

Beyond the Binary: A Sociological Study of Queer Youth Movements, Democratic Transformation, and the Pursuit of Dignity in Urban Vadodara.

***Ms. Tehzib Barodawala**

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology

Faculty of Arts Faculty of Arts

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

tehzib.b-soc@msubaroda.ac.in

****Dr. Pooja Dikshit Joshi**

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology

Faculty of Arts Faculty of Arts

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

pooja.d-soc@msubaroda.ac.in

***** Dr. Virendra Singh**

Assistant Professor,

Head, Department of Sociology

Faculty of Arts Faculty of Arts

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

virendra.singh-soc@msubaroda.ac.in

** Corresponding Author: Dr. Pooja Dikshit Joshi

**In whispers, then roars, the tides take their stand,
A social movement, a united hand.
Breaking the chains of norm and disdain,
Planting the seeds for a world to regain.
Queer youth march with courage so bright,
Painting the darkness with colours of light.
Their voices rewrite what was cast in stone,
A melody of freedom, a world to own.
Through struggle and love, they ignite the flame,
Transforming society, reclaiming its name.**

Social movements are tools of both disruption and unity, influencing the course of human history and shedding light on the route to a more equitable and inclusive society by negotiating the fine line between development and stability. Social movements are the driving force behind social change because they oppose long-standing systems and promote fair distribution of resources and power. Together, these movements demand political, social, and economic change by defying the lack of momentum of enduring conventions. They are dynamic forces that can bring disparate people together around a common goal. They also frequently show themselves as potent sparks when the status quo's supporters oppose them. By challenging the established quo, these movements aim to rebuild society, yet total devastation is not necessary for this restoration. Rather, it entails selective retention, partial education, prudent idea borrowing, and a slow acceleration of change (Rao, 2000). The role of the state has evolved

from merely ensuring safety and security to attending to the personal issues of its people, as seen by the current level of government. As welfare states have grown in popularity, these private concerns have turned into public ones, forcing the government to rally its sizable populace to take collective action. As a result, the formerly immobile state bureaucracy has transformed into a force for growth and transformation. Acknowledging this shift is essential to comprehending contemporary social movements and how they relate to democracy (Wainaina, 2024). By challenging established power structures, advocating for justice, and calling for acceptance of multiple identities, queer youth organizations serve as prime examples of how social movements can transform democratic values. The queer youth movement represents an unrelenting effort to challenge and redefine gender and sexuality norms in society. This movement, which is based on the idea that gender is a cultural construct rather than a fixed or intrinsic reality, gives young people the ability to rethink and challenge the constrictive roles that have been placed on their bodies throughout history. The Queer youth movement emphasizes the fluidity of identity and advocates for the urgent need to regain control over self-expression, drawing inspiration from important intellectuals such as Simone de Beauvoir, who proposed that the body functions as a canvas for cultural expression. This movement proactively fosters new spaces for diversity and inclusivity rather than just opposing the norms that are in place. Through addressing structural obstacles like prejudice, exclusion, and underrepresentation, Queer youth promote a society in which personal identities are honoured rather than repressed. They strive for a world where everyone can live genuinely as themselves by challenging the deeply embedded cultural practices that perpetuate exclusion through activism, art, and community building. These movements promote inclusivity within democratic institutions by challenging heteronormative and cisnormative social norms. According to Mukherji (2013), social movements have their roots in social conflict and seek to alter the system in order to better serve the interests of marginalized social groups. The role of the state in this process is crucial; it has evolved from a defence against outside dangers to one that needs to encourage and formalize citizen participation. These days, the welfare state may be both a potential partner and an enemy to social movements. By opposing discriminatory behaviours, movements not only promote the rights of LGBTQ people but also broaden the democratic process (USAID, 2020).

In conclusion, queer youth activism serves as an example of how underrepresented groups may shape social norms and propel democratic change by tenaciously defending their right to respect and acknowledgement. This study emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend how social movements, state dynamics, and democratic procedures interact in modern society.

Key words: social movement; Queer youth; heteronormativity; state; Equity and justice, Democracy.

Introduction

From Protest to Progress: Social Movements tool for Social Change

“Never question that a small number of dedicated, thoughtful citizens can make a big difference in the world—in fact, it's the only thing that has ever done so.” Margaret Mead.

Social movement and revolutions are the two main portal of bringing about a major change in the society. They can be term as pathological aberrations. Main objective of the movement is reconstruction. Reconstruction does not call for total destruction of the society. Partial education, selective retention, judicious borrowing and gradual acceleration are all necessary ingredients of authentic reconstruction. (Touraine, 1981). Social Movement can be defined as forces against the status quo. State earlier was made to protect citizen from the external aggression providing them internal security but with the emergence of the notion of welfare and socialist state, private worries have become public worries. As welfare states become more prevalent, it is crucial to recognize that individual challenges are now acknowledged as common social issues. This development urges on governments to use the collective strength of their people to support decisions that have an impact on all of us. The old, dogmatic bureaucracy is evolving into a flexible, dynamic organization that encourages development and transformation (Wainaina, 2024). It highlights the need to recognize ongoing continuous social change in order to understand the complexities of contemporary social movements and their relationship to democracy. The state's primary responsibilities include regulation and reorganization of the social system. The way the state operates has a significant influence on how social movements are analysed

in the current global environment. In order to maintain stability and advance justice, the state must not only regulate social institutions but also inspire its people to take part in group initiatives that spark significant change. Once thought of as the guardians of the status quo, bureaucratic institutions are now seen as essential instruments for enforcing laws, promoting advancement, and fostering sustainable development. Accepting this social change is not only beneficial but also necessary for the future we hope to build.

