with LGBT Community. Truly speaking there are hardly few laws in India which help this community. In present article we will be discussing the actual condition of this community, their struggle for identity and the present status in India.*

Keywords: LGBT Community, Sexual orientation, Sexual Identity

1. Introduction

No one is perfect on this earth, god is neither an exception.

It is being said since long that all the living beings are the kids of god. God never categorized as male and female, this was made by human beings for their convenience.

Present Article deals with the categorization of human beings in form of LGBT community and different problems faced by them due the social stigma. In this article we will be discussing the meaning of LGBT and their areas of problem faced by them in the society. We will try to understand why such people are treated differently from other human beings, are they really different from the normal human beings. What makes a person LGBT?

2. Meaning of LGBT community

L- Lesbian, G-Gay, B-Bisexual, T-Transgender. Now let us understand the meaning in detail.

A lesbian is a homosexual woman. The word lesbian is derived from Greek Island of Lesbos. Men who are attracted to other men are called as Gay. People who are romantically and sexually attracted towards men and women are called as bisexual. Transgender are those whose gender identity differs from that assigned to them naturally by birth. Often this LGBT community is also denoted as LGBTQ or LGBTTQIAAP or LGBTQ+. Q for those who identify as queer or are questioning their sexual identity; "LGBTQ" has been recorded since 1996 [1]. Queer is an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities who are not heterosexual or cisgender. I stand for intersex, A stands for asexual, ally and P stands for pansexual. Originally meaning "strange" or "peculiar", **queer** came to be used pejoratively against those with same-sex desires or relationships in the late 19th century. Plus (+) means that we welcome all the other identities so that no one is left out.

Difference between Sexual orientation and Sexual identity

Sexual orientation means sexual and romantic feeling towards others [2]. People who identify their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual are attracted towards people of opposite sex then themselves, whereas people who identify themselves as lesbians or gay get attracted towards

people of same sex. Bisexual or Pansexual are those who get attracted towards more than one gender.

Gender identity is an internal feeling of being a man, woman or neither. Most people have gender identity that matches to the sex assigned to them by birth, however some people might gender identity that does not match to the gender assigned to them by birth, these [people might use the term transgender or non-conforming to describe their gender.

Many people confuse these two terms of sexual orientation and sexual identity. The simple way to understand the difference: gender orientation is about "who you are attracted to" and gender identity is about "who you are" (boy, girl, both or neither). Gender queer is the term used by the people who are not comfortable in calling themselves boy or girl. They may feel like both or neither gender.

Society has always connected feeling with gender. Feelings for yourself and for others whom you get attracted. Such feelings are being categorized as that of male or female. But what if there is confusion relating to such feelings. This confusion has given birth to LGBT community.

LGBT Pride Flag

Gilbert Baker designed the rainbow pride flag for the 1978 San Francisco Gay Freedom Celebration [3]. Original eight-stripe version designed by Gilbert Baker (1978) then came the seven-stripe version with hot pink color removed due to a lack of fabric (1978–1979) and presently the Six-stripes version with turquoise color removed and indigo color changed to royal blue (1979-present) The rainbow flag, commonly known as the gay pride flag or LGBT pride flag, is a symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pride and LGBT social movements. Other older uses of rainbow flags include a symbol of peace.

- Red: stands for courage;
- Orange: offers the vision of possibilities;
- yellow: represents the challenge that GREEN has kindled;
- Green: indicates a challenge to co-operators to strive for growth of membership and of understanding of the aims and values of co-operation;
- Light blue: suggests far horizons, the need to provide education and help less fortunate people and strive toward global unity.

- Dark blue: suggests pessimism: a reminder that less fortunate people have needs that may be met through the benefits of cooperation.
- Violet: is the colour of warmth, beauty, and friendship.

Health issues of LGBT

A person who cannot express himself in front of his friends, family and society, what sought of depression and anxiety such person must be facing. There are various health issues which the LGBT community faces [4]:

a) Physical fitness

Average lesbians have higher body mass index than heterosexual women. Lesbians and bisexuals are more likely to be overweight and obese. Anal cancer is found at high rate in gay men. Lesbians has to suffer from breast cancer as they do not routine mammograms or have clinical breast examination.

b) Depression and anxiety

Depression and increased level of anxiety is one of the major health issue. There are various reasons for depression which includes the following:

- Unable to share the sexual orientation with friends and family.
- Discrimination in society at every level due your sexual orientation or sexual identity.
- Discrimination at workplaces, schools, colleges etc..
- Forcefully following the sexual identity in the society due the social stigma.

c) Sexually transmitted infection

The first name proposed for AIDS was GRID i.e. Gay-related immune deficiency. Men who has sex with men is most likely to acquire HIV in developed countries than the other population. Due to unemployment LGBT are forced to work as sex worker. No means of livelihood force such people in flesh trade which ultimately exposes them to sexually transmitted infection.

