

**LIFE EXPERIENCES OF GAYS IN
THIRUVANATHAPURAM DISTRICT: A CASE
STUDY**

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Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Gay is a homosexual male. They are a group of males who are faced with lot of issues and isolation of the community and social stigmas in the society in day today life. They get marginalised and side lined in the society and the main reason is the people's perception that they have not change and not widely accepted today.

This research aims to study the life experiences of the gays in Thiruvananthapuram and problems they face including that are psychological, social and personal. The content of this research reflects the view of this particular sexual minority in the society. The behavioural pattern of the family and friends towards the gay community is studied and how the society looks upon them are also looked into in this research. The main purpose of this study was to examine the problems gays faced in the society and the isolations.

Case studies were conducted and five individuals were interviewed for this qualitative study.

It was found that they have been more isolated in this heterosexual society and faced a lot of problems even from their own house members and own community.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Homosexuality in India has been a subject of discussion from ancient times. Hindu texts have taken positions regarding the homosexual characters and themes. Rigveda, one of the four canonical sacred texts of Hinduism says *Vikriti Evam Prakriti* (meaning what seems unnatural is also natural) which some scholars believe recognises homosexual dimensions of human life, like all forms of universal diversity. The ancient Indian text Kamasutra written by Vatsyana dedicates a complete chapter on erotic homosexual behaviour. Historical literacy evidence indicate that homosexuality has been prevalent across the Indian subcontinent throughout history, and that homosexuals, were not necessarily considered inferior in any way until about 18th century during British colonial rule (Stephen Hunt; Andrew K. T. Yip,2014) (1 December 2012).

The LGBT community or GLBT community, commonly referred to as the gay community, is a loosely defined grouping of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) and LGBT – supportive people, organizations, and subcultures, united by a common culture and social movement. These communities generally celebrate pride, diversity, individuality, and sexuality. LGBT activists and sociologists see LGBT community-building as an antidote to heterosexism, homophobia, bi-phobia, trans-phobia, sexualism, and conformist pressures thought to exist in the larger society (Gunderloy, 1989).

Homosexuality is a feeling or desire involving sexual attraction to people of one's own sex. In common usage, the term homosexual is used to refer to both same-sex oriented males and females. The word "Gay" is often used as a synonym for male homosexual behaviour while the term "Lesbian" is referred to a woman who is sexually attracted to other women. In terms of sexual orientation of individuals, a bisexual person is sexually attracted to both men and women. Transgender is another category who is neither a complete sex and are called 'Hijras' in Hindi and jovially referred to as 'neither here nor there'. Gays and lesbians emphasise the cultural, social and identity aspects of homosexuality (Britannica, 2018).

Sexologists and sociologists are becoming increasingly aware that society cannot be divided into compartments such as homosexual and heterosexual, gay and lesbian, male and female. There is an entire sexual spectrum out there including bisexuals, transsexuals and

transgendered people. In fact, sexuality is turning out to be a complex mix of biology, behaviour and identity.

Although homosexuality has a long history in India, the gay movement is relatively nascent. Until recently, most homosexuals in India did not have many social and culture avenues to express their sexuality. This is changing now, thanks to great awareness and education. Many men of homosexual orientation are choosing to identify themselves as 'gay' and embracing a life style that resists marriage and other conventions of an otherwise hetero sexual society. They remain largely invisible and form networks that shy away from the public glare for fear of social and familial backlash.

The word 'Gay' is associated with several stereotypical image and ideas, like the way they act and dress. Thus, whether correct or not, we have a certain awareness of gays in our consciousness, like feminine men wearing tight, leopard prints. However, there is no real image of lesbians in our consciousness. They are denied any kind of identity and it could just as well be that they don't exist at all. This is another kind of silencing that we see taking place. Lesbian women cannot speak for themselves, because according to society, they don't exist at all. Female sexuality has always been as taboo-something not to be discussed, something which is a matter of the "domestic sphere". This new angle to female sexuality will obviously be hard to accept. Furthermore, this also punctures male supremacy as the need for the males get rejected here. Women are forcibly married off to men so as to "cure" them. They are suffocated by ideological discourses and glorified expectations of women as custodians of "morals, tradition and culture".

With this environment and back drop, the Lesbian movement has crawled along with the gay initiatives for its sustenance and growth. For a better understanding of the different facets of homosexuality, there is a need to visit the conceptual, cultural, social, and legal aspect of homosexuality as well as to ascertain its acceptance status in various countries.

Conceptual and Historical Aspect

The shift in the understanding of homosexuality from sin, crime and pathology to a normal variant of human sexuality occurred in the late 20th century. The American Psychiatric Association, in 1973, and the World Health Organisation in 1992, officially accepted its

normal variant status. Many countries have since decriminalised homosexual behaviour and some have recognised same- sex civil unions and marriage (Kashyap,2013).

The new understanding was based on studies that documented a high prevalence of same-sex feelings and behaviour in men and women, its prevalence of across cultures and among almost all non-human primate species. Investigations using psychological tests could not differentiate heterosexual from homosexual orientation. Research also demonstrated that people with homosexual orientation did not have any objective psychological dysfunction or impairments in judgement, stability and vocational capabilities. Psychiatric, psychoanalytic, medical and mental health professionals now consider homosexuals as a normal variation of human sexuality.

Human sexuality is complex. The acceptance of the distinction between desire, behaviour and identity acknowledges these dimensions may not always be congruent in individuals suggests complexity of the issues. Medicine and psychiatry employ terms like homosexuality, heterosexuality and trans-sexuality to encompass all related issues, while current social usage argues for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), which focuses on identities. The prevalence of homosexuality is difficult to estimate for many reasons, including the associated stigma and social repression; the unrepresentative sample surveyed and the failure to distinguish desire, behaviour and identity. The figures vary between age groups, regions and cultures.

Anthropologists have documented significant variations in the organisation and meaning of same-sex practices across cultures and changes within particular societies over time. The universality of same sex expression coexists with variations in its meaning and practice across cultures. However, recent research argues that psychological and interpersonal events throughout the life cycle explain sexual orientation .It is unlikely that a unique set of characteristics or a single pathway will explain all adult homosexuality.

The argument that homosexuality is a stable phenomenon is based on the consistency of same sex attractions, the failure of attempts to change and the lack of success with treatments to alter orientation. There is a growing realisation that homosexuality is not a single phenomenon and that there may be multiple phenomena within the construct of homosexuality.

Anti-homosexual attitudes, once considered the norm, have changed over time in many social and institutional settings in the west. However, heterosexist, which idealises heterosexuality, considers it the norm, denigrates and stigmatises all non-heterosexual forms of behaviour, identity, relationships and communities, is also common.

In addition to the challenges of living in a predominantly heterosexual world, the diversity within people with homosexual orientation results in many different kinds of issues. Sex, gender, age, ethnicity and religion add to the complexity of issues faced. The stages of the lifecycle (childhood, adolescence, middle and old age), family and relationships present diverse concerns. In most circumstances, the psychiatric issues facing gay, lesbian and bisexual people are similar to those of the general population. However, the complexities in these identities require tolerance, respect and a nuanced understanding of sexual matters. Clinical assessments should be detailed and go beyond routine labelling and assess different issues related to lifestyle choices, identity, relationships and social supports. Helping people understand their sexuality and providing support for living in a predominantly heterosexual world is mandatory. People with homosexual orientation face many hurdles including the conflicts in acknowledging their homosexuals feelings, the meaning of disclosure and the problems faced in coming out.

Gay-affirmative psychotherapies have been developed, which help people cope with the awareness of being same-sex oriented and with social stigmatization. There is no evidence for the effectiveness of sexual conversion therapies. Such treatments also raise ethical questions, in fact, there is evidence that such attempts may cause more harm than good, including depression and sexual dysfunction. However, faith-based groups and counsellors pursue such attempts at conversion using yardsticks, which do not meet scientific standards. Clinicians should keep the dictum “first do no harm” in mind. Physicians should provide medical service with compassion and respect for human dignity for all people irrespective of their sexual orientation.

There are a few small case series in psychiatric literature detailing homosexuality in males and its treatment with aversion therapy. It places the responsibility on the individuals without critically examining the social context, which is stigmatising and repressing. The medicalization sexuality and the political impact of labelling and its role in social control are

often discounted. The ubiquitous use of disease models for mental disorders is rarely questioned.

There is a dearth of Indian psychiatric literature that has systematically investigated issues related to homosexuality. Data on prevalence, emotional problems faced and support groups and clinical services available are sparse.

Research into these issues is crucial for increasing our understanding of the local and regional context related to sexual behaviour, orientation and identity in India.

Despite medicine and psychiatry arguing that homosexual orientation is a normal variant of human sexuality, mental health fraternity and the government in India are yet to take a clear stand on the issues to change widely prevalent prejudices in society. The fraternity needs to acknowledge the need for research into the context-specific issues facing LGBT people in India. The teaching of sexuality to medical and mental health professional needs to be perceptive to the issues faced by people with different sexual orientations and identities. Clinical services for people with such issues and concerns need to be sensitive to providing holistic care. A positive and a non-judgemental attitude will go a long way in relieving distress. Professional societies need to increase awareness of these issues, transfer knowledge and skill and provide opportunities to increase the confidence and competence of mental health workers in helping people with different sexual orientations and identity. Psychiatrists and mental health professionals need to be educated about the human rights and possible abuses. The emphasis should not just be on education but also on a change of attitude.

The American psychological Association is urging mental health professionals not to shun the assumption that gays and lesbians can change their sexual orientation through therapy or other treatments, insisting that it will not work.

A new resolution adopted by the group states that parents ‘guardians, young, people, and their families would also be wise to avoid sexual orientation treatments that portray homosexuality as a mental illness or developmental disorder. The group adds that people should instead seek psychotherapy, social support, and educational services “that provide accurate information on sexual orientation and sexuality, increase family and school support and reduce rejection of sexual minority youth.”. Researchers have not firmly concluded to

what extent homosexuality is genetically inherited, but many think it is a mix of nature and nurture.

However, a number of studies have suggested the involvement of genes in homosexuality. Glassgold said that though conflicting research on the therapy issue is cited by some, studies have found that “sexual orientation was unlikely to change due to efforts designed for this Purpose.”Based on this review, according to a statement issued by the APA, the task force suggested that mental health professionals better avoid misrepresenting the efficacy of sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE)when providing assistance to people distressed about their own or other sexual orientation. The task force examined 83 peer-reviewed journal articles on the topic of SOCE written from 1960 to 2007, along with other recent studies on the psychology of sexual orientation. (<https://www.dnaindia.com/health/report-therapy-can-t-turn-gays-and-lesbians-straight-say-us-psychologists-1280707>).

‘Therapy can’t turn gays and lesbians straight ‘Analysing the studies conducted in the past, the task force could not reach any conclusion on whether SOCE is effective, or on whether the methods might be safe or harmful. Without such information, psychologists cannot predict the impact of these treatments and need to be very cautious, given that some qualitative research suggests the potential for harm. Practitioners can assist clients through therapies that do not attempt to change sexual orientation, imposing a specific identity outcome.

The Task force also identified some clients seeking to change their sexual orientation may be in distress because of a conflict between their sexual orientation and religious beliefs. It suggested that licensed mental health care providers treating such clients help them “explore possible life paths that address the reality of their sexual orientation, reduce the stigma associated with homosexuality, respect the client’s religious beliefs, and consider possibilities for a religiously and spiritually meaningful and rewarding life.”

Homosexuality as a cultural phenomenon is not new. Sappho, a Greek poet and teacher of arts, who lived between 630 and 612 BC in the Greek city state of Lesbos, was known for her preference for women and had affairs with several of her female protégés at her Centre for Arts. Yet she was highly respected, both for her artistic sensibility and her poetry, which combined reference to lesbians love. Plato extolled her as the tenth Muse and the coins of her

times were embossed with her image. It was with the advent of Christianity that homosexuality came to be stigmatized and segregated to the borders of the mainstream sexuality. The meta narrative of Christianity demonized homosexuality. Later, in the early twentieth century, the sexological discourses pathologised it in the West. The Biblical account of destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is well known across the Christian world. Sexologists, such as, Karl Westphall, Karl Ulrichs, Richard von Krafft-Ebbing and Havelock Ellis considered homosexuality as inversion. Gays and lesbians were, therefore, scorned, discriminated against and victimized. Surprisingly, therefore, lesbians and gays remained 'closeted', and there was hardly a gay/lesbian literature. Since the middle of twentieth century, the attitudes towards homosexuality have undergone a change. Gayism/lesbianism has not only been de-bounded and decriminalized but also a large number of countries, such as, Netherlands, South Africa, Canada, Hungary, Iceland, Belgium, Spain, Germany, France, Mexico, a few federal units of the United States and several others have legalized gay marriage.

In India the situation has been paradoxical. The stigmatization and circumvention of homosexuality are considered of the colonial import. So is homosexuality - this is what the Right wing forces believe. According to them, homosexuality is alien to Indian culture and is a source of moral corruption. The British colonial government introduced Article 377 in the Penal Code in 1868 criminalizing homosexuality and laying down stringent punishment of fine and/or life imprisonment for sexual acts against 'the order of nature'. Earlier than that in Indian culture, lesbianism and gayism were acceptable forms of sexuality-the most ancientsculptural art of Khajuraho caves and the architecture of some of the Hindu temples in Orissa bear testimony. Influenced by colonial thinking, the non-heteronormative sexual identities came to be objected and outlawed in India. The cultural environment has, therefore, been hostile to gays and lesbians in India. They are afraid to cross to boundaries and 'come out'

for fear of physical violence, and social opprobrium and there is not much literature dealing with same-sex love. Any cultural expression of lesbianism/gayism engenders anger and retaliation, especially among the Right wing forces, who display abhorrence and complete intolerance of homosexuality, in art and literature. It must also be mentioned here whether in films or literary works, the representation of gays/lesbians projects them as borderline bugs, criminals, mentally sick, or deprived of heterosexual coition.