Mobilization is at the heart of any social movement, requiring people to actively participate and stay committed to shared goals. Sociologist Davis (1959) observed that movements often arise to address newly emerging societal needs, while Blumer (1969) argued that they are sparked by unstructured, stress-filled situations within a system. Movements are influenced by social structures, but they also reflect a voluntary effort by individuals who come together to achieve common objectives. Social movements function by both cooperation and conflict. Cooperation creates the structures that sustain society, while conflict challenges and reshapes those structures, ensuring societal evolution. This dual role highlights the interconnectedness of movements and social change. Much like the age-old question of the chicken and egg, it's hard to determine which comes first—social change often triggers movements, while movements accelerate further change. Typically, movements begin on the fringes of society, driven by groups that feel excluded or oppressed. Over time, they gain momentum and push towards the centre, uniting people around shared ideologies and building organizational frameworks. As these movements evolve, they often institutionalize, transitioning from informal networks to established organizations, which strengthens their ability to drive meaningful change.

Social movements are powerful catalysts for transformation. They confront societal issues, challenge entrenched power structures, and offer a voice to the marginalized. By mobilizing diverse groups and pursuing goals that blend material change and cultural redefinition, they shape the societies in which we live. In democracies, where freedom of expression and association flourish, movements play a critical role in narrowing the gap between marginalized communities and systemic power. Ultimately, they embody humanity's constant strive for justice, equality, and a better world.

According to sociologist, (Davis, 1959), a social movement arises to address a “new felt need,” while Herbert Blumer argues that such movements develop from “undefined and unstructured situations” that create stress within the social system (Blumer, 1969). Wallace further posits that revitalization movements begin only when participants feel that their cultural systems are unsatisfactory (Wallace, 1956). These perspectives highlight the adaptive nature of social movements, which often arise during periods of rapid social change and serve as mechanisms for addressing grievances and enacting reform. Movements are not merely reactions to a decline in social conditions; they can emerge when long-standing oppression becomes intolerable. Individuals who have endured systemic injustices may suddenly mobilize when the conditions for change appear favourable. This shift often occurs when the gap between societal expectations and actual satisfaction becomes too pronounced, leading individuals to believe that problems can be solved through collective action (Rao, 2000). When people accept strains as a fact of life, they are less likely to challenge the status quo. However, the belief that change is possible can ignite mobilization against existing arrangements. Social movements embody a dialectical relationship between historical context (past experiences), current social structures (present conditions), and aspirations for a better future (human creativity). They provide a vision for societal improvement and reflect the interplay between persistent change and evolving elements within a system. Movements are neither mere emotional outbursts nor solely products of manipulation by leaders; they result from conscious efforts by participants to reshape societal arrangements based on their experiences (Wainaina, 2024). For, instance, queer youth movements exemplify how marginalized communities can articulate their struggles and aspirations within the broader framework of social change. These movements challenge heteronormative and cisnormative structures while advocating for inclusivity in democratic processes. They highlight the importance of identity politics and intersectionality, where various aspects of identity—such as race, class, and gender—intersect to shape the experiences and demands of queer individuals (USAID, 2020).

Movements and institution have an intricate and processual relation between them. The transformation of movement into institution and vice versa is gradual and seldom sudden. Movements provide institutional

mechanisms. Institutions are instrument of movement to translate ideology into programme theory into practise without which they remain shell without substance Therefore, institutions require movements for their survival through periodic replenishment, if and when latter experience an erosion of their legitimacy.

Every social movement seeks to establish a structure or institution capable of translating its vision into reality. In this context, issues of identity, equity, and security are pivotal around which collective mobilizations occur. Identity has a significant impact on how people and groups behave in larger social settings. Collective identities are based on common experiences and a sense of solidarity, whereas personal identities are frequently linked to particular roles such as being a parent, a professor, or a Democrat. As people and communities identify and express who they are within broader cultural frameworks, identity is a key motivator in the queer movement. While individual identities—such as those of an activist, partner, or student—reflect distinct roles, collective identities within the queer community are anchored in common struggles, victories, and solidarity. These collective identities, which are influenced by things like sexual orientation, gender identity, and race, are exquisitely varied.

Queer identities embrace diversity and promote unity throughout various groups, showcasing the LGBTQ+ spectrum's depth and complexity. The gay movement's strength and revolutionary potential stem from this duality: appreciating individuality while coming together for a common goal.