In a 2016 survey of 100 Indian LGBT employees, the Mission for Indian Gay and Lesbian Empowerment (MINGLE), an advocacy group, found that 40 percent had been harassed at work and the majority were not covered by LGBT workplace protection policies [5].

3. Status of LGBT in India

National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India AIR 2014 SC 1863 is a landmark decision by the Supreme Court of India, which declared transgender people to be a 'third gender', affirmed that the fundamental rights granted under the India Constitution will be equally applicable to transgender people, and gave them the right to self-identification of their gender as male, female or third-gender. This step was regarded as major step towards gender equality. After this they were granted reservations for educations in educational institutions, jobs etc. On September 6, the SC unanimously struck down a part of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, to exclude all kinds of adult consensual sexual behavior. In its judgment, the Court emphasized the fundamental right of homosexual persons to live with dignity, without the stigma attached to their sexual orientation, with equal enjoyment of rights under India's constitution, and equal protection under the law. **Navtej**

Singh Johar & Ors. v. Union of India thr. Secretary Ministry of Law and Justice WP(C) No.76 of 2016. Supreme Court in 2018 decriminalized consensual sex among adults in private including homosexuality. Framing of LGBT friendly HR policies received a legal boost after this land mark judgment.

Judiciary has shown positive attitude towards LGBT community, now there are people from different field who are trying in their own manner to bring awareness among people about the LGBT community. Popular TV show Satyamev Jayate and the TARA Sharma Show have helped raised awareness about LGBT issue among parents. There were few cases wherein the people belonging to LGBT asked their parents to watch this show instead of explain on their own. We can say this the beginning and there is still long way to go for LGBT to be treated as normal human beings.

Success stories of people belonging to LGBT community

Being a member of LGBT community is the matter of choice and feeling, so it actually does not degrade your performance as human being. There are people who have gone against the stigma of the society, have struggled for what they are and still are successful in their life [6].

Vikram Seth

He is renowned face for more than three decades in literary circle. He is best known for his novel "A Suitable Boy", he is regarded as most influential writer in modern era. One of the gay personalities in India, the 61 year old, who has received Padma Shri has penned down his anguish over the recent judgment on decriminalizing of sec 377.

Gauri Sawant

She is a transgender women who was born as Ganesh. She has struggled for her identity. Today she is a known face in LGBT community. Gauri has also adopted a young girl whose mother has passed away. Gauri is an example who chose to live life the way she wants.

Laxmi Narayan Tripathi

A transgender activist, hindi film actress and a Bharatnatyam dancer based in Mumbai, Laxmi recognizes herself as part of hijra community. Laxmi is the elder among seven siblings from Uttar Pradesh. She was being taunted in school for what she is, was also sexually abused by her relative. Fascinated by Bharatnatyam and its costumes she has secured Arts degree from Mumbai's Mithibai College, has done PG in Bharatnatyam with support of her family, she has worked in number of TV serials and also starred in Bigg Boss reality show.

Ashok Row Kavi

Kavi is the founder of Humsafar Trust and from among the people who spoke openly on homosexuality and gay rights in the country. He is a Journalist and prominent LGBT activist. Unable to deal with the reactions for his homosexuality he dropped from engineering college. He enrolled himself as Hindu Monk in Ramkrishna Mission and studied Theology. He is a Journalist who worked for papers like The Indian Express, The Daily etc.

From the above success stories we can conclude that gender has nothing to do with your success.

4. Conclusion

When we love someone we accept the person as it is, humans are gifted with the most beautiful feeling of love so we should accept people the way they are instead of criticizing or analyzing them. LGBT community needs love and support, they are the one who has faced hatred and violence for what they are, wherein they are not at all in fault. Belong to LGBT community is not a crime, today we see there are hardly few rights of LGBT which are recognized by law like New York is the first nation who has passed law offering Gender-neutral birth certificates. The new policy will have effect from Jan.1, 2019 where there shall be third option 'X' other than 'M' & 'F' [7]. People can amend their birth certificates when in they can inform the government who they are, this is just the beginning, there is still long way to go [8].

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Author Profile

Tejaswi Rajendra Avhad is Assistant Professor (Law), LL.M, SET.