In the nineties, the issue of identity assumed great importance both in the realm of lesbians and gay theory and the Movement. The idea of biological essentialism was found to be limiting and exclusionary as other non-heteronormative sexualities like transgenders, transsexuals, hijras, kothis, and panthis, who are women trapped in men's bodies were ignored. Therefore, the overarching umbrella term 'Queer' came to be used for all these categories. Judith Butler's theory of 'performativity', using post-structuralist tools of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan, conceptualized gender/sexuality as 'performative, that is, a role performed by the subject, according to her/his choice which resulted in (i) pluralism of gender identities and (ii) considering gender/sex as fluid and a matter of choice. Its effect can be seen in India where the Gay Pride Marches in Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai include lesbians, gays, hijras, transgenders, and others who come together as 'Queer' to forge coalitional politics against the homophobic Indian society.

Homosexuality has an ancient history in India. Ancient scriptures like Rig-Veda which dates back around 1500 BC and sculptures and vestiges depict sexual acts between women as revelations of a feminine world where sexuality was based on pleasure and fertility. The description of homosexual acts in the Kamasutra, the harems of young boys kept by Muslim Nawabs and Hindu Aristocrats, male homosexuality in the medieval Muslim history, evidences of sodomy in the Tantric rituals are some historical evidences of same sex relationship (Jay, 1998).

However, these experiences started losing their significance with the advent of vedic Brahmanism and, later on, of British Colonialism. Giti claims that Aryan invasions dating to 1500 B.C. began to suppress homosexuality through the emerging dominance of patriarchy. In the Manusmriti there are references to punishments like loss of caste, heavy monetary fines and strokes of the whip for gay and lesbian behaviour. Manu's specifications of more severe punishments for married women can suggest either a wide prevalence of such relationships among married women or a greater acceptance of these practices among unmarried women. In either cases, these references point to the tensions in the norms of compulsory heterosexuality prescribed by Brahmanical patriarchy. Both sexual systems coexisted, despite fluctuations in relative repression and freedom, until British colonialism when the destruction of images of homosexual expression and sexual expression in general became more systematic and blatant. Various explanations of the origin of homosexuality have been proposed. Some of these explanations invoke biological factors, whereas others

invoke social factors. Some argue that homosexuality is a chosen lifestyle, some believe that sexuality is socially constructed, and some make a case for homosexuality being multiple determined. Homosexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to manifest non right handedness. Therefore, one could say that homosexuality has a possible prenatal origin in some homosexuals. On the other hand, the majority of homosexuals are right-handed.

Recent studies on the concordance for homosexuality among identical twins have shown that identical twins are highly discordant for homosexuality; these studies have also consistently implicated the non-shared family environment but not the shared family environment in the genesis of homosexuality. Several environmental factors have been implicated in homosexuality for instance; male homosexuals are more likely to report a dominant mother than male heterosexuals. On the other hand, not all male homosexuals report a dominant mother and some heterosexual's men have a dominant mother. Additionally, in a sample of homosexual men with borderline personality disorder, their fathers were more affectionate and their mothers were more emotionally distant, which is the opposite of the dominant mother, absentee father paradigm. Another environmental factor associated with homosexuality is childhood molestation. Homosexuals appear more likely to have been molested or raped by men in childhood than heterosexuals. However, several homosexuals molested or raped in childhood recall experiencing same sex attractions before their molestation or rape. Additionally, how is it that whereas boys molested by men are more likely to be homosexual as adults, even girls molested by men are likely to be lesbians as adults?

Social constructivism as applied to understanding the origin of homosexuality is better known as 'Queer theory', though queer theory does not strictly concern itself with homosexuality; it aims to undermine any explanation that goes against the social constructionist paradigm. Queer theorists argue that "The Homosexual" is a 19th century social construction, and a product of medical discourse, an idea initially made famous by "Michel Foucault". Queer theorists argue that prior to this date, some people engaged in homosexual acts but had no homosexual identity. Queer theorists also emphasize the instability of erotic targets in some individuals and the cross-culture variability of homosexual's expression to argue that homosexuality is socially constructed. The notion that the concept of a homosexual is a recent social reconstruction has been thoroughly debunked. Throughout recorded history, several European and on-European cultures have been aware of

Individuals who sexually prefer partners of the same sex or both sexes. Such awareness has also often corresponded to a taxonomy of the types of people with sexual interest in the same sex, and such taxonomy has often classified both the receptive and the active partners in a male homosexual act. Middle Eastern cultures have even had terms for a different kinds of boy prostitutes. Some cultures have not developed a taxonomy of no heterosexual types or lack the concept of homosexual. However, one can still find homosexuals among such cultures-Indeed a cat by any other name or by no name is still a cat.

The claim of the social constructionists that there are social sources of human sexuality cannot be easily dismissed. Surely, those who favour biological explanation of homosexuality need to account for the cross-cultural variability in the tolerance and expression of various homosexual behaviours. Since time immemorial and within all cultures of the world gays, lesbians, Transgendered and inter sexed people have been described, acknowledged and even accommodated within society. From the "mahu"and "aikane" of Polynesia to the "berdache" of Native America Tribes; from the "sachet" of prehistoric Egypt to the "eunuchs" of ancient Greece and Rome; from the "sires" to the Israelites to the 'mu'min' or trusted men of the Syrians, from the traditional third gender roles of Aboriginal tribes in Africa such as among the Mob people of Zaire to the place and harem guards of the Arabs and Chinese; from the cross dressing entertainers of Manila and Bangkok to the "Hijra" and "Bogappa" dancers and temple priests of north and south India; right down to our own modern gay and transgendered communities is San Francisco, London and Sydney - persistent and unmistakable "third" or alternative gender subcultures have always naturally existed in one form or another. The existence of same sex romance and sexual desire in the past has been reported since ancient times. Ancient Greece has long been portrayed as a homosexual paradise for today's modern gays and lesbians. The most famous historic gay culture, Greek society normalized same sex love among its male and female members. Homosexuals' relations were believed to be above the lower-classes, reserved for the middle class and aristocracy.

HOMOSEXUALITY IN INDIA:

Homosexual people were somehow excluded or left unnoticed by Indian ancient Vedic civilization and its Sanskrit texts are neither reasonable nor fair to that great culture. India's ancient literatures are comprised of voluminous texts and their priestly authors were all known for their detailed accounts of all sciences, both godly and mundane. It is highly

unlikely that they would omit or overlook any aspect of human nature. Rather we see in the Kama shastra full accounts of both men and women who had "Tritiya-prakriti" or "third-sexed" by nature and described as homosexually. The present day "hijra or "eunuch" class of Northern India is unquestionably comprised largely of homosexual and transgendered people, with only very few who are truly intersexed. This has been documented through years of research and personal interviews conducted by professionals like Dr. Serena Nanda, the professor of Anthropology for the City University of New York. In her book "THE HIJRA OF INDIA". Sinha's (1967) study of hijra in Lucknow, in North India, acknowledges the hijra role as performers, but view the major motivation for recruitment to the hijra community as the satisfaction of the individual's homosexual urges.

Anyone familiar with modern GLBTI (gay, lesbians, bisexual, transgender, intersexed) communities' people will immediately recognize the correlation between them and the Vedic descriptions of the third sex is because their gender qualities and behaviours are universal and especially now a days quite well known. Homosexuality is generally considered a taboo subject by both Indian civil society and the government. Public discussion of homosexuality in India has been inhibited by the fact that sexuality in any form is rarely discussed openly. In recent years, however, attitudes towards homosexuality have shifted slightly. In particular, there have been more depictions and discussion of homosexuality in the Indian news media and by Bollywood. On 2 July, 2009, Delhi High Court, decriminalised homosexual intercourse between consenting adults and judged section 377 of 'the Indian Penal code to be conflicting with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India. Religion has played a significant role in shaping Indian customs and traditions. While homosexuality has not been explicitly mentioned in the religious texts central to Hinduism the largest religion in India, some interpretations have been viewed as condemning homosexuality. Scholars differ in their views of the position of homosexuality within India's main religious traditions. There have been arguments that homosexuality was both prevalent and accepted in ancient Hindu society.

The Manu smriti, which lists the oldest codes of conduct that were proposed to be followed by a Hindu, does include mention of homosexual practices, but only as something to be regulated. Though homosexuality was considered a part of sexual practices, it was not always well accepted. There were punishments prescribed for homosexual behaviour, for instance, the verse referring to sexual relations between an older woman and a virgin

(woman)reads".... a woman who pollutes a damsel (virgin)shall instantly have (her head) shaved or two fingers cut off, and be made to ride (through the town) on a donkey", suggesting a severe punishment. However, the verse referring to sexual relationship between two virgins suggests a relatively milder punishment" ... a damsel who pollutes(another) damsel must be fined two hundred (panes), pay the double of her (nuptial) fee, and receive ten (lashes with a) rod". These provisions, quoted out of context, seem homophobic, but in fact they are concerned not with the gender of the partners but with the loss of virginity that rendered a young woman unworthy of marriage. For instance, the punishment for a forced sex act between a man and a woman state ... "If any man through Insolence forcibly contaminates a maiden, two of his fingers shall be instantly cut off, and he shall pay a fine of six hundred (panes)", which seems more severe in comparison to the punishment prescribed for the same act between two virgins. There is also no penalty prescribed for two non-virgins who have sex together.

The skewed treatment may have been due to gender bias, considering that the Manu smriti is the same scripture that has stated that the status of woman in the society is the same (or even lower than) that of man's land, his cattle and other possessions. The unabridged modern translation of the classic Indian text Kamasutra deals without ambiguity or hypocrisy with all aspects of sexual life including marriage, adultery, prostitution, group sex, male and female homosexuality and transvestism. The text paints a fascinating portrait of an India whose openness to sexuality gave rise to a highly developed expression of the erotic. Actually, in classical India, the disparagement for the homosexuals was not devoid of compassion. The homosexual belongs to a deficient class of men called Klima in Sanskrit, deficient because he is unable to produce male offspring. The word (which has traditionally been translated as eunuch, but almost certainly did not mean eunuch) was a catch-all term to include someone who was sterile, impotent, castrated, a transvestite, a man who had oral sex with other men, who had anal sex as a recipient, a man with mutilated or deficient sexual organs, a man who produced only female children, or finally, a hermaphrodite. In short, Kliba is a term traditional Hindus coined to describe a man who is in their terms sexually dysfunctional (or in ours, sexually challenged). Kliba isnot a term that exists any longer, but some of its remnant-the perception of a deficiency, and the combination of pity, dismay and a degree of disdain toward a man who is unable to marry and produce Hilden-continues to cling to the Indian homosexual.

In ancient texts, folktales and in daily conversations, mismatched lovers, generally these with vast differences in status (a fisherman or an untouchable falling in love with a prince), are reluctantly absolved of blame and the union gradually accommodated, because it is viewed as destined from a former birth. When a brave homosexual couple defies all convention by openly living together, its tolerance by the two families and the social surround generally take place in the framework of the rebirth theory. In 1987, when two policewomen in the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India got "married", a cause in Indian media, the explanation often heard from those who could no longer regard them as "just good friends sharing living accommodation" was that one of them must have been a man in a previous birth and the couple prematurely separated by a cruel fate.

In ancient India homosexual activity itself was ignored or stigmatized as inferior, but never actively persecuted. In the Dharma shastras, male homoerotic activity is punished, albeit mildly: a ritual bath or the payment of a small fine was often sufficient atonement.

This does not change materially in spite of the advent of Islam, which unequivocally condemns homosexuality as a serious crime. Muslim theologians in India held that the Prophet advocated the severest punishment for sodomy. Islamic culture in India, though, also had a Persian cast where in homoeroticism is celebrated in literature. In Sufi mystical poetry, both in Persian and later in Urdu, the relationship between the divine and humans was expressed in homoerotic metaphors. Inevitably, the mystical was also enacted at the human level. At least among the upper classes of Muslims, among "men of refinement", pederasty became an accepted outlet for a man's erotic promptings, along as he continued to fulfil his duties as a married man. Emperor Babur's autobiography is quite clear on his indifferent love for his wife and his preference for a lad. We also know that until the middle of twentieth century, when the princely states were incorporated into an independent India. There was a strong tradition of homosexuality in many princely courts in north India. The homosexual relationships were much safer than relationships with mistresses whose children could be the source of endless divisive rivalries.

It seems that the contemporary perception of homosexual activity, primarily in images of sodomy, can be traced back to the Muslim period of Indian history. As we saw, the classical Hindu image of homosexual activity is in terms of fellatio. In the Kamasutra, for instance, the

fellatio technique of the closeted man of "third nature" (the counterpart of the Kliba in other Sanskrit texts) is discussed in considerable sensual detail.

