

Gender Dysphoria: An Epistemology on Transgender Narratives

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Chapter VI

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Summation

The transgression from the essential masculine and feminine behavior is mostly considered unacceptable even after a gamut of anthropological, sociological, and gender literature that suggests the plurality of identities and records of multiple sexualities. It is the culture that associates these mannerisms, behaviours, and attitudes as masculine or feminine. The ‘body’ is a site in which the cultural and social constructions come into being and is mapped onto individuals. Masculinity and femininity are culture-specific constructs that impart a set of instructions or prescriptions on being an ‘ideal’ man or woman. These constructions not only constraint individuals in binary categories but also imposes a social order or systematic regimes such as government regulations which controls bodies to behave in socially and politically accepted manners. The body is thus, seen as a part of hierarchized dichotomies. The power structure leads to the dominance of one class or group and subjugation of others. The subjugated become the minority for whom the government can either choose to recognize the rights of minorities, or justify discrimination, or marginalization of minorities which in turn leads to citizenship entitlements which are not available for bodies that transgress cultural, social, sexual, and/or political boundaries.

The second chapter “Social Dynamics of Gender” focuses on the social dimensions of transgender community in India and other European countries. Binary gender ideologies and heteronormativity are universally imposed misconceptions. When the society categorizes the gender roles as male and female on the basis of biological sexual construct, individuals who do not belong to either stratum are

despised and treated with disgust. Though many people seem to fit within the specific categories of masculinity and femininity, these generalizations are final and perfect. Rather binary gender notions are merely societal constructs and not natural. Also, it is a common misapprehension that 'gender' and 'sex' describes the same ideas, while there is a huge disparity between the two. Gender of a person is a social phenomenon, and that being feminine or masculine is different from being female or male. Likewise sex of a person needs not to be evenly aligned with the sexuality because sexual orientation, identification, and practices are socially constructed and have their own specific forms of practice.

Transgender people substantiate themselves contrast to their biological sex thus they cannot be confined in the binary gender ideologies. But the existence of trans community can be traced in every culture throughout history and yet they are marginalized from the mainstream society. The visibility and knowledge about trans people are relatively common compared to previous centuries still, they face severe discrimination, social stigma, and systemic inequality. The chapter centralizes on the predicaments and perils the transgender community undergoes during their lifetime. *A Scientific Aspects of Transgenders* by Ajay Majumder and Rabin Tarafder substantiates the objectives discussed in the chapter.

Ajay Majumder and Rabin Tarafder delineate the societal positions, daily activities, emotional, and physical struggles of transgender community. The book gives a detailed account on transgenders as well as other sexual minorities. The communal living standard of a third gender is considered inferior when compared to cisgenders. They are victimized for their gender incongruity in every sphere of life. Trans people are often abandoned by their family and pushed to the periphery as social outcasts and end up in begging and doing sex work for survival. The transgender community needs to get

accepted and treated with dignity in the society. In some countries trans people lack the access to basic facilities like public resources and medical attention. In hospitals, the authorities hesitate to admit trans women in women's ward because some women are homophobic and feel uncomfortable in the presence of trans women. Some trans individuals have reported sexual abuse and verbal harassments in the men's ward. Besides proper and hygienic toilet facilities for trans people are not available in most areas. Being a gender incongruent person is viewed as an abomination thus resulting in physical and psychological trauma.

