



# Teachers Education College and Teaching Curriculum and Queer Community—An Analysis of Queer Awareness in the Student Community of Teachers Education Colleges in Kerala

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**ABSTRACT:** *In the days of gender-neutral uniforms and some of the rules in BEd colleges and educational institutions in Kerala were suffocating students. In the wake of this, the Department of Higher Education yesterday ordered students to come to B.Ed colleges in any decent attire. Teachers are responsible for teaching pupils a specified syllabus and imparting information about that subject. It is their responsibility to ensure that students grasp what is being taught to them in the classroom, online, or in an e-learning environment. This paper tries to analyse why society is still reluctant to accommodate queer people. Queering the curriculum also entails questioning the meaning of "civil rights" by looking at queer people's historical experiences, as well as other commonly held assumptions such as how gendered categories and concepts of "normal" are socially constructed. Teachers collaborate with students, other teachers, school officials, families, and community members to ensure their kids' academic achievement and healthy growth. Depending on the instructors' intentions and the requirements of their pupils, the nature of these interactions among various stakeholders varies.*

**KEYWORDS:** *College, Education, Student, Teachers, Queer.*

## INTRODUCTION

"Blessed are those who sleep in the classroom because they do not lose even their dream." These are the lines in Malayalam Poet Sachchidanand's poem 'Autobiography of an Indian Student'. There are students in the classroom who do not even have the means to dream [1]. As a queer student, they at times are breathless in the B.Ed classroom [2]. Despite facing many forms of discrimination since school days, many students enter B.Ed College with the great openings that university life has given them [3]. But how do B.Ed classrooms treat students? What kind of students are they considering? This paper intends to analyze the same. Queer students many a times do not consider the cisgender heterosexual people anyway. They remain kid in the classroom. They are almost invisible, and not even in a mirror. Quoting a poem, "There are a lot of mirrors in my school [4]. I do not remember seeing myself, not in textbooks or in chalkboards or the tips of teachers tongues. I wasn't talked about here, an unspoken character in a room of protagonists, I wondered why no one could tell us how to find ourselves."

## METHODOLOGY

Although the volume of research on the LGBT population is steadily increasing, scant consideration has been given to LGBT attitudes among college students.

Yet, this population is comprised of individuals who are both at a time in their lives in which “coming out” is likely to occur and in a place [5]. This study not only adds to the knowledge around student perceptions of campus climates and the lives of queer students of color but also to the mixed-method approach of SPN and phenomenology. Furthermore, this study’s aesthetic and structural construction, weaving stories and methods, is an effort to produce a document that demonstrates and informs a unique queer person of colour theoretical positionality [6].

#### *Data Analysis:*

The society should understand why the classrooms are closed. This is not just a criticism of B.Ed colleges, but a concern of a queer student about the anti-woman-queer-Muslim-Dalit attitudes prevalent in all our educational institutions. Educational institutions in Kerala have never been queer inclusive. Though a false face of progressiveness has been put out there, they have always existed as extremely toxic males [7]. The discussions created by the ‘gender neutral’ uniform is not tied up. During the last six months, there have been various government interventions on the subject of 'gender'. The institutionalized assassination of Ananya Kumari Alex, Kerala's first transgender radio jockey and presenter, has sparked a wide-ranging discussion about the discrimination that queers experience in the health sector.

The government had yesterday ordered an inquiry into a private hospital in Kochi that performed a unique gender reassignment surgery. The government has taken steps to make textbooks subject to gender auditing from the pre-primary level onwards. Naturally, the choir in Kerala had questions as to whether these efforts would be reduced to a limited definition of the subject of 'gender' as 'related to women' or whether a queer inclusive approach would be adopted [8].

In the aftermath of all this, Valayanchirangara LP School and Balussery Government School discussing 'Gender Neutral' uniform. Various opinions were heard on the subject from various quarters. But since our classrooms, curricula and school buildings are all gender neutral, it is not correct to assume that classrooms can be enclosed only by such counter-revolutions under the label 'gender neutral'. It's such an old place. I can still see teachers in my B.Ed. classroom who cannot accommodate the boy who grew his hair, pierced his ears and wrote his eyes. They still make fun of me in public. In the midst of all this, we are preaching the ‘gender neutral’ debate with our legs outstretched, and there is a flaw in it [9].

The question on my mind is whether our schools are adequate to accommodate students in ‘gender neutral’ uniforms. In which classroom do children in gender neutral uniforms go? What kind of teachers teach them? - Within a hundred sets of concerns. If you look at the B.Ed colleges in Kerala, things will be clearer. It can sometimes be shocking to learn how these institutions treat faculty students. (Or, what's shocking about this). Sarees are mandatory for girls in many institutions. There is a rule not to come to class without a shawl.

Teachers do not hesitate to publicly embarrass students who question this rule, even in the slightest. There are teachers out there who fainted when the order ‘sari is not mandatory for teachers’ came. They may have reasonably feared that teachers would be wearing bikinis to school from tomorrow. It was big news recently that transgender Anira had approached the Legal Services Authority seeking to have a lawyer available to apply for euthanasia in the Kerala High Court. Schools in Kerala are facing a transgender teacher with all the qualifications [10]. The Government of Kerala intervened effectively in Aneera's case and ensured that Aneera could continue to work. All queer men deserve the same support as Anira. No student should be skinned in the classroom. There are a lot of queer people like Anira who have reached

the teaching field. They also need space in the classroom. A government has a responsibility to stand with those students.