In Ancient India lesbian activity is described in the Kamasutra at the beginning of the chapter on harems, where many women live together in the absence of men. What the queens have is just one king, preoccupied with affairs of state, to go around. The women use dildos, asellus bulbs, roots or fruits that have the form of male organ. The implication is that lesbian activity took place only in the absence of the "real thing". There are hints on other kinds of lesbian activity in the ancient law books: The harsh punishment is not for the activity itself but for the "deflowering", the heinous crime of robbing a young girl of her chastity. Not surprisingly, it seems that female homosexuality was punished more severely than homosexuality among men; out of concern for the protection of women's virginity and sexual purity, traditionalists would say; to exercise control over women's sexual choice and activity, modern feminists would counter.

It is ironical that reactionaries, both Hindu and Muslim, who reject homosexuality as a decadent western phenomenon subscribe to the same foreign code that is so alien to the Indian tradition. The Indian tradition of indifferent or deliberate ignorance is also incompatible with the model of the western gay movement, which is beginning to make inroads into our metropolises. In its insistence on the politics of a gay identity, of a prouder at least defiant assertion of homosexual identity, this movement is beginning to compel the rest of society to confront the issue publicly. Unlike the West, the Hindu society does not have the concept of 'sexual orientation' that classifies males on the basis of who they desire. However, there is a strong, ancient concept of third gender, which is for individuals who have strong elements of both male and female in them. According to Sanskrit texts such as the Naradasmriti, Sushruta Samhita, etc., this third sex or gender includes people we call today homosexuals, transgenders, bisexuals and the intersexed (LGBTI). Third genders are described in ancient Vedic texts as males who have a female nature- referring to homosexual men or feminine gendered males. The gender/sexual role of third genders has for long been predominantly associated with receiving penetration from men, just like the gender/sexual role of manhood has been to penetrate men, women or third genders. However, the Kamasutra clearly describes third-gender men assuming both masculine and feminine identities as well as both receptive and dominant sexual roles.

Although Hindu society does not formally acknowledge sexuality between men, it formally acknowledges and gives space to sexuality between men and third genders as a variation of male-female sex (i.e., a part of heterosexuality, rather than homosexuality, if analysed in Western terms). In fact, Hijras, Allis, Kostis, etc.- the various forms of third gender that exist in India today- are all characterized by the gender role of having receptive anal and oral sex with men. Sexuality between men (as distinct from third genders) has nevertheless thrived, mostly unspoken, informally, within men's spaces, without being seen as 'different' in the way it seen in the West. As in other non-western cultures, it is considered more or less a universal aspect of manhood, even if not socially desirable. It is the effeminate male sexuality for men (or for women) which is seen as 'different,' and differently categorised. Men often refer to their sexual play with each other as 'mastic'. A significant fallout of this has been that sexual desire between men, which was near universal earlier, is now become more and more isolated from the mainstream, as men are distancing themselves from it because of the stigma of effeminacy or third gender attached to the notion of 'gay'

In her book, *Love's Rite*, Ruth Venita examines the phenomena of same-sex weddings, many by Hindu rites, which have been reported by the Indian press over the last thirty years and with increasing frequency.

In the same period, same-sex joint suicides have also been reported. Most of these marriages and suicides are by lower middle class female couples from small towns and rural areas across the country; these women haven contact with any LGBT movements. Both cross-sex and same-decouples, when faced with family opposition, tend to resort to either elopement and marriage or to joint suicide in the hope of reunion in the next life. Venita examines how Hindu doctrines such as rebirth and defencelessness of the soul are often interpreted to legitimize socially disapproved relationships, including same-sex ones. In a 2004 survey, most - though not all - swamis opposed the concept of a Hindu-sanctified gay marriage. But several Hindu priests have performed same-remarriages, arguing that love is the result of attachments from previous births and that marriage, as a union of spirit, is transcendental to gender. Many Indian and Hindu intellectuals now publicly support Lobtail rights. Some liberal Hindu reform movements, especially those in the West, also support social acceptance of gays, lesbians and other gender minorities. Psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakra writes that Hindus are more accepting of "deviance or eccentricity" that are adherents of Western religions, who typically treat sexual variance as "anti-social or psychopathological, requiring 'correction' or

'cure". Hindus, he argues, believe instead that each individual must fulfil their personal destiny(adharma) as they travel the path towards moksha (transcendence).

Commenting on the legalisation of homosexuality in India; Albano, general secretary of The United Kingdom Hindu Council said: The point here is that the homosexual nature is part of the natural law of -God; it should be accepted for what it is, no more and no less. Hindus are generally conservative but it seems to me that in ancient India, they even celebrated sex as an enjoyable part of procreation, where priests were invited for ceremonies in their home to mark the beginning of the process.

The third gender (South Asia) Hindu philosophy has the concept of a third sex or third gender (Tritiya prakriti - literally, "third nature"). This category includes a wide range of people with mixed male and female natures such as effeminate males, masculine females, transgenders, transsexuals, the intersexed, androgynes, neutrois and so on. However, the original nature of third gender has nothing to do with "sexual-orientation" as is reported by the sects of modern and contemporary west. Third-genders have no connection with sex among men (which is universal). Third-genders are of a different gender from males and females because they have a female inside regardless of who they are sexually attracted to. Even though, "homosexuality" refers to a third-gender's sexuality for men, many MTF third-genders are not "homosexual" and are attracted either exclusively to women or are 'bisexual' and likewise, many FTM transgenders are attracted to men. Hinduism, being a combination of both. They are mentioned as third sexy nature (birth).

Acceptance of Homosexuality-A Global perspective

A study of acceptance of homosexuality at global level is interesting, enigmatic and at times defies logic. Globalisation tends to bring consensus and uniformity by smothering rough edges and makes human beings as well as nations move in a positive direction of understanding, peace, cordiality and enlarging areas of cooperation. This does not apply to homosexuality where standpoints are irreconcilable and poles apart. At one end of the spectrum is total acceptance with connotations of normal human behaviour while at the other end it is viewed as a sin/crime to be crushed ruthlessly. There is no dialogue and reconciliation between the two extreme ends. A historical study of the subject shows that homosexuality was never accepted by state as well as religion till the Twentieth Century and

was always regarded as a crime by the state and a sin by the religion. However, with the march of time the negative view of homosexuality has been eroding with more and more states accepting it as a normal human behaviour and have been treating homosexuals as equal citizens with the same rights & privileges as enjoyed by other citizens. This metamorphosis is attributable to human rights movements and a relook at religious concepts. The Roman Catholic Church, once in the forefront of oppositions is gradually moving towards permissiveness and conciliations. The acceptance of homosexuality as apart of society has made giant strides. No country in Europe has a law against homosexuality. Although Russia has no laws against homosexuality, yet it enacted an anti-gay propaganda law in 2013 prohibiting any positive mention of homosexuality in the presence of minors including online transmissions.

Acceptance levels of homosexuals around the world fall under the following three categories:

- (a) Thirteen states mostly from Europe and Latin America have granted legal status to same-sex marriages.
- (b) In U.S.A. and Mexico, all the federal units have not granted legal status to same-sex marriages. Hence the acceptance of homosexuality is only partial.
- (c) 79 countries including India have anti-homosexuality laws. Hence same-sexes marriages are illegal and punishable.

Countries where same-sex marriages are legal

The Netherlands, 2000

The Dutch Parliament made history in 2000 when it made it legal for same-sex couples to marry, divorce, and adopt children by a 3-to-1 vote margin. Today, there are 16,000 married same-sex couples in the Netherlands, where gay marriage enjoys an approval rating of 82 percent the highest in the European Union.

Belgium, 2003

While there wasn't much of an uproar in Belgium when the country's parliament legalized gay marriage, the Vatican was outraged, prompting Pope John Paul II to launch a global campaign saying that "homosexual unions were immoral, unnatural and harmful."

Canada, 2005

It took a two-year journey filled with court battles before Canada's house of commons voted to make gay marriage legal in the entire country, as opposed to just in nine out of the 13 provinces and territories. Social conservatives tried to overturn the law in 2006 but failed.

Spain, 2005

While Spain extended marriage rights to same-sex couples in 2005, the law has since faced fierce opposition from conservative politicians, including a court challenge that was defeated in 2012. In March, Interior Minister, Jorge Fernandez Diaz remarked that gay marriage should be banned because it doesn't guarantee the "survival of the species".

South Africa, 2006

In 2005, South Africa's Constitutional Court ruled that preventing of gay marriages violated the country's young constitution, which was adopted not long after the end of Apartheid. The court-mandated law passed easily in parliament the following year.

Norway, 2009

In 1993, Norway was the second country, after Denmark in the late 80s, to allow civil unions between same-sex partners. The Norwegian government later legalized same-sex marriage in 2009. The main controversy at the time was whether lesbian mothers had the right to artificial insemination; they won that right when the parliament voted to approve gay marriage by a margin of 2 to 1.

France, 2013

France's National Assembly passed a bill to legalize gay marriage by a vote of 331 to 225, in the face of hundreds of thousands of protesters who overturned cars and fought off tear gas along the Champs-Elysees. The first gay marriage in France took place on May 29 2013 in Montpellier between Vincent Austin and Bruno Boileau.

Brazil, 2013

In May, Brazil's National Council of Justice ruled 14-to-1 that notary publics couldn't refuse to perform same-sex marriage. While civil unions already gave gay couples access to

government benefits, the ruling allowed partners to take each other's surnames and adopt children more easily.

In Mexico and United States, most of the federal units have granted legal status to same-sex marriages. States like Alabama, Florida and Michigan have still anti-sodomy laws. It is a matter of time when the dissenting units fall in line and grant legal status as the momentum of human rights movements is too strong to resist. More and more civil organisations as well as opinion makers including politicians are championing the cause of homosexuals. In U.S.A., all the states expectable, Florida and Michigan are yet to grant legal status.

Legal Position in India

Homosexual intercourse was made a criminal offence under section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. This made it an offence for a person to voluntarily have "carnal intercourse against the order of nature." In 2009, the Delhi High Court decision in *Naz Foundation v. Govt. of NCT of Delhi* found Section 377 and other legal prohibitions against private, adult, consensual, and non-commercial same-sex conduct to be in direct violation of fundamental rights provided by the Indian Constitution.

According to a ruling by the Indian Supreme Court, decisions of a High Court on the constitutionality of a law apply throughout India, and not just to the territory of the state over which the High Court in question has jurisdiction.

However, even there have been incidents of harassment of homosexual groups.

On 23 February 2012, the Ministry of Home Affairs expressed its opposition to the decriminalisation of homosexual activity, stating that in India, homosexuality is seen as being immoral. The Central Government reversed its stand on 17 February 2012, asserting that there was no legal error in decriminalising homosexual activity. This resulted in two judges of the Supreme Court reprimanding the central government for frequently changing its stand on the issue. "Don't make a mockery of the system and don't waste the court's time," an apex court judge told the government.

On 11 December 2013, the Supreme Court set aside the 2009 Delhi High Court order decriminalising consensual homosexual activity within its jurisdiction. The bench of justices

G.S. Sanghvi and S.J. Mukhopadhaya however noted that parliament should debate and decide on the matter. The full decision can be found at ([http:// www.scribd.com/doc/190889099/Sc-Verdict-on-Article-377](http://www.scribd.com/doc/190889099/Sc-Verdict-on-Article-377)). On January 28, 2014 Supreme Court dismissed the review Petition filed by the Central Government, NGO Naz Foundation and several others, against its December 11 verdict on Section 377 of IPC. In explaining the ruling the bench said : “While reading down Section 377,the High Court overlooked that minuscule fraction of the country’s population constitutes lesbians, gays, bisexuals or transgenders, and in the more than 150 years past, less than 200 persons have been prosecuted for committing offence under Section 377, and this cannot be made a sound basis for declaring that Section ultrararest Articles 14, 15 and 21.Human rights groups expressed worries that this would render homosexual couples vulnerable to police harassment, saying. “The Supreme Court ruling is a disappointing setback to human dignity, and the basic rights to privacy and non-discrimination. The Naz Foundation (India) Trust stated that it would file a petition for review of the court’s decision.

The Indian Supreme Court in the Nave Singh Johari vs Union of Indian judgement (6th September 2018), decriminalized homosexuality. However, the space cleared by legal judgement cannot be immediately availed of by those affected by it because legally determined/defined space doesn’t necessarily become social space. This essay looks at the formation of this social space and the perception of homosexuality in civil society. It will examine the impediments of communication that homosexuals encounter in the heteronormative world, and the ensuing misunderstandings regarding homosexuality. It argues that a proper medium is necessary to provide communication in a social space that would then treat homosexuality as ‘normal’. I argue that Mahesh Dittany’s plays enable the imagination and the construction of such an accepting civil society.

Homosexuality has appeared in different forms over so many years ranging from abnormality, criminality, immorality, sickness and finally to a natural sexual orientation. Homosexuality can be admired, condemned, accepted or rejected, depending on the society’s setup, outlook and the culture in which it occurs. Though, it is true that literature from Hindi, Buddhism, Muslim and modern fiction confirms the presence of same sex love in various forms, yet homosexuality is still considered a taboo in various parts of the world. There have been places where same sex has been considered as unnatural, unacceptable and abnormal. Religious books, materials and writings from the Vedic and ancient period reflect those

homosexual feelings have always existed in India. For example, Pradhan, Ayeranalgesia (1982) mentioned that, “Temples of Konark and Khajuraho depict homosexuality, so it might not have been a condemned mode of sexual orientation at that time”. Sexuality is an important and inseparable part of all human beings. Through this, we experience and express ourselves as sexual beings. Efforts and interventions which try to change sexual orientation of GLBT have succeeded only in reducing their sexual activity and self-esteem rather than creating sexual preference for opposite gender. Though, a survey conducted by Life Way Research (2013) found that tolerance and acceptance of homosexuality is increasing but, still till 2012, gays and bisexuals faced stigma and discrimination, which in turn, adversely affect their mental health (Belinsky, 2012). In 1973, American Psychiatric Association deleted homosexuality from its diagnostic list of mental disorders and in 1975, they officially declared that homosexuality is not a mental disorder (Spitzer, 1981). There are various terms which are related to GLBT community.