Transgender youth are coming out revealing their gender identity in schools, families, and social medias more often these days compared to the past. Many NGOs and gender queer organizations are rendering their support to people with role confusion and gender incongruity, yet there exists various factors that make it difficult for them to lead a dignified life. The primary predicament they face before or during the transition period is to come out as a trans person and to make his/her parents, teachers, siblings, and other family members to understand the psychological makeshift of the third gender. As the heteronormative ideologies are deeply inculcated in the minds of people, many of them are perplexed at the thought of breaking a system that they have been following since time immemorial. The thesis addresses how this lack of knowledge affects the societal existence of people with gender incongruity. A child is clueless about its sexuality until someone imbues them with the differentiation between male and female. The gender roles are followed with the idea of sex. So children believe the binary gender system and try to follow the standards set by the society. Men are expected to be brave, tough, independent, and dominant while women are expected to be soft and submissive. Even daily chores are segregated according to gender roles. A child with gender incongruence finds it

difficult to fit under the denominations set by society. In *The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*, Doraisamy was never interested in going out with his brothers or playing with boys of his neighbourhood. Rather he loved doing the chores assigned to his sister, wear her dress, and play with girls. In the beginning he did not even knew that being effeminate was not accepted in a binary centric culture. As a child, Doraisamy behaved the way he liked and did things that made him happy.

When Doraisamy grew up, the surroundings made him feel different and non-inclusive. He was criticized and admonished for his way of walking, style of talking, choice of attire, voice, mannerisms, and what not. He was ridiculed and beaten up by his parents and brothers. Many thought he was seeking attention through his effeminate behaviour. Doraisamy felt like a mistake of nature for he never had an idea about transgender people. His young mind was cluttered with fright and loneliness. This highlights the lack of awareness about sexuality and gender spectrum. Most trans individuals suffer from not knowing their condition before transition period. There is a huge difference between a child with gender incongruence finding his/her gender identity after a long struggle and finding one's identity with little guidance and support from parents, teachers, and other role models. It is important to include basic ideas about gender spectrum and third gender categories to children in their curriculum. And during the transition period of a transgender child, the school officials should create a comfortable environment for him/her and make sure that the child is not bullied by his/her peers. Positive involvement of parents and teachers can create a haven for them and that reduces the rate of transgender drop outs from educational institutions. For instance, similar to Doraisamy many young trans children are ruthlessly beaten, starved, and abandoned by their families. His family thought he was possessed by demons, took him to a temple, and tonsured his head. Their superstitious believes and

aversion towards trans people made them to torture their own family member. Like Doraisamy's village that views trans people as a curse to the family and community still exists in this multi developed and civilized world.

Revathi in her autobiography *The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*, penned various encounters she underwent in her life as a hijra. She remarks about the objectification of transgender bodies. Transgender women are always subjected to sexual objectifications, constant body surveillance, and commented upon the physical beauty standards set by the society. Apart from being treated as a minority, they are compared with cisgenders and stereotypically degraded as 'not a real woman'. There were instances, Revathi was questioned about the secret of her breasts by a shopkeeper and threatened by a police man to expose her genitals. She was stripped naked in a police station and people around her were making obscene comments about transgender bodies. While travelling she was addressed with derogatory terms and even physically assaulted. The sad reality is that people do not come forward to aid the trans community who are in distress. The thesis emphasizes on the significance of understanding and compassion towards the third gender community. On the one hand they endure the agony of being misplaced in a wrong body and deep longing for love, healthy relationships, and parenthood. Like adding insult to injury by escalating their hardships further will be inhumane.

The preamble of Indian constitution declares the nation and its people justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity irrespective of religion, caste, social status, or any other bias. But for centuries the Indian state policy recognized and accepted only binary sex, male, and female thus eliminating the transgender community from enjoying their rights and liberties which included right to vote, right to own property, right to legal marriage, right to claim a formal identity in legal documents, and most