## DISCUSSION

The atmosphere in our classrooms is generally apolitical and not at all democratic. Over the years, many medical, engineering, arts and science colleges in Kerala and most of the universities have formed student-led discussions and small groups on the subject of queer. The need to understand sex and the body with a political emphasis rather than as a purely biological subject is becoming more and more apparent in modern times. At the same time, the big question remains as to how well our education system, curriculum and teaching staff cover such topics.

The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2009) proposes to include gender as a separate subject in the curriculum. Although there is a paper on gender, school and society in the fourth semester of Calicut University's B.Ed. syllabus, the content of the syllabus does not move beyond the 'male' and 'female' categories. The situation is similar in the rest of the universities. Classes in B.Ed. colleges on gender, sex and sexuality present gender and sexual minorities as patients. There is a section in the psychology paper in the first semester of B.Ed. about the problems experienced during adolescence. There, all non-male and female conditions are diseased. Gender is out of the question. All sexual orientations outside of heterosexuality need to be corrected. Quoting the instance of a queer person, when they were asked to write about the problems students face as teenagers, gay marriage was also on the list written by a friend of them. They were not shocked to see it. This classroom expects such an answer as well. They talked to him about it and corrected him. How many people can a queer person edit per day?

The trauma experienced by a queer student who has to be in these classrooms is horrendous. IPC criminalizes homosexuality 377 is four years after its partial cancellation. Kerala is also the first state to implement a 'transgender policy' after the Nalsa Judgment. But this kind of injustice and violence is still not discussed in any way. Now, even if such a discussion were to take place, any one queer student would have to commit suicide.

Following Anjana's suicide in Kerala, a large number of issues that arise as a result of convention therapy are being discussed. Only after Ananya's death did the government come up with new ideas for gender reassignment surgery. Unfortunately, many more queer men will have to die to discuss the problems of each section of the LGBTIQ + community and make new changes. In the end, it is doubtful whether the queer person will survive, let alone get natural justice.

Towards the end of last year, a manual for teachers was published on the NCERT's official website to address the need to create an educational environment that is inclusive of transgender students. The manual, titled "Inclusion of Transgender Children in School Education: Concerns and Roadmaps", was widely criticized on social media. Subsequently, the NCERT. This manual was also withdrawn from the site. The manual was prepared by a group consisting of Poonam Agarwal, a professor and former head of the Gender Studies Department at NCERT. This was not a very quick intervention. Behind the manual are various debates that have arisen in the wake of the 2014 Supreme Court Nalsa ruling.

The manual covered a wide range of topics, including gender-neutral uniforms, gender-neutral toilets, and the abolition of gender segregation. Efforts should be made to bring an accurate awareness of sex, gender and sexuality to the classroom. A variety of workshops and classes can be organized for this purpose. It is also imperative to include such topics in the curriculum.

We can exemplify existing policies and studies at the international level for reform efforts in the field of education that should be possible in the long run. Qualified principals have precise instructions on the steps each country should take for the welfare of queer individuals. The right to education is the very essence of Eligibility Principles Principle-16. The Nalsa Judgment of 2014 put forward the idea of ensuring representation for transgender people, including in the education and employment sectors. All these small social movements have been possible as part of the various struggles, legal battles and resistances of the Queer men since at least the 1990s. The most recent example of this effort is “Inclusion of Transgender Children in School Education: Concerns and Roadmap”. NCERT offers some practical ways on how an educational institution can be queer inclusive. The manual suggests;

- Educational institutions need to have queer friendly infrastructure e.g. toilet-rest room-hostel facilities.
- It is imperative that binary-based school-classroom (sports, etc.) activities cease. It is important to control gender-based school activities and to eliminate discrimination against girls and boys in school assemblies and classrooms. Group activities should be encouraged. Gender neutral uniforms can be worn considering students.
- All teachers and non-teachers should be made aware of the transgender issue as part of measures to end discrimination, isolation and ridicule against queer students.
- Train teacher trainers and educators to create a trans-friendly school environment.
- Curriculum reform: Removing parts with anti-quirky references and adding new parts is important.
- Pro Organizing events that build students' confidence - The cooperation of motivational speakers, councilors and NGOs can be expected in this area.
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- Queer Clubs: These types of clubs may be helpful for students' coming out and mental health.
- There should be cells and committees to prevent and address the atrocities faced by queer students.

## CONCLUSION

It is essential that teachers educate students and teachers, especially on such topics. Otherwise, they will have to stand in front of babies in gender-neutral uniforms tomorrow. School-college life has long been a major injury for queer individuals. Quoting the words of Intersex Rights Activist Aanandh "Where did our childhood go?" No student's childhood should be stolen anymore. Teachers should not be social engineers and coconuts and mangoes. It is enough to be a little more careful. It is enough to be human. If only the child sitting on the last bench in the class realized that he was his child. Students practice and acquire competency in subject and applied learning skills through a standards-based series of designed activities. Curriculum serves as a primary guide for all educators in terms of what is required for effective teaching and learning, ensuring that all students have access to challenging academic experiences.

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