Homosexual: This term basically refers to those people who are sexually attracted to, or have sex with members of same gender. It also reflects one’s enduring way of experiencing sexual, or romantic attractions to the people of same sex. This sexual behaviour greatly affects a person’s sense of personal and social identity. Homosexuality, bisexuality and heterosexuality are considered three categories of sexual orientation (Gronkowski, 2004).

Gay/Lesbian: The term gay basically refers to sexual attractions, love and feelings towards persons of the same sex. Lesbian describes those women who have sexual desires, preferences for other women. In broader sense, this term can be used to describe modern homosexual life the social culture, community etc.

Bisexual: It basically refers to those persons who are sexually and emotionally attracted to both sexes as well as opposite sex. Westheimer (2000) pointed out that bisexual people indulge in sexual relations with both sexes; some people may have sex with men and women at the same time, while depending on need and situation they might alternate with male and female partners. Writer (2013) stated that as compared to gays, bisexuals are higher in hiding their sexuality.

Transgender: It refers to those people whose gender identity does not complement their biological anatomy. In this state one’s ‘gender identity’ (self-identification as woman, man,

neither or both) doesn't match with one's actual sex (genetic sex). These people may be heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual and may cross-dress or can even opt for sex reassignment surgery.

Sexual orientation: It indicates a person's sexual interest whether it is for members of the opposite gender, same gender or either gender. It not only explains identity such as gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual but also refers to sexual behaviour and attraction. It involves sexual self-identification, sexual behaviour and sexual fantasy (Saucy et al., 2004). Sexual behaviour of attraction may or may not be consistent with identity. Some individuals are homosexuals but they may not identify themselves as gay or lesbian. Similarly, some people may have relation with same as well as opposite sex but they may not consider themselves as bisexual. Bohdan (1996) emphasized that sexual orientation involves a wide range of feelings, behaviours, experiences, expectations and commitments.

Coming Out: It is the process by which a person realizes, accepts and reveals his or heterosexual orientation to others. We can say that gay, lesbian or transgender people come out everytime they reveal their sexual orientations to others. Emilio and Freedman (1997) reported that it involves public declaration of one's sexual orientation and also includes feeling of pride and bravery which they needed to deal with social stigma, prejudice, rebuke and constraints.

Homophobia: It refers to the fear or hatred of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people, their community. It also involves the prejudice, stigma or discrimination experienced by these people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Fine (2000) further added that researchers have refined this definition and they have broadened it by including "the fear of being closer to homosexuals" and "extreme anger, hatred, and fear reaction to homosexuals". Homophobia is expressed in various ways; from offending remarks made about such people, their life style their community to such people being troubled, tortured, mentally harassed or physically assaulted. There are various examples when institutions behave in a homophobic way by denying (gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) people any opportunity or their rights.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A gay is a homosexual man. The word gay is also used for man in relation to their sexual identity or sexual behaviour, regardless of sexual orientation or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns. With male homosexuality or same sex attraction.

All around the world throughout the history it has been defended the existence of homosexuals and bisexuals. In some cultures, it is regarded as something natural and a variation of human sexism and in some sexual relations of some sexes are supported or those people had higher positions. However, in some culture, homosexuality is still despised and treated in a bad way Davis, (2012). Gayesim also called sapphism or male Homosexuality, the quality or state of intense emotional and usually erotic attraction of a human male, To another male when early sexologists in the late 19th century began to categorize and describe homosexual behaviour, hampered by a lack of knowledge about homosexuality or men's sexuality, they distinguished gay as men who did not adhere to male gender roles and incorrectly designated them mentally ill a designation which has been reversed in the global scientific community. Men in homosexual relationship responded to this designation either by hiding their personal lives or accepting the label of outcast and creating a subculture and identity that developed in Europe and United States. In India it is considered as an offence. There are been stigmatized from their own families. It is considered as "taboo" and something not to be discussed even though it is largely invisible.

This research aims to study the life experiences of the gays in Thiruvananthapuram and problems they face including that are psychological, social and personal. The content of this research reflects the view of this particular sexual minority in the society. The behavioural pattern of the family and friends towards the gay community is studied and how the society looks upon them are also looked into in this research. The main purpose of this study was to examine the problems gays faced in the society and the isolations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As per the studies, it is seen that even though gayiesm is widely known, it is not accepted completely by the society. For which majority of them still have to live by hiding their identity. There are many elements which directs the gay individual to a stigmatized life.

Social oppression is one of the outstanding elements. This social stigmatization hinders them from coming up to the main stream. Even though there are a lot of studies prevailing about gays nothing has come up to entitle them. Many awareness programmes and initiatives has been taken up by the government and other NGO's for their upliftment and thus in the light of this the study becomes highly relevant as it considers the social and personal life of the gays.

CHAPTER: II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sunil Kailanni accounts for the expanding interest in civil society in the late 20th century thus- in the West it is a consequence of disillusionment with ‘the increasingly decrepit processes of party politics, and in the East, it is due to the concern with ‘private property right and markets’ (Khilnani,2001, p.11). There wasn’t a great deal of importance attached to the concept of civil society before World War II. Marxism identified it with bourgeois society: ‘a realm of contradiction and mystification sustained by relations of power’. There was a ‘serious revival’ of the term in the late 1960s by the Left among ‘radicals disaffected with Marxism’, influenced by Antonio Gramsci’s work of re-conceptualization of Marx’s schema of base and superstructure which gave the concept of civil society a wholly ‘novel centrality’. The term ‘civil society’ acquired significance in Eastern Europe and Latin America in the late 1970 and 1980s.

Neerachandhoke (2003) writes that during the 1980s the East Europeans wanted a mechanism to address questions related to their freedom from ‘unbearable political situations’, and the ‘remedy’ was in the formation of a ‘free zone’ within the existing system. The free zone was a solution which provided a space for people to articulate their problems in a systematic manner. This free zone was peopled by ‘social associations, self-help and self-management organisations, and solidarity networks’, and it was called ‘civil society’ by the East Europeans (Chandhoke,2003, p.14). The emergence of this free zone, namely, civil society, spread political awareness and action among people transforming them into the ‘political public’. Chandhoke continues: ‘The civil public, which had initially turned its back on the state, had dramatically transformed itself into the political public, concerned with the form and content of power’ (Chandhoke,2007, p. 610). Civil society interlaced socio-economic rights along with political and civil rights.

In the West, civil society as an idea and as a space emerged to facilitate those needs of the people that could not be directly addressed to or by the state. It enables people to participate in the political environment by providing a space for debate and understanding their basic rights. But the concept of civil society operated in a different modality in different parts of the globe. In the globe south, the functioning of associations is effective in the operation of democracy: ‘It is as social collectiveness that citizens can resist, escape or influence state or

society' (Rudolph,2000, p. 1762). The associations facilitate an awareness of people's rights and duties within the state, particularly the right to democratic participation in the functioning of the state.

In India, the concern of the civil society was 'to deliver a minimum standard of life to its people' (Chandhoke, 2003, p.20), particularly in the post-Independence phase where the powerful bureaucracies and political elites had 'shrugged off' the interest of the masses. After the Emergency in 1977, 'the civil liberties movement and the environment movement' came to the fore in the political scene (Chandhoke, 2007, p.611). In order to articulate the concern of these struggles a language was necessary which was provided by civil society. The language which enabled the establishment of civil society in England and France also served in the context of countries 'struggling to consolidate fledgling democracies. Sunil Khilnani writes that the need to have an Indian civil society was felt during the 1980s when the chasm between the elite and vernacular universes of discourse was apparent; at a time when the entry of the agrarian groups into state and national-level politics changed parliamentary politics (Khilnani, 2001, p. 27). It is in this kind of civil society that one needs to locate homosexuality, mainly so because of the role that civil society plays in the social, economic and political spheres, touching upon the lives of people from various sections of society, especially the marginalized and voiceless.

The 1980s saw the rise of the second phase of the women's movement and critical theory in the West, and the reverberations of these could be felt in South Asia including India (Vanita&Kidwai, 2000, p. 205). In India, this was a post-emergency period when multiple disparities existing within Indian society had not been bridged; one such disparity was based on gender and sexuality. The sexually marginalised, particularly homosexuals, remind invisible: 'With a few exceptions, South Asianists in India and outside have contributed to the myth that homosexuality is unknown in India by ignoring it completely or relegating it to the footnotes' (p.205). To battle the ill treatment of the marginal sections through negotiation with the power/government, the formation of strong representative bodies is necessary. Homosexual as a marginalised category need appropriate representation for their concerns and problems and for these to be visualized by civil society. To understand the need for such a voice it is imperative to have an understanding of homosexuality in India.

David M, Halperin (1990), *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love*, Routledge. In his thought inspiring book Halperin addresses the constructive-essentialist debate on gay history from a constructive point of view. He supports the social constructionist school of thought associated with the French philosopher Michel Foucault, although he admits that the social constructionist view would be proven false if it could be shown that sexual orientation is innate. Social constructionists argue that the categories of “homosexuals” and “heterosexuals” have emerged from the social, political and scientific debate over sexuality that had taken place since the late 19th century and that their application to people in effect makes them “homosexuals” or “heterosexual”. The book can be praised for its lucidity and brilliance.

Eve Tushnet (2014), *Gay and Catholic*, Maria Press. Eve contributes to the discussion about how to reconcile gay and catholic identities. This is a great work on Christianity and homosexuality. The church and culture do not offer very many models for profound relationships outside of the romantic realm dismissing people as “just friends” - so Tushnet draws on historical records of vowed friendship, interviews with people living in intentional community, and her own experiences offering hospitality to give readers vivid icons to guide them. The seventh chapter of the book is packed with brilliant insight and fascinating memoir. This is a book for everyone, gay or straight; catholic or non-religious. Eve Tushnet goes a long way toward reminding us of the depth and importance of same-sex friendship, especially for the gay people.

Ruth Vanita (2002), *Queering India: Same Sex Love in Indian Culture and Society*, London: Routledge, covers a wide range of topics covering films, literature, popular culture, historical and religious texts, law and other related aspects of life in India. It provides a profoundly new understanding of gays and lesbians in Indian society.

Garcia-Aroyo (2009), *Whistling in the Dark: 21 Queer Interviews*, London: Sage (ed), covers various issues related to homosexuals, the problems they have and the challenges they face in their daily lives. The book contains 21 interviews of such people.

EmmanBernay (2008), *Homosexuality*, New York :Greenharen Press (ed). The book is a comprehensive treatise on homosexuality and differentiates between various nuances of homosexuality. It emphasises that Gay refers to all members of LGBT community and is not

sex specific. It argues that the term homosexual does not explain the complete concept. The word refers only to sexual behaviour rather than complex romantic feelings between members of the same sex.

The Gay Almanac (1966), The National Archive of Lesbians and Gay History, New York: Berkeley Books, it traces the history of the gay movement and brings out many educative and interesting facets. Hitler first curtailed, then prevented and finally destroyed all German sex research. This was the onset of the systematic persecution of German homosexuals between 1933 and 1945.

Island and Letellier (1991), Men Who Beat the Man Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence, Oxford Press. The book throws light on the incidence of domestic violence among gay men which is nearly double than that in the homosexuals. The homosexuals are affected by some legal economic and political issues. Psychology was one of the first disciplines to study a homosexual's orientation as a discrete phenomenon. Homosexuality was often approached from a view that sought to find an inherent psycho pathology as its root cause, past research has shown that minority stress is linked to health risk such as risky sexual behaviour and substance abuse.

Bilerico Eric Marcus (2004), Making Gay History, Perennial, is an engrossing book which covers the first 50 years of the American LGBT movement through the stories of more than 60 people. It is an amazing testament of the gay men and lesbians who had the courage to live their lives openly and honestly.

Michelangelo Signorile (1996), Outing Yourself, is point by point guide to coming out of your family, friends and co-workers. The coming out experience is one that unifies us as gay men and one that we all struggle with.

Randy Shilts (1988), And the Band Played on: Is an Amazing History of the First Five Years of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic, Penguin Books. Its chronicles attempt to identify the virus, traces its spread in the U.S., The Federal Government: Disastrous response and how the gay community defended itself against a wave of anti-gay hostility that swept the country. It is the best book on the early years of the epidemic that has had such tremendous impact on gay men and our culture.

Michelangelo Signori (2003), *Queer in America*, University of Wisconsin Press, talks on the hypocrisy in the media which continues its double standards of reporting on every detail of every one-night stand of heterosexual celebrities like Britney while whitewashing the romantic lives of powerful gay men and lesbians and closeted gays work for and promote business leaders and politicians who promote an anti-gay agenda.