importantly right to education, employment, health care, and so on. Majumder and Tarafder in *A Scientific aspect of Transgenders* elucidate about the transgender rights under Indian Penal Code (IPC). Though the existence of transgenders in India can be traced back to Vedic period, the community was criminalized under various Sections and Articles of IPC. Majumder and Tarafder explain this contrast through their book. Before the conquest, the laws and justice were regulated by the regional rulers or the village heads, in the frame of 'Nyaya Panchayat', which means a framework for delivering justice. In 1947, under the Indian Independence Act, India got freedom and the constitution came in force but not all the laws put amended by the British were revised but remained in practice. One such rule was the first Criminal Tribes Act passed by the British India's Governor General in 1871. The policy was initially implemented in Northern India and widened nearly to the entire colonial India by mid 1920s. The act was aimed to prevent an increase in the number of hijras then addressed as 'eunuchs'. Any hijra gatherings, initiations, and ceremonies were banned by the officials thus leading to a near extinction the community. They were labeled as abominations to nature and this created a low visibility rate of hijras in public spaces. Furthermore the punishments for breaking the rules included vigorous imprisonment, whipping, beating, and several other cruelties. The Act was repealed in 1949 and former Criminal Tribes were denotified in 1952.

The transgender community has fought and is still struggling strenuously for their rights. Living Smile Vidya in her memoir *I Am Vidya: A Transgender's Journey* shares the legal battle she encountered for name change. In the final chapter titled *I Want to Live- with pride*, Vidya demonstrated the struggles she faced for legally changing her name from Saravanan to Vidya. She forwarded an application to the Tamil Nadu Stationery and Printing Department, with a reason mentioning her sex

change. But the application was rejected remarking such reasons cannot be entertained. Vidya was persistent, about legally registering her identity as a trans woman. She was well aware that not many laws were implemented in India for transgender community so Vidya along with transgender activist Priya Babu filed a litigation demanding franchise for transgenders. The judgment was favourable for them. Transgender people could choose male or female as their gender, a milestone for their community. Some trans women even got Voter ID cards after this.

Vidya was not satisfied with a name change and Voter ID certificates. She further sent petitions to the District Collector, Taluk Office, and Chief Secretariat, to have her name changed in all her documents. The officials demanded for ration card, but her family refused to give that. After investigation they asked her to produce a medical certificate for sex change. In India, no medical certificates or legal documents were provided at that time for transgender people who underwent sex reassignment surgery. Even after filing various petitions and court visits she could not change all her documents. She was ridiculed and insulted by people all along her journey. Her efforts to legally register her identity in all her documents resulted in failure. Heart wrenchingly she expresses:

India freed herself sixty- six years ago. Amidst our achievements and failures, democracy has remained strong and intact. Dalits have a voice, feminists are heard- they can hold rallies, demand their rights. But transgenders are the Dalits of Dalits, the most oppressed women among women- they enjoy no equality, no freedom, and no fraternity. They continue to lead a wretched life, devoid of pride and dignity. (Vidya 136-137)

People belonging to marginalized groups recurrently suffer from serious confusions and mental agony. They meticulously tend to prove their identity to the

world and get acceptance for the way they are. From health inequality to gender discrimination, there are many pressing issues faced by transgender people.

The politics of 'passing' is one particular humiliation both trans men and trans women encounters during their life time. Trans people are particular about their looks. During transition period they undergo sex reassignment surgery, hormonal therapy and multiple other surgeries to change the sexual construct as well as physical appearance. But when heteronormative society criticizes them for their physical traits it creates a barrier for proper manifestation of personality and identity. The thesis focuses on the identity crisis faced by the trans people both physically and psychologically.

Most people assume the other's gender as male and female by putting together a number of cues, like body feature, clothing, voice etc. The process is totally unconscious and determining an individual's identity as man or woman comes in an instant for binary ideologies are already instilled in the minds of every person. From that moment on the speaker confidentially refers to the other person using masculine or feminine pronouns. For most cisgender people this process happens smoothly and if an error occurs, they correct it with ease or rarely mind. In case of transgender people they are very sensitive upon addressing them with proper name and pronouns. At times trans women get to be addressed with female names and pronouns without revealing their identity. That makes them happy and contented for all the struggles they undergo to reincarnate their body. But at certain instances after revealing their identity as trans, they are looked up with bewilderment and are appreciated or sarcastically commented for able to 'pass' like a 'real woman'. By definition, passing is where a trans woman is anonymously perceived as a cisgender. But passing is a repulsive term because it contains a contradiction that there is something 'false' or 'surreptitious' about being seen as their authentic self. This happens with trans men

too. Outwardly being commented for the ability to pass may seem like an appreciation but in reality it is a backhanded compliment that questions the identity of trans individuals.

