

Mystification over Sexuality
Prerogative to Persist in Laxmi Narayan Tripathi's *Me Hijra,*
Me Laxmi

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ABSTRACT

The Paper entitled "Mystification over Sexuality: Prerogative to Persist in Laxmi Narayan Tirupati's Me Hijra, Me Laxmi" dispense the fluster concerning one's own sexuality. To exist and lead a tranquil life is a cardinal right. But this has been declined in the lives of third gender. Even though contemporary civilization is unprejudiced towards the transgender when collates to the preceding one, still certain people neglect to accept the transgender. They firmly trust that there are only two genders in the humankind and fails to adjudge them as a typical person. Furthermore, they are depicted as lunatic. This article delineates the homosexual conduct of the transgender, prior discerning them as the third gender. The role of society and the menage in the entity of the transgender is scrutinized. From the launching of LGBTQIA+ campaign every year, it made an enormous impact over their community. The primary novel chosen for the study exhibits the sexual violence that Laxmi has endured because of her effeminate conduct and also the ostracization she has gone through in her life. The paper seeks to construe how the wilderness over one's own sexuality sequels in psychological turmoil's and also the challenges she and other people like her has endured in order to attain in their life.

Keywords: *Transgender, hijras, ostracization, society, third-gender*

Laxmi Narayan Tripathi is an Indian author and a dancer. She is also known as an Indian transgender rights activist. In her works she often speaks about the plights of sexual minorities. Her writings show the forthright and perceptive account of her life. She brawls for the rights and livelihood for the transgender community. She strives for her dignity. She has felt that the society lags optimistic outlook over the transgender, so she becomes a person who brings a change in it.

The novel chosen for the study is *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi* by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi. In her initial stage she has been perplexed about her own gender. As she has been born with male organs and has clarified as male at birth, she often has the question about her own identity. The main plot of the novel is how a boy with numerous health issues and gender confusion has overcome all the obstacles in the life and remains a greatest epitome of success in the community

of the transgender because of her courageous attitude. She has gone through mental trauma when her body has been violated by men because of her effeminate behavior. It seems like that her body does not belong to her but to others. In many places she highlights the successful period of her life. Unlike many other *hijras* she has not face any ostracization from her family. Laxmi has broken the limitations for the transgender community through her work by bringing out the issues which are faced by the transpeople in Indian communities. Dawn article states that “*Me Hijra, Me Laxmi* serves as an educational narrative about the lives and paradigms of the *hijra* community. All her work gives a strong voice and power to hijras alike. As a transgender activist, Laxmi embraces her sexuality and fights for the visibility and rights of the transgender community. She adds to the larger campaign for LGBTQ+ rights by encouraging self-acceptance and questioning social standards. Laxmi is an advocate for inclusivity, challenges prejudice and promotes awareness in order to embrace transgender sexuality and identity. She promotes candid discussions in an effort to dispel stigmas attached to transgender people and to promote understanding and acceptance in society. Tripathi frequently discusses the value of accepting and acknowledging the range of gender identities and manifestations.

Laxmi during her initial stage is not aware of her sexuality. Yet she discerns that the way she speaks and saunter in a feminine quirk. But she cannot figure out the cause. She has been sexually exploited in the age of seven. Men has taken advantage of her feminine quirk and has molested her. But Laxmi is too young to acknowledge it. Later, she detects her attraction towards men and wonders whether it is because she is a woman internally “I am effeminate, I began and people tease me. I am also sexually attracted to men. Why am I not like everyone else? Am I abnormal?” (Tripathi 11). Through the help of a man called Ashok, she comes to know that she is not abnormal but the world around us is abnormal. “A hijra’s male body is a trap not just to the *hijra* itself who suffocates within it, but to the world in general that wrongly assumes a hijra to be a man” (40). Transpeople finds it difficult to live in the wrong body and this condition of discomfort is known as gender dysphoria. It is a psychological and emotional distress which begins when an individual’s identity does not align with their birth sex. This leads to discomfort, anxiety and suffocates in their own body. The Frontiers article states that “non-binary and genderqueer people are those who do not identify within the gender binary system, not falling exclusively in male or female categories”. Young people typically contain higher percentage of non-binary individuals. Because they are marginalized members of this group are vulnerable to stigma and poor health outcomes.

The sex which has assigned to the transgender during their birth and their gender identification are out of alignment for transgender people. This mismatch might make it difficult

for them to conform to social norms about gender roles and the attitudes and behaviours that go along with their assigned sex. The transgender community is diverse and the term ‘third gender’ may not adequately capture this diversity. Respecting and acknowledging each person’s distinct gender identity and expression is crucial. In SSRN article Niranjana Ghosh states that the novel *Me Hijra Me Laxmi* “highlights the mismatches between biological sex, social gender roles and behavioral attitudes of the third gender as a social deviant”. Cultural conventions, traditional gender beliefs and society norms are frequently linked to the view of transgender people as social outcasts. Some people might have conservative opinions that rigidly uphold gender norms based on biological sex assignments. It can cause misconceptions and stigmatization when people express gender identities that defy or diverse from the standards. Gender roles have always been strictly expected in cultures and those who didn’t fit in the mold were occasionally called out as abnormal. It is imperative to acknowledge that the perception of transgender people as abnormal is a personal viewpoint and opinions regarding gender identity and varies greatly among various societies and groups. Even though *hijras* are recognized as a third gender, they frequently nevertheless battle for basic rights. In the Medium article Krish Bhut states that “Although the hijras are recognized as a third gender legally, they continue to struggle for their basic rights”. They face obstacles like prejudice, social stigma and restricted access to chances for training and work. Legal recognition is a positive beginning but in order to ensure that their rights are fully realized, society attitudes and behaviors are very important.