Andrew Sullivan (1996), *Virtually Normal: An Argument about Homosexuality*, Vintage Books. Andrew (a conservative gay writer and blogger) takes a critical look at the current state of the movement for LGBT civil rights from both the right and left. Andrew calls for the LGBT movements to focus on two issues: marriage and military service. When these two goals are achieved, he suggests closing up shop and throwing a big party.

Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai (2001), *Same-Sex Love in India*, Palgrave Macmillan (eds). *Same sex love in India* offers an eloquent range of writings spanning more than two thousand years of Indian literature. Drawn from Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and contemporary fictional sources, these writing convincingly demonstrate that same sex love has flourished, evolved and been embraced in various forms since ancient times.

Raymond M. Bergerl (1995), *Gay and Grey, The Older Homosexual Men*, Haworth Press : Gay Studies Books; A scholarly treatment of gay men aged 40 and older in America based on an intensive interview and questionnaire study. The first two sections cover the interview of the respondents and results from the study. In subsequent chapters, contributors discuss results from other studies concerning age status labeling, sexual attitudes and behaviour in midlife and other topics.

Kevin Alderson (2000), *Beyond Coming Out: Experiences of Positive Gay Identity*, Insomniac Press. Gay studies book is a revealing study on gay esteem. Psychologist Kevin Alderson explores why some gay men manage to construct overwhelmingly positive self-images. While so many others never overcome low self-esteem or outright selfhatred in interview with 16 gay men, aged 16 to 61. Dr. Alderson reveals that there are definite patterns in the development of a positive gay identity. He presents these men's stories from childhood to adulthood, in their own words. These in-depth cases studies pave the way for Dr. Alderson's trenchant and insightful analysis of the major themes emerging at each stage of development. In view of the above, the research focuses on the study of gays & lesbians in

Indian context. It tries to find out their social and cultural profile with special emphasis on their economic status and their interactions with other segments of society. The research endeavours to peep into their personality traits to find out any angularities or variations from other segments of society. It studies their life style and leisure pattern to have a better understanding of the homosexuals as well as to bring out any deviations. The research encompasses the human rights perspective as well as the legal status of homosexuals. At present, the whole situation is in a flux moving towards dwindling opposition, more acceptance and assertive nature of gay initiatives.

Literature on homosexuality is scare, fictional and foreign in nature and substance. Almost more than 80% literature gone through was found foreign, unconnected, and irrelevant to research work. Many authors continue to write popular, non-academic books such as fiction, poetry, drama on homosexuality. A similar trajectory is visible in both popular and art cinemas as well. The unavailability of related, concise and Indian literature posed great difficulty in research work. Only few Indian authors have written on homosexuality in Indian context. But ironically, none of the authors have written down on homosexuality from legal and social angle. This is the reason why foreign literature in forms of books and articles by many authors, along with leading foreign and Indian cases on homosexuality was sought to facilitate research work. Timely news reports from leading newspapers of India during last four years of research also played a major role in summarizing the research work.

Ruth Vanita and Saleem kidwai titled “Same – Sex Love in India: A Literary History”. For a country like India, that is so steeped in tradition and heritage, it is almost implausible to believe that India has an equally strong and deep-rooted connection to homosexuality. This book also breaks the stereotype that same-sex love was an invention of the Western culture and was brought to India only in the 19th century. Through these readings of ancient texts, I could understand that same-sex love was an inherent part of the lifestyle of Indians from the ancient times. I also appreciate that the editors of the book have personally translated all the pieces of ancient literature. This literature is exhaustive in giving insight and establishing existence of homosexuality in Indian culture. But apart from historical value, it gives no thought on all legal and psychological aspect of homosexuality in India.

“Ardhanarishvara the Androgyne: probing the gender Within.” This book is written by Dr. Alka Pande who is a prolific writer on art History. This book has successfully attempted to

reveal that while western perceptions have always classified human beings into either male or female, the India belief in the androgynous nature of human stems from the divine concept of Ardhanarishvara, literally half man and half woman. More philosophical construct than a social or cultural expression, the divine nature of this ideology lent it an initial acceptability. Today, however, it has emerged from the closet as a social manifestation, causing the blurring of traditional sex roles. This book dares to challenge, question, muse over, analyse and stretch over frontiers of mind towards the hard-hitting reality of gender expression.

Another book referred which gave some insight into law and legal journey of homosexuality is by I.K. Magoo titled “Law relating to sexual offences and homosexuality in India.” This book was divided into eight chapters with only one chapter (chapter six) dedicated to homosexuality. This briefed chapter was a novel attempt by the author to discuss subject of homosexuality with the help of few cases. This chapter gives generalized information on homosexuality with some fair work on legal aspect of homosexuality. This book has covered cases on homosexuality including Naz foundation judgment, but other newer cases are missing creating gaps in research work, this gap was filled with the help of supreme court’s latest judgment in December, 2013.

Michel Foucault's titled “History of Sexuality” which has given an insight into origin and development of homosexuality in Christian World. This book has turned out to be an incisive analysis of the changing nature of desire, represents one of the boldest and most challenging intellectual achievements of recent decades.

Kevin Jennings from a psychological angle is “Always My Child.” The book has wonderfully focused on the day-to-day experiences of adolescents dealing with sexual identity issues, I found that this book “Always My Child” provides the insights and practical strategies parents need to support their kids and cope themselves. It is seen that the Parents whose children are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or who are going through a "questioning phase" are often in the dark about what their children face every day. As a result, offering support will provide comfort and courage to them to come out of closet “Law Like Love: Queer Perspectives on Law” by Arvind Narain and Alok Gupta is a collection of research papers in a book form. This book contains various articles written by various authors highlighting LGBT issue in the context of Delhi High Court Judgment of 2009. Some playful, some critical and others reflective and irreverent, this unique collection of pieces brings the

life, structures and institutions of law alive and shine with relevance in the contemporary moment.

Another book referred is 'From the Closet to the Courtroom' by Carlos. A. Bell who is a professor at Rutgers University (Newyork) and has received many Awards for his commendable work on sexual orientation and Gay Rights. This book 'From the Closet to the Courtroom' explores how five pivotal lawsuits have altered LGBT history. Beginning each case narrative at the center, with the litigants and their lawyers, law professor Carlos Ball follows the stories behind each crucial lawsuit. All the core issues of a person's life, such as family, marriage etc been addressed to traces the parties from them communities to the courtroom, while deftly weaving in rich socio-historical context and analyzing the lasting legal and political impact of each judicial outcome.

"Law, Religion and Homosexuality" was also helpful to understand the role of religion in shaping and developing sexuality of a person. Religion remains at the heart of the relationship between law and homosexuality. The only limitation of the book was apart from catholic or Christianity angle other religions were not dealt to substance.

Queering India: Same Sex Love in Indian Culture and Society, London: Routledge, covers a wide range of topics covering films, literature, popular culture, historical and religious texts, law and other related aspects of life in India. It provides a profoundly new understanding of gays and lesbians in Indian society. (Ruth Vanita, 2002)

Whistling in the Dark: 21 Queer Interviews, London: Sage (ed), covers various issues related to homosexuals, the problems they have and the challenges they face in their daily lives. This book contains 21 interviews of such people. (Garcia- Aroyo,2009)

Same-Sex Love in India, Palgrave Macmillan. Same sex love in India offers an eloquent range of writings spanning more than two thousand years of Indian literature. Drawn from Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and contemporary fictional sources, these writing convincingly demonstrate that same sex love has flourished, evolved and been embraced in various forms since ancient times. (Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai, 2001)

Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) persons have long been the victims of harassment and discrimination evolving from a deep-seeded fear of difference and heterosexual oppression (Noah,2008).

The civil rights movement over the past three decades has identified LG[BT] individuals as a protected non-majority group which “typically hold less political and economic power in society” (Winely, 1993) and, therefore, can also be classified as “persons on the axis of oppression”. Despite movement at the Federal level to protect students, there continues to be no constitutional or statutory protection for LGBT persons, and only 20 states and the District of Columbia claim to provide equal protection against sexual orientation discrimination (State non - discrimination laws in the U.S., 2008).

Since the majority of states do not constitutionally provide protection against harassment and/or discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, LGBT persons often do not enjoy the same economic and political stature as their heterosexual counterparts. The domination of white supremacy, male supremacy, and Euro-heteropatriarchy runs rampant in our communities (Valdes, 1998).

Heterosexist domination is particularly true in education due to the long history of moral uprightness teachers are expected to maintain (Capper, 1998).

School districts, unless required by state legislation, often do not have policies forbidding sexual orientation harassment/discrimination or, if they do, these policies are tag-ones to the district’s sexual harassment and equal opportunity policies. These policies do not adequately address issues surrounding sexual orientation/identity of students, staff, and particularly educational leaders. For this reason, harassment or discrimination of LG[BT] staff or administrators may go undetected allowing inequitable and prejudicial policies to permeate organizations, which may possibly initiate a downward spiral of decreasing acceptance, support, and promotion, possibly leading to irreparable damage to one’s personal integrity and/or career. For the purpose of this study, the review of the literature provides an overview of homosexuality and U.S. public education, as well as a discussion of the history of United States policy/law as it relates to homosexuality, particularly in public schools. Although formal policy and law is not the focus of this study, they are dictated by societal values and often viewed as one in the same. Policy and law and social mores play in sync with one

another, therefore, as they continuously connect, you cannot have one without the other. For this reason, it is critical to present an historical overview of law, as it pertains to homosexuality, in order to begin to understand how the formal policies and laws, and the informal actions and attitudes of society have contextualized the lives of LGBT educational leaders. Homosexuality and Teachers in Public Schools Homosexuality in education is not a recent phenomenon, in fact “society has been confronted with the issue of the homosexual school teacher since at least 450 B.C., when the most famous homosexual educators, Socrates and Plato, educated Greek youth” (Kevin, 1991).

Education in ancient Greek society was the responsibility of teachers and philosophers, and excluding girls, was designed to teach boys the duties of manhood. The student was expected to respect and admire his teacher, and the teacher was expected to gain the devotion and affection of his student; therefore, “homosexual conduct between a teacher and student was considered a valuable part of the education process” (Buchanan, 2000).

Educational Leaders/Denton 31 Sexual orientation discrimination, found in education, has an equally long history. For centuries, the Roman empire, heavily influenced by the Greeks, saw nothing illegal or inappropriate about homosexual conduct between males, and fourteen of the first fifteen emperors practiced homosexuality. Roman values, however, differed from the Greeks when it came to family and education. While Greek society viewed the sole purpose of “family” as a source of procreation and bestowed the education of their young boys to teachers and philosophers, ancient Romans believed the “family” played a more crucial role than merely procreation. In ancient Rome, it was an “extension of the parental responsibility” (Buchanan, 2000) for a father to educate his son(s). Because a father would not have sexual relations with his child or child with his father, homosexual conduct with a student was strictly prohibited, and in the sixth century A.D., the Roman Empire outlawed homosexuality (Buchanan, 2000).

More than 15 centuries later, sexual orientation discrimination in U.S. education prevails. The colonists brought British sodomy laws to America and made them part of U.S. law after winning independence from Great Britain. Homosexuality was considered sodomy, and in U.S. law until the mid-nineteenth century, sodomy was a capital crime, punishable by death. Despite the fact that homosexual teachers had educated children for centuries, U.S. law forced LGBT teachers to remain invisible, thus, little is known about homosexual teachers in

early U.S. education Emil explained, “given this legal background, it is not surprising that the early history of homosexual teachers in this country is invisible” (p. 154). In this larger section, homosexuality in U.S. public education, from the 1850s to the 1970s, is discussed. This section is divided into four major eras: 1) Homosexuality: The 1850s to the Turn of the Century, 2) Homosexuality: Early 20th Century, 3) Homosexuality: The Witch Hunt in Public Education, and 4) Homosexuality: Post World War II to the 1970s. The historical look at homosexuality in U.S. public education begins in the mid-1850s. (Melvin, 2011).

Homosexuality: The 1850s to the Turn of the Century Teachers in U.S. schools were primarily men until the mid-1850s, apparently due to the fact that women were viewed as subordinate and generally not allowed a formal education. Although there are few examples of homosexual teachers in the early history of education, it has been posited that the early U.S. educational system fostered homosexual activity between primarily male teachers and male students. Advanced ideas about homosexual activity in U.S. education: The public images of English boarding schools and American same-sex colleges were that no homosexual teachers were employed and no homosexuality occurred between the students. The private realities of these institutions are that they supported practices that encouraged homosexual behaviour by both faculty and students. Lesbians and gay males may have been more prevalent in early U.S. education than society has been willing to believe. Several notable literary scholars were educators, as well as practicing homosexuals: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Peabody, Amos Bronson Alcott, Henry David Thoreau, Henry W. Longfellow, Herman Melville, (Walt Whitman,2000).

Early homosexual educators often worked together in the same institutions and socialized in the same circles. The majority of the lesbian and gay male teachers mentioned above, worked at the Alcott School, founded and owned by Amos Bronson Alcott. Although the homosexual practices of this group of early literary scholars have become widely known, their experiences as teachers appear to have been blurred by their literary careers (Prince, 1997).

The post-Civil War era heralded rapid growth in public education, and men were no longer willing to work for the low wages paid to teachers. To fill the ever-growing need for teachers, school districts began hiring single women and required they remain unmarried in order to retain poor developmental outcome because such behaviour violated supposedly natural gender norms and accepted notions of procreative sexual behaviour” (Lugg, 2003, p. 106).