Janet Mock in her memoir *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity Love and So Much More* explicates the identity threat she underwent in the form of passing. Mock started her medications for transition at an early stage, which halted the testosterone production in body, and that acted as an advantage for gaining the feminine figure she desired. Mock was blatantly happy and satisfied about her body. While indulging in sex work, she was commented by many people that she does not look like a boy in transition and can pass like any other girl. Some people told her that she is prettier than other 'natural' women. In the beginning Mock felt good about all those words but later she realized that while acknowledging her beauty people are invalidating her identity as woman. Those were the subtle ways to express that she was not 'real' and was faking something. Every transgender individual longs to be accepted by society the way they are. Being appreciated as beautiful and feminine for a trans woman is affirming and welcoming but the appreciation should not degrade their identity. The thesis aims to break down the notions of patronizing the beauty standards and body image ideals set by the society. Breaking those barriers can create a safe space for non- binary people to be confident in their authentic selves, both mentally and physically.

Majumder and Tarafder in their work *A Scientific Aspects of Transgenders* stresses about the importance of social inclusion for the third gender all around the world. Like trans women, trans men are also subjected to identity crisis. In many countries, trans women practice living as a community. For the very least they would have groups of their own for helping each other in need. The visibility of trans men

are low compared to that of trans women, thus making them a minority among the marginalized. The lack of community living or alternate support systems, the struggles of trans men are left unnoticed. Many young girls who experiences gender incongruity are forced to hide their identity and lead a gruesome life. A vast majority of people do not even know that trans men exist.

Dhillon Khosla in his memoir *Both Sides Now: One Man's Journey Through Womanhood* deeply explains the identity crisis he underwent. For a long period of time Khosla could not fathom his gender identity as trans man. He thought that something was wrong within his self and hated his body for being contrast to his emotions. The lack of awareness about gender spectrum resulted in leading a distressing life for a long period. The toughest part was hitting puberty and trying to control the growth of the female organs. Khosla bound his chest and wore men's clothes not to reveal the feminine body. When he found out about trans men he started his medications and opted for surgery. There are lots of trans men suffering from depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicidal tendencies along with gender incongruity. It is reported that transgender individuals have the chance of increased stress levels about sexual orientation and gender identity throughout their lives compared to cisgenders.

A Scientific Aspects of Transgenders states the importance of family and familial ties for every trans person. The acceptance, love, and care of the family is essential when it comes to the wellbeing and personality development of gender non-binary individuals. Many parents are not aware of what it means to be a gender incongruent personality. Few families struggle at first but accept the condition and find ways to support their child while some others disown the transgender children. Jeremy Ivester was fortunate and blessed to have an understanding family who accepted his identity as a trans man and loved him unconditionally. *Once a Girl*,

Always a Boy: A Family Memoir of a Transgender Journey by Jo Ivester records the journey a trans man from Emily Ivester to Jeremy Ivester. Personal identity formation is one of the key developmental tasks of adolescence and early adulthood. Jo Ivester and her family members understood the trauma a transgender individual would face during the transition period. They decided to mitigate the disparities for Jeremy through strong family relationships. Transgender children who feel rejected by their family are more likely to attempt suicide, develop depression, and get addicted to drugs and other illegal activities. Jeremy's family made sure that he feels included, protected and loved.

The research work offers an insight into the world of the third gender individuals. It illustrates every aspect of the hijra community, their status, torments and traumas, their life and hardships, their pain and sorrow, their quest and recognition, struggle and the triumph. The chapter elucidates the importance of inclusion of transgender community into the mainstream. Instead of invisibilizing their existence, the society should acknowledge their struggles, identity crisis, educational needs, and employment opportunities. All human beings deserve to enjoy the rights and liberties such as freedom of expression and speech, right to work, right to proper education and employment, and right to lead a dignified life, and transgender community should not be left out as an exemption.