Numerous Trans people during their inceptive phase remains as a gender non-binary person unaware of their sexuality. Non binary is neither male nor female. And these people have the characteristics of both the genders. Non binary person is also known as Bigender, Gender fluid, Gender Queer and Agender. Likewise, Laxmi also remains as a non-binary before realizing herself as a trans woman. “The terms ‘transmasculine’ and ‘transfeminine’ are used to describe non-binary people who express their gender through conventionally masculine or feminine aesthetics without identifying as men or women. This may include the use of hormones and surgery” (Faye 86). The term “transmasculine” and “transfeminine” describes people whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female but stays toward masculinity or femininity. National Library of Medicine states that “Gender dysphoria, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is defined as a marked incongruence between their experienced or expressed gender and the one they were assigned at birth”. Individuals who go through this turmoil are unable to align their gender expression with the rigid, traditional male or female that society has to offer, which can lead to stigmatization in their culture. This may also worsen interpersonal conflicts, social rejection, anxiety and depressive symptoms, drug use

disorders, low self-esteem and a negative sense of wellbeing as well as an increased risk of self-harm and suicidality. It may also result in relationship problems with family, peers and friends. It's crucial to remember that not all transgender people have gender dysphoria and that every transgender person's experience is different. For those who do experience it, gender dysphoria can be considerably reduced with the help of understanding supportive surroundings and access to care that promotes gender identity.

Gradually Laxmi gets a closure that she is a woman and not a man when she feels the attraction towards men. When her parents realize the true identity of Laxmi they were traumatized. Her father even forces Laxmi to marry a girl. Laxmi is aghast and states that if this occurs, not only her life is going to spoil but also the life of the other girl too will deface. But unlike the families of other transgender, Laxmi's family commence to support her. In A. Revathi's novel *The Truth About Me*, the author states that her family did not accept her when comes out as a transgender. Although acknowledging a third gender identity is a positive step towards inclusivity, they still experience a number of difficulties. Shreya Ila Anasuya in *The Wire* article states that "Though the Transgender Identity Certificate acknowledges the gender assigned at birth and gender requested, while applying for the jobs, they are often compelled to identify themselves as male or female in the absence of a third option". Despite being recognised as a third gender, forcing transgender people to identify as male or female can present a number of difficulties. It could lead to erasure of identity, social stigma, legal and administrative issues, healthcare disparities, mental health impact, isolation and alienation.

For years *hijras* has been treated as an ultimate subaltern who are deprived from the fundamental rights which are assured by the constitution. Laxmi feels that they are considered as slaves and non-persons by the society and also endures injustice for centuries. So, she starts to work hard to gain dignity for their *hijra* community. She is the first transgender to represent Asia-Pacific in the United Nations meeting. And she is also the first transgender to receive the G4 visa. Coming out as a transgender can present a number of difficulties for families. Though there are differences in responses, misconceptions, ignorance of transgender identities, fear of social rejection and worries about family dynamics are some common problems. Families must communicate openly and supportively in order to overcome these obstacles and promote understanding. In National Library of Medicine, J. Fam Psychol states that "Because of the stigma associated with transgenderism, many transwomen experience rejection or abuse at the hands of their parents and primary care givers as children and adolescents". Laxmi Narayan Tripathi has shared that her family initially struggled to accept her identity as a transgender person. However, overtime they have become more understanding and supportive of her

journey. It's important to note that individual experiences can differ and Laxmi's story illustrates the difficulties and eventual acceptance that some transgender people encounter within their family.

Transpeople experience systemic discrimination in housing, work, education and health care. Additionally, there is a higher chance of an arbitrary arrest. Human Rights Watch article states that "Arrest and questioning at checkpoints are often accompanied by physical violence by law enforcement officials". Transgender are denied from police protection, which jeopardises their ability to live in safety and puts them in a constant state of precarity. They also frequently experience violence from members of the public. Due to lack of resources catered to the needs of transpeople and the challenges they face in obtaining identification documents that accurately reflect their gender identity and expression. The discrimination against the transpeople is made worse. This discrimination stems from severe social stigma and isolation. Sexual orientation is influenced by the concept of a sexual identity and JFMPC article states that "it's an enduring platform of emotional, romantic and / or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes". People who identify as transgender may identify with a gender other than the one that was biologically assigned to them. Conversely, sexual orientation refers to an individual's attraction to others. While these elements may be related to one another, they are not mutually exclusive. Like Cisgender people, transgender people can be of any sexual orientation. Transgender activist Vyjayanti Vasanta says that "Access to education and consequently to employment continue to evade the transgender community". The right to life of transpeople is still violated by unreported and unregistered hate crimes.

Innumerable people trust that *hijras* who did castration is alone a real *hijra*. Even certain groups of *hijras* believe the same. Castration is a sex changing operation and it also known as *Nirvana*. But castration cannot be enforced over *hijra*, it's a personal choice. Laxmi is not castrated. In Malaysia castration is prohibited. As it is a Muslim country, they believe that a person cannot change the gender given by God. Transgender has earned their right to vote in the year 1994 in the state of Tamil Nadu. Laxmi states that in Tamil Nadu, transwomen are allowed to use the women lavatory. In India, Tamil Nadu is the only state which has done the majority of welfare for the *hijras*. And this is because numerous numbers of transwomen come from Tamil Nadu. The detection of this paper is, nowadays transpeople are very much aware of their sexuality in their initial stage itself and peg away to attain their rights. Taxing one's sexuality will not be succeeded and it only results in giving agony to one's mental health.

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