Society was on heightened alert and lawmakers took the opportunity to expand and strengthen sodomy laws. Homosexuals were viewed as both criminals and predators, and “should not be allowed to influence young children, nor should they be permitted the opportunity for potential sexual activity with children” (Bapiste, 2010).

Homosexuality: The 1920s Through World War II the much-publicized sexuality research during the 1920s and 1930s, resulted in a plethora of homophobic fear, and a critical eye was turned toward the schools, in particular toward teachers. Teachers remaining single into their 30s, especially male educators, were viewed as having questionable character, and marriage became the socially acceptable norm (Giotto, 2013).

In order to remain in the education profession and avoid the stigma of being classified a homosexual, men turned to marriage to prove their heterosexuality, and the gay male was forced into assimilation. Women teachers were also scrutinized and the traditional “spinster schoolteacher”, once held in high regard, was now in jeopardy. Female teachers, however, found themselves in a Catch 22. Since the mid-1800s, school boards required female teachers to remain single so they could devote their attention to the education of children. The ban on married women in the teaching profession remained the norm rather than the exception until post-World War II. To retain their careers as teachers, women were forced to remain single while at the same time being subjected to ridicule and suspicion of lesbianism and criminal activity. By the late 1920s, society believed the single female teacher posed a moral threat to her female students. However, due to low wages paid to unwed female teachers, school boards viewed their employment as cost-effective and economically sound (Pietro, 2003).

The publication of the 1948 Kinsey report on male sexuality and the 1953 report on female sexuality increased public awareness of the high incidence of homosexuality and intensified the hysteria. (Louis, 1990).

Without a doubt, “the interaction between cold war hysteria, Kinsey’s data, rampant homophobia, and lurid and incendiary newspaper reporting proved to be a volatile mix” (Adelmo, 2003).

The scrutiny of previous decades was at full strength again as society sought to purge all branches of the government, the military, and the educational system of people suspected to

be their teaching position. Should a female teacher marry, she would be forced to resign or be fired by the school board (Logan, 2009).

Female teachers were held to high moral standards and continually watched to assure that the imposed regulations were followed. *Homosexuality: Early 20th Century* By the early 20th century, the teaching profession was dominated by single woman, and the few men who remained in the classrooms were viewed with suspicion (Lugg, 2003).

Clare (2003) described the early 1920s as “an era when social roles and employment were fraught with stringent and highly differentiated gender expectations”. The early 20th century opened the door for those men desiring a career in education, but not wanting the sissified stereotype associated with male teachers. Educational administration became the new career for male teachers. As Ingrid (2003) stated, “educational administration became by definition masculinist, a career for married males with academic credentials”. The view of educational administration has not changed since the early 1900s, and the profession itself has evolved into one of fierce conservatism and homophobia.

The 1920s also brought the introduction of sexual orientation issues into the political arena of education. The sexual orientation debate began as a direct result of the emergence of research in human sexuality and the identification of homosexuality and heterosexuality as the two-primary means of human sexual expression (Annie, 2000).

Once an identified means of human sexual expression, homosexuality was viewed as devil possession, a sin, a crime, biologically hereditary, a mental disorder, and even a learning disorder. Indeed, sexuality researchers in the 1920s saw homosexuality as an “unhealthy and poor developmental outcome because such behaviour violated supposedly natural gender norms and accepted notions of procreative sexual behaviour” (Lugg, 2003, p. 106). Society was on heightened alert and lawmakers took the opportunity to expand and strengthen sodomy laws. Homosexuals were viewed as both criminals and predators, and “should not be allowed to influence young children, nor should they be permitted the opportunity for potential sexual activity with children” (Bapiste, 2010).

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Without a doubt, “the interaction between cold war hysteria, Kinsey’s data, rampant homophobia, and lurid and incendiary newspaper reporting proved to be a volatile mix” (Adelmo, 2003).

The scrutiny of previous decades was at full strength again as society sought to purge all branches of the government, the military, and the educational system of people suspected to be homosexuals. By the mid-1950s, maintaining a “non-queer educational force had become a matter of national security” (Louis Albert, 2003).

In overwhelming numbers, states began to pass legislation to rid the schools of suspected homosexuals, with Florida leading the way. Legislation mandated that educational administrators and school boards were to terminate employees who were suspected to be lesbian or gay. Without a doubt, an educator arrested on a homosexual charge, whether

convicted or not, was immediately terminated from employment with license revocation most likely to follow (Harry, 1997).

LG[BT] teachers were no longer safe as public pressure forced schools to become vessels of persecution with school administrators at the helm. During the 1950s and 1960s, lesbian and gay educators faced daunting choices. If they remained in the profession, they risked exposure and humiliating expulsion. To avoid detection, they would need to adopt behaviors and characteristics considered appropriate for their sex. Alternatively, they could leave schools and work elsewhere. (Liam, 2004)

The 1969 Stonewall Riot in Greenwich Village became a turning point for LGBT educators. Stonewall was an awakening for many LGBT individuals throughout the country and gave rise to a nationwide grassroots effort to openly claim their sexual identities (Blount, 2004). Expansion of the “crimes against nature” laws in the 1920s and 1930s made it illegal to be homosexual and forced LGBT individuals into a deeper state of secrecy and isolation. As Chauncey (1994) put it, “the state built a closet in the 1930s and forced gay people to hide in it”. Policy and Law: Post-World War II to Mid-1970s As previously mentioned, stringent “crimes against nature” laws and closeted gays remained the status quo until the post-WWII era when, by 1950, 48 states still considered homosexual activity a felony, with only murder, kidnapping, and rape receiving heavier penalties (Charles, 1989).

In addition, the medical model classifying homosexuality as a disease emerged during this era and prevailed through the early 1960s (D' Emilio, 1983).

Many states passed “sexual psychopath laws that officially recognized homosexuality as a socially threatening disease. In the 1950s and early 1960s, LGBT individuals were the focus of police entrapment and warrantless arrests on the streets, in bars, and even in private homes. Gay men and lesbians were charged with an array of offenses including disorderly conduct, vagrancy, public lewdness, assault, and solicitation, as well as being subjected to blackmail, surveillance, and postal authority investigations (Winsor, 1999).

LGBT individuals often did not challenge the authority of the police and even when there was a lack of sufficient evidence, most would plead guilty to the charge in an attempt to avoid being further ostracized (McBenn, 1993).

Despite the continued and overt oppression of LGBT individuals in the early 1950s, there was an undercurrent of change. Society was beginning to slowly alter its attitude toward sexuality, and a greater sympathy for those accused of victimless crimes was emerging. In 1955, the American Law Institute's Model Penal Code recommendation was to legalize all forms of sexual activity between consenting adults. Although the recommendation was initially rejected by most states, the courts slowly exercised more leniency with those charged with victimless crimes (Albert, 1992).

The growing leniency of the courts had a direct impact on the U.S. educational system because "for the first time in United States social history the judiciary broke with educational policy concerning immorality, criminal conduct, and the extent to which someone should be punished for consenting sexual activity outside of marriage" (Milton, 1999).

With the trend toward greater leniency, educational leaders began to lose the autonomous power they had for so long possessed. School administrators no longer could rely on the court system as a source of support for information gathering focused on the private lives of teachers (Whitman, 1992).

Judicial leniency for teachers charged with victimless crimes was quickly met with opposition by California lobbyists wanting to keep their teachers in check. The lobbyists successfully sponsored legislation that would return power to educational leaders and was specifically directed at teachers and their morality. California's Penal Code Section 291 now required police to inform local school boards whenever a teacher was detained or arrested for a criminal offense, and Education Code 12756 allowed for the immediate suspension of a teaching license upon conviction of any of several statutes relating to sex and morality (Samik,2001).

This court ruling was a major advancement in employment rights for LGBT educators. Finally, by 1973 "Morrison was firmly established as one of the strongest statements in favour of an individual's right to retain employment despite a wide variety of personal indiscretions". Beginning in the early to mid-1970s, municipalities and school boards were beginning to pass anti-discrimination ordinances to protect homosexuals in the workforce. By 1973, the National Education Association included sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policy and supported domestic partner language as a negotiable contract issue.

The American Federation of Teachers followed suit in 1974 and gave their gay and lesbian employees domestic partnership status (Rossman, 1997) Policy and Law: The Late 1970s Since 1975, many state legislatures have removed situational descriptions that permitted immediate revocation of a teaching license (Winsor, 1992).

The late 1970s was a period of nationwide change and significant advancement in the civil rights for LGBT individuals. Greater acceptance of homosexuals in society, especially in education, was not without backlash from conservatives. In this section, the three major anti-gay rights movements of the 1970s are discussed, 1) Save Our Children Campaign, 2) California's Proposition 6, and 3) Helm's Bill. As previously stated, in 1977, Anita Bryant, former Miss America finalist, spearheaded the Save Our Children campaign. At that time, Dade County was home to a large gay/lesbian population and was considered to be a politically liberal community (Marshall, 1992).

Dade County was Bryant's starting point, but the ripple effect would reach nationwide proportions for years to come. Save Our Children Campaign Prior to 1977, Ruth Shack, wife of Dick Shack, long-time booking agent and friend of Anita Bryant, won the election to the Dade County Metro Commission. Anita Bryant had publicly endorsed Shack in the election, taping several radio endorsements, which were considered to be instrumental in her election. Shack, however, had also been endorsed by the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays. Shack, along with 48 other candidates supported by the Coalition, had promised to support LG[BT] rights in return for the homosexual vote. The election brought 45 of the 49 Coalition supported candidates to office and shortly thereafter, Shack introduced an anti-discrimination ordinance supporting LG[BT] rights, and the ordinance passed by a vote of 5 to 3 (Agota, 2003).

Bryant, outraged by the passing of the ordinance, immediately began her Save Our Children campaign in an attempt to repeal the ordinance. Both Bryant and the supporters of the ordinance received nationwide support, and "Dade County became the setting for the first head-to-head conflict between the fundamentalist religious movement, with Anita Bryant as its nationally-prominent spokesperson, and the as yet rather closeted but increasingly militant [LGBT] population" (Micheal, 1997).

Although Bryant had minimal knowledge of homosexuality and admittedly met only a few homosexuals, she was quick to link homosexuality with child pornography, other forms of depravity, and communism. Bryant characterized the LGBT movement for civil rights as a “homosexual conspiracy” against God and country. Bryant stated: The word gay totally belies the homosexual lifestyle. I don’t even know How the word gay was attached to the homosexual lifestyle. The militant homosexuals took the word and with the power that they have, they programmed it into our modern vocabulary. That in itself is a frightening example of what they can do to a society – how they can brainwash you into using their terminology. It’s too early to say, and I don’t know what the homosexuals still have up their sleeve. They are very desperate people who will stop at nothing. (Ronald, 1997)

Bryant’s accusations that homosexuals were militant, desperate people who would brainwash the public and stop at nothing to achieve their end was a form of Mc Carthy-esque tactics that were successful in heightening fear in citizens nationwide. She even went as far as to assert that the Equal Rights Amendment and National Organization of Women were fronts for lesbianism John pointed out, however, that Bryant’s attack “was aimed at the stereotypical, limp-wristed, seductive, crossdressing, male homosexual who was sexually interested in young boys” (p. 44), and homosexual teachers were at the top of her list. Before long, LGBT teachers were viewed as having three main goals: molestation, recruitment, and violence, and rhetoric was advanced that these individuals should not be allowed to teach children. Bryant’s five-month campaign ended successfully on June 7, 1977, when the voters of Dade County repealed the ordinance supporting LGBT housing and employment rights by a vote of 69 percent to 31 percent. Bryant’s campaign against gay rights did not stop in Dade County; by 1978, she had helped to successfully repeal sexual orientation anti-discrimination ordinances in several other municipalities. While the successful battles raged in the states of Florida, Minnesota, Kansas, and Oregon, another was brewing and taking hold in California. California’s Proposition 6 California’s conservative State Senator John Briggs was known for his disdain of homosexuals, and in 1977, flew to Dade County to lend his support to Anita Bryant and her Save Our Children campaign. Briggs was impressed with the large sums of money Bryant had raised for her cause and felt empowered by her resulting victory (Harris, 1992).

After returning to California, “Briggs decided to use the issues of homosexual school teachers and the death penalty as the emotional underpinnings of his campaign for governor” (Ann, 2004).

In June, 1977, Briggs introduced Proposition 6 as a means of ridding California schools of homosexual teachers. Like Bryant, Briggs equated homosexuality with depravity and considered it a “conspiracy of corruption.” Briggs’ focused on the premise “that gay and lesbian individuals intentionally entered the teaching profession to seduce young students into a homosexual lifestyle. Thus, Proposition 6 was necessary to curb this conspiracy of corruption” (Marshall, 1992).

Supporters of Briggs and Proposition 6 contended that adoption of Proposition 6 would not forbid school districts from hiring homosexual teachers, but would, instead, provide them with an option not to (Hamick, 1997).

In reality, however, Proposition 6 had significantly more far-reaching intents, and its ramifications would have been devastating for homosexual educators and their heterosexual allies. The Initiative defined “homosexual conduct” as “advocating, soliciting, imposing, encouraging, or promoting of private or public homosexual activity directed at, or likely to come to the attention of schoolchildren and/or employees” (Benjamin, 2012).