Transgender people are criticized and taunted for their gender identity, employment status and poor living conditions but they are mocked for their mannerisms and behavioural patterns too. If cisgenders are asked about the reason for their homophobia, the revelations mainly points out that trans people are aggressive and arrogant. People tend to judge others easily by their external features and gestures but rarely analyse the cause behind the vigor. The third chapter "Stigma and Pain:

A Psychological Overview” emphasizes on the importance of a loving and healthy childhood for children with gender incongruence. Along with the societal pressure and exclusion trans people suffer the hatred of their family. The deprivation of affection, acceptance, and love creates a hostility which is the root cause of the aggressiveness trans people exhibit. The concepts are validated through Karen Horney’s Psychoanalytic Social Theory.

The Psychoanalytic Social Theory was built on the notion that an individual’s personality development depends upon the socio- cultural conditions, especially childhood experiences. When an individual’s need for love and affection is not satisfied during childhood, it creates a developing ground for basic hostility towards parents and the consequences leads to basic anxiety. People who suffer from basic anxiety try to combat it by adopting three fundamental styles by connecting to others which are, moving towards people, moving against people and moving away from people. The compulsive behaviour of neurotics generates a basic intrapsychic conflict that evolves into idealized self- image or self- hatred. When the idealized self- image is expressed as neurotic search for glory, neurotic claims, and neurotic pride, self- hatred is expressed as self-contempt or alienation from the self. The chapter elucidates how the lack of love and alienation during childhood affects personality development during and after transition. In certain situations when they behave aggressively or have mental break outs, they long for the presence of their family. The absence of parents, family, and loved ones has created a void in their life which can never be replaced.

Transgender individuals try to repress their gender incongruence to be included within their family fully comprehending their helplessness and the fear of estrangement. They try to lean on others to win their affection and acceptance.

Revathi in her memoir *The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story*, reveals the struggles

she faced and the trauma she underwent for the love of her parents. The more she tried to hide her femininity the more was her mental agony. Revathi's family believed they could change her feminine behavior by physical violence. She sadly recounts the days she was beat mercilessly by her brothers and no one rescued her. Whenever she tried to explain her emotions her family never tried to listen to her words or understand her struggles. The fear of beatings and taunts made young Doraisamy hide his hostility which resulted having trust issues and withdrawal from the self. His life was threatened, which aggravated the basic anxiety in him and made him run away from his house.

Neurotics exhibit the tendency to seek for a powerful partner to feel safe and accepted. But not everyone succeeds in finding a partner who understands all their insecurities and accepts them. Revathi was longed to be loved and to lead a family like any other woman. But the two relationships she had, resulted in trauma and more hostility towards people. Some people are under the wrong impression that trans women are like sexual predators, they are incapable of love and that they possess only lust. Their involvement in sex work is an added insult to these derogatory notions. This chapter brings in the trauma Revathi underwent when Babu left after her brothers threatened to harm him and the man she married abandoned her breaking all the promises he gave that he will love her till the end of his life. The frustration and anger that piled inside her took a tragic toll on her life. She shouted at people who ridiculed her. Whenever she tried to raise a complaint to the authorities, they dismissed her queries as mere acts to gain attention. The chapter exposes how that acceptance and inclusivity during childhood can lessen the psychological adversities transgender individuals face during transition and during their future life.