Opponents of Proposition 6 feared that its definition of “homosexual conduct” was too broad and would lead to flagrant misuse of power on the part of school administrators resulting in arbitrary grounds for termination or non-hiring. Under this definition, both homosexuals and heterosexual allies could be scrutinized and considered for termination or non-hiring for merely discussing his/her homosexual lifestyle and presenting it as a positive alternative to students or by expressing tolerance of homosexuality in a private conversation with friends or colleagues (Helenda 2001). For this reason alone, it was argued that Proposition 6 was unconstitutional. The broad definition of “homosexual conduct” was not the only criticism brought about by the opposition. Concerns were raised about the review and dismissal process, which increased the power bestowed on school administration to “define standards of conduct and gather information against a school employee” (Oliver, 2002).

In essence, Proposition 6 was viewed as a setback in civil rights and a return to the autonomous power school administrators had wielded in previous decades. This unlimited power was viewed as contrary to federal and state limitations on separation of power and directly violated federal and state privacy protections (James, 1990).

Ronald Reagan, then former California governor, has been credited as being the most influential opponent of Proposition 6. Although Briggs had claimed Reagan initially expressed support of Proposition 6, it is surmised that Nancy Reagan's numerous homosexual friends in Hollywood and Reagan's campaign for the Presidency influenced him to not speak out in favour of an anti-gay initiative. However, Briggs did not expect Reagan's vehement opposition of the initiative. In addition to Reagan's claims of the unconstitutionality of Proposition 6, he also asserted the insurmountable cost of enforcement and significant governmental involvement. He foresaw a negative backlash against innocent people, particularly LGBT educators, and stated "whatever else it is, homosexuality is not a contagious disease like measles. Prevailing scientific opinion is that an individual's sexuality is determined at a very early age, and that a child's teachers do not really influence this" (Bougita, 1997).

Amid charges of voter fraud, failure of the California Supreme Court to rule on the initiative's constitutionality, and an outpouring of parental support for the retention of a gay male teacher, Proposition 6 went to the voters on November 7, 1978. It was defeated by a margin of 2 to 1 and "for the first time, supporters of homosexual rights had won an election against the conservatives. In fact, they may have won their most important election" (Oliver, 2012).

Helm's Bill Before the defeat of Proposition 6 in California, Oklahoma State Senator Mary Helm requested a copy of the legislation from John Briggs. Helm's Bill, a replica of Proposition 6, was introduced to the Oklahoma State House and Senate in February 1978. It passed unanimously and began a seven-year judicial journey that would end with a United States Supreme Court split decision in 1985 (John, Adris, 1992).

On the heels of the Supreme Court split decision, several other states began to draft and consider laws similar to the Helm's Bill. These states included: North Carolina, Texas, Nevada, and Arkansas (Helen, 1997).

What began as a small ripple of judicial leniency and relaxing social attitudes, toward homosexuals in the early and mid-1970s, quickly grew to a tidal wave of resurgent discriminatory legislation that began with Anita Bryant's Save Our Children campaign and continued into the next millennium. Current Anti-Discrimination Policy/Law and Homosexuality In the decade following the successful Save Our Children campaign, the future of LGBT civil rights appeared grim. Throughout the U.S., discrimination against LGBT individuals prevailed and "more than two-thirds of the anti-gay ballot measures were lost every year, the vast majority of them repeals of basic non-discrimination laws like the one targeted by Bryant in Miami-Dade County" (Anti-LGBT Ballot Measures, 2005-2006). In this section, anti-discrimination law and policy, from the 1980s to present day, are discussed. The subsections include: 1) Law and Policy: Small Victories in the 1980s, 2) Law and Policy: The 20th Century Comes to a Close, and 3) Law and Policy: The New Millennium. In the midst of the trend against gay rights, the LGBT community did win some battles in the on-going war. In 1977, the same year Bryant was spewing her anti-gay rhetoric and gaining support for the repeal of non-discrimination laws, the District of Columbia, with its sodomy law still in place, passed a gay rights law. This law remained the strongest gay rights law in the country through the 1980s (Winas, 1988).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study Titled Life Experiences of Gays in Thiruvananthapuram District: A Case Study is a qualitative approach to gain in depth understanding of the life experience of gays in Thiruvananthapuram district. “Methodology is the philosophical frame work within the research is conducted or the foundation upon which the research is based” (Brown,2006).

TITLE OF STUDY

LIFE EXPERIENCES OF GAYS IN THIRUVANATHAPURAM DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General Research Question

- ❖ What are the various challenges faced by gays in the society and in day to day life?

Specific Research Questions

- ❖ What are the social stigma faced by gays?
- ❖ What are the behavioural patterns of the family members and close kin towards the gays after coming out?
- ❖ Have the gays faced any mistreatment on the grounds of their sexuality?
- ❖ What are the challenges the Gays face in a heterosexual society?
- ❖ Is there any difference in perception of other towards them before and about their sexuality?

RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

The topic under concern requires an in-depth understanding on the situation; hence the researcher opted for case study design. Case study method of studying social phenomena is the thorough analysis of an individual case. The case study design helps the researcher to efficiently learn a lot about the various social experiences of the gays. Due to the sensitivity on the topic the researcher found it extremely difficult to find cases. Hence, had to limit the study to five cases.

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

GAY

Conceptual definition: A gay is a man homosexual the word gay is also used for men in relation to their sexual identity or sexual behaviour, regardless of sexual orientation or as an adjective to characterize or associate nouns with male homosexuality or same-sex attraction.

Operational definition: A men who is in a relationship with another men.

Stigma

Conceptual definition: Social stigma is of or discrimination against a person characteristic that serve to distinguish them from other members of a society.

Operational definition: Disagreement or people towards gay in a society which sets them apart from the mainstream.

METHOD OF STUDY

Researcher wanted a face-to-face interview with the respondents. So that the respondents can talk in depth, choosing their own words because this helps the researcher to develop a real sense of the respondent's understanding of the situation the details were also collected by building rapport and then through phone interviewing within two weeks of time. Therefore, the researcher chooses unstructured interview. Unstructured interview allows the researcher to collect data with open questions.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Researcher had applied an interview guide in order facilitate this interview. Interview guide ensure that the researcher collect the same general areas of information from each respondent; this provides more focus. It included some basic themes based on the research questions formulated beforehand. The themes included the questions related to nature of their family life social influences, experiences and stigmas

SELECTION OF CASE

To narrow down the study, researcher has taken in an account of gays ranging from 18 to 30 years old and who live in Thiruvananthapuram. The researcher was able to select the cases through snowball sampling.

CHAPTER: IV

CASE PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Presentation of case

This chapter is dealing with the presentation of cases, which depicts the scenario and life of the Gays and also problems they deal with in their day-to-day life.

Case:1

The researcher personally interacted with a respondent via telephone. The respondent Martin is a 27 years old man. He is from Thiruvananthapuram. He is working in a company in techno park Thiruvananthapuram. When the researcher asked the questions, he said that they had to face a number of problems psychologically in day-to-day life.

He had faced a lot of difficulties in his society. He has often felt the need to commit suicide. He faced a lot of isolation and ridicule from his family, friends, and relatives. He was not even considered a human being.

Martin said to the researcher that “when I was about 13 and 14 year, I thought I was more attracted to boys and I later found out that this character is called Gay”.

He didn't even know what a gay was. In his child hood, boys were attracted to the girls, he was the opposite. His father and mother and sister are also in there house. But it is a coincidence that he is known at home as a gay man. He was open minded to his sister but this was the only thing he did not tell her. But one day while he was telling the jock, he told her information and at first she teased him but when he confirmed that it was his identity, she suddenly got angry and started arguing. His sister even told him some medical treatment.

Martin says that “This is misconception of our community that I belong to and that it will change with sex identity counselling or medical treatment”.

About three years after he got to Techno Park, he did not tell anyone his identity at first but told some close friends about it.

He comes from a Christian family back ground. Although the Bible and other Vedas refers to LGBTIQ, the community view is that this is a kind of new race. The perspective of society is that this is the concept of a kind of new race. Society views these people as human beings who have been punished by God.

When they talk about change, many think it's very wrong. They are utterly ignorant about our society as the race they knew was divided into male and female and any race beyond that was what they considered to be sinners. Gay, lesbian and transgender people are completely excluded from society and their rights are given no value to the voice of the society.

Even if each of us wants to make a difference, we need to understand such type of individuals who have no right to reveal their identities in government institutions or other educational institutions.

According to IPC 377 homosexuality and related marriages were considered wrong by law but this section was repealed by September 6, 2018 making homosexuality and marriage legal.

He is a member of the Quebrith (LGBTIQ) community Martin told that “only if there be good communities like this, we can achieve equality and rights for all as well as awaken the community and also make them aware of such communities.”

Case 2

The researcher personally interacted with the respondents via. telephone. Sreejith is 29 years old man who is from Thiruvananthapuram. He is an entrepreneur. When Sreejith started talking about himself, the first thing he said was about our changing society. Despite many changes, people's attitudes towards them (LGBTQ) have not changed. But things now have changed even more than in the past. They are reluctant to open up about their own sex even after everybody is free to express themselves because of the fear of society. Realization that he was a gay, began when his childish love blossomed. But he realized that this character was just for him. The more he watched films, the more he became attracted to its actors. Primary school, higher secondary was all over and still he didn't disclose his character to anyone. Then he went to college. During his college days, he communicated well with his teachers. It was at this point that he told a teacher that he was a gay and his family came to know about this through his teacher. His mother was upset but the teacher consoled her. But

after hearing all this, his mother told him, “Don’t tell this information to anyone. We can cure the disease through counselling or medical treatment.”

Sreejith said that “my mother looked at me through the eyes of the people in the community. This is not only the case of mother, but this is the view of all people.”

He was not interested in a government job and was running a business of his own. Even when he treats everyone well, they all look at him differently. Although his family his Hindu, he was not interested in Hinduism. The puranas and the Vedas speak of the gay community but society cannot accept them. He does not go to the temple but when he goes to the temple during any festival some people would make fun of him. At sometimes, he hates the society itself. A culture that was invented by someone in the past continues even today and they are not ready for any change and they are not interested. If we want to change the society, each of us must change. Then only this society will change. But the situation is much better than it was before.

Sreejith said to the researcher, “We are all Indian citizens. So we need equality like all Indian citizens. Society should not deny us education, job and services of government by saying that you are a gay or a transgender person.

Although homosexual marriage is now permitted but the central government is still against it as they gave an appeal in Delhi High Court that a same sex couple cannot claim fundamental right for their marriage (The Print, 2021).

He has been a member of the Quebrith LGBTQ community for two years. Many people are willing to encourage and motivate them.

Case:3

Vishnu Narayanan is a 21 years old man and he is coming from Thiruvananthapuram. He is now studying degree. He faced a lot of ridicule and he is a degree history student he has no friends and is a very confined position.

His family consists of father, mother and sister. By the time he was almost a teenager, he had realised that he was a homosexual. He had never told anyone at home that he is a gay man.

He wants to say this at home but the unknown reaction of his father, mother and sister is what worries him. His father is a contractor. He is worried that his father will be ashamed if the locals find out about this. He told a close friend when he was a 10,12 that he is a gay but his friend told him it was a treatable disease. He was in low primary classes he did not even know what homosexuality was. Then, he got admission in degree in history. It was during this time that class for LGBTIQ was organized in our college. So, he got a lot of motivation with attending that class.

He came to know about their organization and he was able to talk to them more. But he has not yet been accepted as a member of that organization. Vishnu said that for every homosexual person there will be many crises in their own life. So, the more he learned about the Queerhythm community, the more they learned about their community the more he realized that homosexuality was just a kind of human being.

Vishnu told the researcher “There are many people in the society who are reluctant to even tell a lot of people they are gay because our society is the reason for isolating them”. His family is a Hindu family. He has no interest in faith; most of Hindu mythology says approves homosexuality but they are not ready to solve their problems even though such people are alive.

Even with so much education the attitude of the society has not changed. Even in an educated state like Kerala, it is enough to look at them with discrimination towards such people so what will be their situation in the less educated states. Even if they go to other public places in search of work, they are again subject to ridicule.

Sonu and Nikesh is the first gay couple in Kerala and Nived and Rahim is the second gay couple. Their marriage has changed a lot in the society. We must bring about changes like this so that everyone gets equal justice and equal consideration.

Case:4

Nithin is 30 years old and is coming from Thiruvananthapuram. Homosexuality is a community that experiences a lot of isolation. Homosexuality is marginalized in a society where everyone is marginalized. They never get the equality they deserve from their society.

Nithin has gone through a lot of pain and crisis. The first thing he said was about their love that was with a friend he met in college. Ajin so they told each other that they love each other and they still love it.

He was educated in a government school and did well in SSLC, PLUS TWO, he passed with flying colours and his family and villagers did not know that he was a Gay man. The adoration of film actors in the plus two years made him feel that he was in love with them unlike other individuals. He said that Mammooty was his favourite actor. Because he was more active in college life but often nowadays the gay or lesbian they didn't know about. It was a time when no one came forward.

He had spent a year in college and when the first-year students came to that college he talked more with a boy named Ajin and he was more open minded to him. So, they fell in love and their love continues to this day.

Although he believes in some religious matters, societies' attitude towards some of them is very painful. Homosexuality is marginalized in today's society. God is the same for everyone but sometimes society considers this group to be a cursed group of pupil. Another part of the community looks at this homosexuality with a face of compassion. Although gay and lesbian, they are referred to in the puranas and the Vedas as ordinary human beings yet in society's perspective they are looked down upon with contempt.

He is a person who works in a corporate bank. There is segregation towards homosexuality just as there is segregation towards caste in the place he works and the expressions of some people can never be tolerated.

Whether he is a gay is due to his own fault or fault of his family, the behaviour of some is very painful. It is a question mark that how every one of us Indian citizens gets the fundamental right of equal justice and equal treatment to this society. Many laws do not even consider homosexuality, and even though section 377 of the IPC has been removed and people cannot accept it.

Nithin told the researcher that "If he is an Indian citizen, we should all get the same justice and equal treatment. The next generation will not follow the same pattern but will move forward with the method of equality by creating change over time.

He has been a member of the queerythem LGBTIQ community for almost two years now and his view is that communities like this should grow. When he talks about his community, he says that, they get lots of opportunities to develop their skills and share their difficulties. A lot of good people support them in a good way. Each of us must be able to keep others together without excluding anyone from the society.

Case : 5

Anshad is 27 years old man coming from Thiruvananthapuram. What he was to say is about the discrimination he had experienced? He comes from a Muslim community and he works in a private company. He says about the painful things that happened to him in the mosque and his workplace.

In his family he has Bappa, Umma and two sisters. He started thinking about these things from his childhood. Since he was an only son, he got a lot of love from his family and used to buy him clothes for every festival.

During his childhood, his family was at the forefront of religious matters. He used to recite the Quran during his childhood because their family was at the forefront of religious matters everyone became attentive.

His friend a neighbour near his house became his close friend and they became good friends his family and their friends, family became very close. He would tell his friends all about his likes and dislikes and his friend would tell him everything in return. So as the year went by and his friends became inseparable, it was then that they realised that they were in love with each other.

He told his sister that he was a gay man and as soon as she heard his sister was upset and told her mother. His mother started crying with him a lot.

So, he became a topic of dissolution among the locals and he was ashamed to even leave the house similarly his father did not leave the house. During his MBA studies, he was subjected to a variety of teasing friends. Thus, he too became very strong. He faced extreme isolation from home, community, college and church.

It was at this time that a friend of his told about the gay community and he took membership in that community and he was able to find a lot of friends. Anshad told researcher that “If it were not for such community, I would have committed suicide”. It is safe to say that there is no other community that suffers so much.

The fact that they are not given enough consideration in law and even in government institutions is disgusting.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

The following themes emerged during data. In this chapter researcher has identified different theme. Those themes are related to the research focus and address the specific research questions and that provides the research with the basis for a theoretical understanding of the data.

Thematic analysis

- Homophobia

The homophobia definition is the fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people were lesbian, gay, or bisexual. It has been defined as contempt, prejudice, aversion, hatred or antipathy, may be based on irrational fear and ignorance and is often related to religious beliefs.

“There are many people in the society who are reluctant to even tell a lot of people like me because our society is the reason for isolating them”

[Vishnu narayanan]

Society is seen and understood on the basis of religious scriptures. They are not given a chance to live here. When some people understand gay, they are afraid of themselves. From this it is easily understood how the society see them and they get denied of the basic rights people can be homophobic in many different ways. Homophobia takes the form of insults discriminations.

- Mental health issues

Mental health illness are health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behaviour mental illnesses are associated with distress and or problems functioning

in social, work, or family activities. Mental health is the level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness.

“Don’t tell this information to any one we can cure the disease through counselling or medical treatment”

[Sreejith]

Mental health issues that affect gay population is relatively high. The majority of gay and bisexual men have and maintain good mental health even though research has shown that they are at great risk for mental health problems. However, ongoing homophobia, stigma and discrimination can have negative effects in gay men health.

- Gender equality

Gender equality also known as sexual equality or equality of the sexes, is the state of equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender, including economic participations and decision- making and the state of valuing different behaviours, aspirations and need equally, regardless of gender.

“If he is an Indian citizen, we should all get the same justice and equality”

[Nithin]

Gender equality is a state in which one’s opportunities, freedoms or importance. In gay community they give equal opportunity for all people. They being gays, which are not yet included in the main stream of the society faces a lot of inequality and disrespect at the work place, public and even at their own houses so, here it is addressed that they need to be respected as well as regarded too.

- Social stigma

Social stigma is the disapproval of or discrimination against, a person based on perceivable social characteristics that serve to distinguish them from other members of a society. Social stigmas are commonly related to culture, gender, race, age, sexual orientation.

“If it were not for such community, I would have committed suicide”

[Anshad]

- Sexism

Sexism is prejudice or discrimination based on one’s or gender. Sexism can affect anyone but it primarily affects any one but it primarily affects women and girls. It

has been linked to stereotypes and gender roles, and may include the belief that one sex or gender is intrinsically superior to another.

“Equal chance and equality of all streams no discrimination no sexism”

[Martin]

Sexism in a society is most commonly applied against women and girls but the sexism affects minority people example(gay). In society they gay people have no equal chance to the education and work place even in their religious place and own house.

- Suicide

Whether gay men have higher prevalence of suicidal behaviour has also been debated in recent years. Some gay men have contended that suicide is highly prevalent among LGB populations, especially youth (Gibson,1989).

Rotheram-Borus, hunter and Rosario,1994. Suicide is the act of taking one’s own life. Research has found that attempted suicide rates and suicidal ideation among lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender (LGBT)youth is significantly higher than among the general population.

“If it were not for such community, I would have committed suicide”

[Anshad]

The suicide rates and suicidal tendency is higher among gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, youth is significantly higher than among the general population. The reason of increasing suicidal rate is mainly discrimination and isolation against LGBT people have been shown to have significant negative impacts on the physical and mental health and well-being of LGBT youth for example depression and drug use among LGBT people have been shown to increase significantly after the passage significantly after the passage of discriminatory laws.

- Sexual prejudice

Scientific analysis of the psychology of anti-gay attitudes will be facilitated by a new term. Sexual prejudice serves this purpose nicely. Broadly conceived, sexual prejudice refers to all negative attitudes based on sexual orientation, whether the target is homosexual, such prejudice is almost always directed at people who engage in homosexual behaviour or label themselves gay, lesbian (Herek-2000)

“Is a gay being due to his own fault or fault of his family, the behaviour of some is very painful.” [Nithin]

Sexual prejudice encompasses all negative attitudes and assumptions directed toward an individual or group based on sexual orientation. Sexual prejudice refers to negative attitudes toward an individual because of her or his sexual orientation.

- Minority stress

The stress as derived from minority status and explores its effect on psychological distress in gay men. The concept of minority stress is based on the premise that gay people in a heterosexist society are subjected to chronic stress related to their stigmatization. Minority stressors were conceptualized as internalized homophobia, which relates to gay men’s direction.

“This is a misconception of our community that I belong to and that it will change with sex identity counselling or medical treatment”

[Martin]

The gay related discrimination perceived stigma or other stressors is associated with poorer mental health for gay because the population of gay men is very less amount yet not all gay men and heterosexual men experience the same levels or types of stressors, nor do they react the same in response to stress exposure.

- Stigma and discrimination

Some people may have negative attitudes toward gay bisexual, and other men who have sex with men these attitudes can lead to rejection by friends and family discriminatory acts and violence and laws and policies with negative consequences

“The puranas and the Vedas speak of themselves or the gay community but society cannot accept them.”

[Sreejith]

Sexual stigma is a form of social stigma against people who are perceived to be non-heterosexual because of their belief’s identities or behaviours. Felt sexual stigma consist of the apprehensiveness that one might have of being loaded with a sexual stigma based on the views and stereotypes that society has placed on sexual minority members.

CHAPTER: V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

Findings

Homosexuality is romantic or sexual attraction or behaviour among members of the same sex or gender. As a sexual orientation, homosexuality refers to "an enduring pattern of or disposition to experience sexual, affectional, or romantic attractions" primarily or exclusively to people of the same sex; "it also refers to the individual's sense of personal and social identity based on those attractions, behaviors expressing them, and membership in a community of others who share them".

Homosexuality is as old as humanity. The queer practices were secretly existent among the queens in harems, cowherds, soldiers, slaves, prisoners, nuns, priests, harvesting women and the highly spinning maidens in the olden days. The instances of "Gilman" in Islam, "Sodom and Gomorrah" in Christianity; and "Ardhanarishvara" in Hinduism testify further to the ancient inscriptions of homosexuality in the prominent religions of the world. Homosexuality is one of the three main categories of sexual orientation along with bisexuality and heterosexuality within the heterosexual-homosexual continuum. The longstanding consensus of the behavioural and social sciences and the health and mental health professions is that homosexuality is a normal and positive variation in human sexual orientation, though many religious societies, including Catholicism, Mormonism and Islam and some psychological associations, such as NARTH, teach that homosexual activity is sinful or dysfunctional.

'Gay' is a word that primarily refers to a homosexual person. The term was originally used to refer to feelings of being "carefree", "happy", or "bright and showy"; it had also come to acquire some connotations of "immorality" as early as 1637. The term is used as a reference to the homosexuality may date as early as the late 19th century, but it's used gradually increased in the 20th century. In modern English, gay has come to be used as an adjective, and as a noun referring to the people, especially to men and the practices and cultures associated with homosexuality. By the end of the 20th century, the word 'gay' was recommended by major LGBT groups and style guides to describe people attracted to members of the same sex.

The word "gay" arrived in English during the 12th century from Old French *gai*, most likely deriving ultimately from a Germanic source. For most of its life in English, the word's primary meaning was "joyful", "carefree", "bright and showy", and the word was very commonly used with this meaning in speech and literature.

This study is focused on exploring experiences of growing up through childhood, adolescence and young adulthood of gay individuals within their homes, schools, neighbourhoods, among friends and their journeys of finding themselves and their communities while living in a heteronormative society.

In this study the researcher has tried to understand individual experiences and processes of growing up and development and maintenance of same-sex sexual identity. While studying these processes, the researcher explored the role of family, peers, romantic relationships, educational institutions, queer communities in shaping the gay identity. The researcher has attempted to locate these individual narratives of 'growing up' and 'becoming' gay within the socio psycho context within which these lives and journeys have unfolded. In this sense this study has been informed by a life course perspective.

Marginalised sexuality, they being in a marginalised society or sexual minority individuals experience a substantially different life course than do heterosexuals. Experience of stigma and discrimination and an accompanying sense of alienation affects the childhood, adolescence, adulthood and entire life experiences of gay individuals.

Social stigma they face are mainly the negligence they face at work mainly, also ignoring from the group is also one of the main issues they deal with. Abusing them at work or in public places have also come into notice such as verbally abusing them at work or in public places have also come into notice such as verbally abusing them at work as mentioning their identity and insulting them. They also feel low when people make biased decisions on them.

Coming out has become the most severe part of a gay's life. They go through a phase of identity crisis where there will be no one to support them or to make them feel it's okay. They mainly don't come out due to fear of getting oppressed. The process of coming out is always a big deal for them as the reaction of parents and close kin and friends toward them would be no longer the same.

Conclusion

Gays are members of a social minority group, who are suffering from various forms of socioeconomic and cultural injustice. They are subject to some prejudices rooted in beliefs and traditions about sexuality and gender. The lack of social recognition has an effect on the capacity of gay people to fully access and enjoy their rights as citizens. They are facing tremendous difficulties in growing up in a society where heterosexuality is often presented as the only acceptable orientation and homosexuality is regarded as deviant. They continue to face discrimination and exclusion across the world in all spheres of life. In this study the researcher identified the problems that gays face in their daily life. Marginalized sexuality, coming out, social stigma and finding a partner are some of the major challenges. They are marginalized in the mainstream of the society. It makes their opportunities and also to make social contributions become limited and this leads them to develop a low self-confidence and self-esteem among themselves. They lose opportunities due to their identity which is really terrible. What threatens them the most is the rejection of parents and close friends, which ultimately leads them to depression and other mental health issues.

Nowadays, many adolescents reveal their sexuality to families and other friends. It was not done before, simply because of the fear of getting oppressed. Most of them are worried about the responses of the family and the community. During the data collection, the researcher understood that, fear of rejection and the community. During the data collection, the researcher understood that, fear of rejection and serious negative reactions kept them from opening up and sharing their views. The majority of gays learn to cope with this after revealing their identity, particularly when they have the support of family and friends, and participate with LGBT organizations and social networks. They are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence due to their sexual orientation, than those that identify themselves as heterosexual. It is high time to change the perception of the family and society towards gays and accept them as what they are.

Suggestions

- More opportunities to be given for the upliftment of the gays.
- Support the gays, irrespective of their gender.
- To check the violence that is perpetrated in the home as well as the public sphere, the domestic violence law has to be expanded to include parental violence.
- To give awareness classes on gays to the elderly than that of the youth.

- To normalize LGBTQ all around the world and to include them into the mainstream too.
- To include sex education into the academic syllabus.
- To change the attitude media has to play a responsible role by reporting gay issues and promoting a culture of tolerance and freedom of minorities.

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**LIFE EXPERIENCES OF GAYS IN
THIRUVANATHAPURAM DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY**

APPENDIX

1. Name
2. Age
3. Occupation
4. Are your parents supportive?
5. How do you manage to live?
6. What are the challenges you face in the heterosexual society?
7. Are you married?
8. How did you parents and close friends react to this?
9. What are your suggestions for the government?
10. Any plans about empower this community?