In *I Am Vidya: A Transgender's Journey*, Vidya shares the hardships she encountered during childhood and transition. Like Revathi, she too faced the frowning, ridicules, and physical assault when she revealed her gender identity as trans. Her family members, teachers, friends, and neighbours excluded her which made Vidya feel hostile towards society. She was distracted from studies and her grades deteriorate. She tried to find solace in Ilango's love but that relationship was short lived. Vidya's love for education was curtailed because of her fear of rejection and isolation. The pain of exclusion made her alienate herself from the majority. The chapter further details the struggles Vidya faced due to her gender incongruence. She begged in the local trains and markets for a living. Once a man brutally thrashed her for asking alms and no one came to her aid. These incidents created fear and anxiety in Vidya which led to more neurotic anguish. Vidya's narrative urges the readers to look at trans people as fellow human beings and let them live a peaceful life.

Janet Mock in her memoir *Redefining Realness: A Path to Womanhood and Much More* narrates the obstacles, changes, and humiliations she underwent during her childhood, adolescence, and transition. She talks about the bitter experiences she had with her parents, siblings, classmates, and other acquaintances. Since childhood Mock was compared to her brother Chad. Her father always showed his disappointment for not being manly enough like Chad. She was molested several times but could not reveal the sufferings to her parents or other family members. Mock found solace only after meeting Wendi, another trans woman. She alienated herself from family, school, and society fearing verbal and physical abuse. Mock was marginalized being a transgender person and a woman of colour. She exhibited the all the neurotic trends and characteristics mentioned by Horney. Mock longed for the love and acceptance of her parents and siblings during transition period, the toughest phase in every trans

individual's life. But they admonished her for being different and 'freak'. The lack of familial love created a void in Mock's life which could not be replaced by anything. However she was fortunate to have a reliable and strong partner Aaron who understood and accepted her without any gender bias. Mock's narrative expresses the necessity to create a haven for individuals with gender incongruence within family, educational institutions, and work place.

Visibility for trans masculine individuals can be a double edged sword sometimes on different levels. On one hand many call it privilege to 'pass and blend' in with the heteronormative world, which for the most part is true but 'passing' is not equality, it is a mask of equality. Trans men lack resources that are available for trans women and that include support groups, research efforts, and medical care.

In *Both Sides Now: One Man's Journey Through Womanhood*, Khosla describes his journey from a girl Asha to a trans man Dhillon. He narrates the difficulties, insults, and health issues faced from family and society. Khosla's narrative exhibits the neurotic trends of moving towards people, moving against people, and moving away from people. The chapter further analyses the emotional and psychological needs of trans men.

Jo Ivester's *Once a Girl, Always a Boy: A Family Memoir of a Transgender Journey* proves that familial love, caring, affection, and support can change the attitude, personality, psychological stability, and physical health. When Jeremy (then Emily) expressed his gender identity as trans, his family members were confused but they never stopped loving him, rather they learned the nuances of gender spectrum, addressed him by using the names and pronouns he preferred. His whole family stood by him through every phase of transition which made Jeremy not to feel entirely hostile towards family, friends, and society. Though some people mocked him for his appearance and gender identity, the love and acceptance of his family made him to be

strong and consistent in plans. Jeremy and his family later became spokespersons for other trans individuals who were abandoned by their family and society. The chapter concludes by highlighting the importance of physical and psychological health of people with gender incongruence. It further emphasizes on the prominence of inclusivity among parents, family members, peer groups, and neighbourhood for trans individuals while coming out and transition.

The fourth chapter “Transgender Culture and Heritage Across Nations” highlights the customs, rituals, myths, and misconceptions in transgender community. India is well known for its cultural diversity, festivals, beliefs, and customs. Trans community in India follows certain traditions and rules which sustain their beliefs in mythologies and their chief deity Bahuchara Mata. The chapter discusses about rituals like reeth, Aravaan worship, Yellamma worship, thayamma operation, and funeral customs. It also traces the transgender existence through mythologies like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharatha*, *Kamasutra*, *Shilpa Shastra*, historical events, and *Bible*. Indian trans narratives of Revathi and Vidya are analyzed with Yulia Sakurazawa’s *Transgendered People of India: Forsaken Tributaries*.

Janet Mock’s *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More* traces the Hawaiian culture through Niko Besnier’s *Polynesian Gender Liminality Through Time and Space*. Polynesians conceptualize transgender people as being ‘mixtures’ of male and female attributes. People differ from one another by having different ratios of male to female. The mixture of a male-bodied mahu consists of more femaleness than maleness in a male body, and vice versa for a female-bodied mahu. The chapter explores the customs of mahu, mahuvahine in Tahiti, faafafine in Samoa and fakaleiti in Tonga. The prominence of Hula dance among Polynesian trans culture is also highlighted.

Trans men, neither live in groups nor follow any specific rituals, customs, or practices. Like the low visibility in society, their involvement in communal practices is also thin. The narratives of Khosla and Jo provide hints on trans men groups which gather occasionally to share their experience and needs. The chapter traces the female to male individuals in Greek mythology and history by referring to *FTM: Female-to-Male Transsexuals in Society* by Aaron Devor. The chapter concludes by culminating the heritage of transgender community across nations.

The fifth chapter “Writing as Therapy” focuses on the narrative styles and techniques of the primary sources taken. A detailed analysis is done on the structure followed by the authors. Victims of physical and psychological trauma tend to devise a resistive strategy to deviate their minds off the agony. This chapter highlights how the authors used writing as a therapy to overcome their horrendous memories of the past.

The research aims at better understanding and emancipation of transgender community. Transgenders are exposed to the multi-level nature of violence by invalidating their existence and undermining the sociological and cultural practices. The narratives chosen serves as an illuminating and helpful guide to readers who wish to augment their discernment and sensitivity towards the challenges people with gender incongruence encounter in their daily life. Every human being in this world is born free, deserves equal dignity, and are entitled to the liberties of basic human rights without discrimination. Transgenders are also a part of society but marginalizing them based on their non-hetero traits lead the community to the most disempowered and deprived group. The basic steps that can be taken against shunning gender incongruent people are by trying to acquire proper awareness about the gender spectrum and transgenderism. Instead of staring at them and passing comments that make them feel uncomfortable, cisgenders can approach trans individuals and have a normal conversation thereby

gradually accepting them in mainstream society. Prejudice, bigotry, and hate-related violence sparked by strong feelings about some aspects of human diversity have been a part of human attitudes and behaviour. Only nurturing differences will promote human rights. Promoting respect for the rights and privileges of others, understanding and appreciation of human differences, and the constructive expression of ideas will produce the desired results.

Awareness of gender diversity and the need to safeguard transgender youth from hostile school and other institutional environments is a dire need. The recommended interventions include formation of care groups for trans children, film screenings that ensure the sensitization about gender transition to cisgender students and tutors, setting up resource centers that provide a wide knowledge about trans history, and adopting policies that prevent trans children from sexual harassments. Some schools in the district of Tamil Nadu have initiated efforts by inviting transgender spokespersons and counselors to educate their students and staff about gender inclusivity. The numbers of schools dropouts are exponentially high among transgender individuals. They are bullied, isolated, and physically abused by other people. The perception of dropout may require review and reform of structural constraints, legal procedures, and policies that impede access to higher education. The fear of estrangement and the confusions during transition period leads to a stagnation in their learning process. This of is one of the various reasons that many trans women end up in begging and sex work.

It is fortunate that the struggles of transgender community of the earlier generation with the support and guidance of several NGOs and forums have started yielding results. There are visible changes in the government policies and other agencies that allow the present generation to have a 'breathing space'. One of the landmark judgements passed by the Supreme Court of India is to allow gender

incongruent individuals to decide their self-identified gender and the court further passed directions to various government offices to grant legal recognition to them as 'male', 'female' or as 'third gender'. Lack of medical clearance for determining gender has the higher probability of creating anomalies as in the case of trans individuals, but by passing the bill the court has reduced a complicated procedure to a matter of choice of the individual with certain records. Some state governments in India constructed public restrooms for the third gender. They have also devised social welfare schemes and public awareness campaigns to eradicate social stigma and have set up departments to look into the medical issues.

One of the major barriers trans individuals face before and during transition is the usage of pronouns. Revathi, Vidya, and Mock felt unease while others addressed them with male pronouns while coming out and during transition. While Khosla wanted to be seen and addressed as a man with male pronouns. Even before coming out he dressed impeccably in male attire to be identified as a man. He felt upset each time others referred Khosla with his former female name or female pronouns. Jeremy on the other hand was confused about his gender identity, so he shortened his former name Emily to 'Em'. His family members and friends were little confused when it came to the usage of pronouns. Most languages are binary gendered and it does not have a place for gender categories that does not fit into male and female. In 2016, Oxford University issued guidelines to use gender neutral pronoun 'ze' instead of 'he' or 'she' while addressing fellow students. One of the world's leading educational institutions has initiated the new guidelines in a 'students' union leaflet' as a part of a move to prevent transgender students being offended. Furthermore, deliberately using the wrong pronoun on an individual identified as trans was considered an offence under Oxford's behavior code.

The effort is aimed at making the academic environment free from discrimination especially for transgender students who feel offended and humiliated when referred with binary pronouns for it attempts to put them in binary gender category which they are not. Having appropriate and suitable for transgenders will make a world of difference. It will act as an approval for their distinctiveness.

The children are taught from beginning that for man 'he' is used and for woman 'she' is used. So the child automatically considers others as a perversion of human trait. Having a gender neutral or transgender pronoun will help to create a positive image the minds of children right from a young age. Then they will learn to accept trans people as way of life or a diversity of nature.

Visual media holds immeasurable power when it comes to reinforcing positive and negative attitudes about a community. Many a times trans people are used to sensationalize stories merely to pull in higher ratings for the channel. Transgenders are caricatured, making light of their struggles and underpinning common misconceptions and negative stereotypes of what it means to be a non- heteronormative person. Mainly trans women are misrepresented in many places, they are not accurate, realistic, or empowering and are often one dimensional, stigmatizing, and harmful. Many movies that feature trans women characters do not always treat them with the same dignity given to cisgender characters. It is incredibly common for all parts of a trans person's lives to be treated as fodder for comedy, from laughing at the violence they experience, to inaccurate jokes about their genitals. This not only directly disrespects the 'right to dignity' of a trans individual but also objectifies and dehumanizes them by reducing their existence to a joke. Many individuals who identify as trans have not revealed their real identity to their own families fearing rejection and ridicule. Perhaps these fears would not exist if transgender characters were accurately portrayed.

For the past two decades a handful of visual representations have tried to create a change by featuring the real life, struggles, and challenges faced by trans community. Art is a mirror and it should reflect the realities and manifest real life through imagination, for art is a power and that should be equally enjoyed by all people.

Queer studies, which started to gain theoretical attention in the last five decades, have likewise added to a typical epistemological interface with 'Transgender Studies'. Indeed, the discrete originations of 'transgender' and 'queer' have given comparative grounds to deconstructing structures of commonality and an understanding which moves past existent classifications of recognizable proof. The investigation of the changed directions of 'contrast' with regards to sexual orientation and dis-capacity additionally relates to the common pertinence of interconnectivity of the societal and the physical. Research in the field has not just centered on the added substance impacts of non-hetero presences however it has likewise attempted to utilize the hypothetical model of one to translate the other.

The problem began when the majority of the heteronormative in the society started to decide for the minority like the trans community. No one questioned the majority, from where or who gave the authority to decide or judge the minorities. People think that changing the sex with which a person is born is anti-human but in reality if any individual is dejected or harassed on the basis of gender non-confirmed, then that is the real inhumanity and social injustice. It's not the right of society to decide what an individual should become; rather it's the inner self of each person to make his/her own identity. The society can guide them but should not rule them. Transgenders are not some exceptions in the societal system where the males and females dominate; they too are a part of society.