Democratic and socialist principles are based on equality, which stands for a society's dedication to justice, fairness, and human dignity. No matter their socioeconomic background, age, sex, gender, caste, religion, language, or class, it guarantees that everyone has access to possibilities for growth and success. Equality is more than simply a concept for underrepresented groups, such as those in the queer movement; it is a lifeline for inclusion and dignity. Equality is much more important in the context of the queer movement. Because of cultural standards that value heteronormativity, the LGBTQ+ population has long been subjected to exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination. Removing obstacles that keep LGBT people from obtaining legal rights, work, healthcare, and education is essential to ensuring their equality. It also entails encouraging respect and acceptance of many identities in society. Research indicates that providing equal access to opportunities for excluded groups, including the queer community, not only enhances their well-being but also contributes to the diversity and innovation of society at large (Narain, 2018). In the pursuit of equality, countries frequently implement progressive legislation and affirmative action to empower marginalized communities. In order to close the gaps caused by structural injustices and guarantee that underprivileged groups get the assistance they require to prosper, these actions are crucial. However, complications emerge as efforts to promote equality progress. Disparities may arise within marginalized groups, resulting in inequalities among the poor. In other situations, for example, the most vulnerable members of a community may still face hardships while a privileged subgroup, commonly known as the "creamy layer," benefits disproportionately from these policies (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015).

When combined with proactive strategies like productive discrimination, affirmative action becomes crucial for levelling the playing field and guaranteeing that the genuinely disadvantaged receive advantages (Shah, 2004).

Equity is about acknowledging and resolving the distinct difficulties that different groups—such as those characterized by gender, age, and identity—face, and it goes beyond simply addressing economic differences. These disparities are ingrained in society's structures and are frequently maintained by institutional norms and behaviours.

Patriarchal regimes that define women's duties in the home and in society have institutionalized inequality. Women are relegated to unpaid household chores by the sexual division of labour, while their contributions in professional settings are undervalued by unequal compensation for equal effort. Women's autonomy and agency are further limited by the fact that they are frequently left out of decision-making processes and disproportionately encounter violence in both public and home contexts (Narain, 2018). In a similar vein, young people are frequently disenfranchised and denied meaningful access to family, educational, and social decision-making processes. Their contributions are underappreciated despite the fact that they are often hailed

as the "future" of society. This causes them to feel frustrated, alienated, and in certain situations, to become mobilized against systems that do not recognize their potential (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015).

The queer movement, which aims to achieve equity for those who are marginalized due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, finds these findings especially pertinent. Queer people encounter structural obstacles that prevent them from accessing opportunities and rights, just like women and young people do. In addition to social stigmas that frequently expose LGBT people to violence and exclusion, institutionalized homophobia and transphobia show up as unequal access to healthcare, education, and career prospects. Equal legal treatment is only one aspect of equity for the queer movement; another is recognition of their particular experiences and systemic obstacles. It calls for specific actions to eliminate the prejudices and social norms that support exclusion and guarantee genuine inclusion in social settings and decision-making.

Creating a society where everyone can prosper, regardless of identity, requires addressing injustices. This entails acknowledging that the LGBT movement's battles are about more than just achieving legal equality; they are also about tearing down the more profound social institutions that have traditionally disadvantaged them. We can get closer to a society that recognizes the contributions of each person and makes sure that all opinions are heard and valued by promoting equity.

Security has become a pressing concern in contemporary society due to the rise of organized non-state actors engaging in violent acts. This situation has fragmented the collective conscience and highlighted the need for concerted efforts from civil society to address these challenges. The queer youth movement exemplifies this dynamic by addressing issues of identity while advocating for equity and security within a broader social context. Queer youth mobilize not only against systemic oppression but also for their right to participate fully in society. Their activism challenges heteronormative structures while advocating for recognition and inclusion across various dimensions of identity. As T.K. Oomen notes, social movements are critical in addressing these inequities by articulating collective identities and pushing for structural changes (Oommen, 2010). The intersectionality inherent in queer youth activism reflects a broader struggle for equity that encompasses multiple identities and experiences. In conclusion, addressing issues of equity and security within social movements is essential for fostering inclusive societies. The queer youth movement serves as a powerful example of how marginalized groups can articulate their struggles while advocating for systemic change that promotes dignity and recognition.

Research Problem

How do queer youth movements in Vadodara fight against social marginalization and advance equality of participation, social acceptability, and acknowledgement of range of Identities?

Research Question

How do Queer youth movements contribute to inclusive citizenship and the transformation of social norms in urban Vadodara?

Research Objectives

- To study how queer youth movements in urban Vadodara are fighting social exclusion.
- To investigate how queer youth activism promotes dignity, inclusion and identity recognition among marginalized communities.

RECLAIMING SPACE, REDEFINING IDENTITY: *The Queer*

To be 'oriented' towards particular sex as the object of one's sexual expressivity means, in effect having a sexuality that is like target practice-keeping it aimed at bodies who display a particular sexual definition above all else, picking out which one to want, which one to get, which one to have. Self-consciousness about one's sexual orientation keeps the issue of gender central at precisely the moment in human experience when gender really needs to become profoundly peripheral. Insistence on having a sexual orientation in sex is about

defending the status quo, maintaining sex difference and the sexual hierarchy; whereas *resistance* to sexual - orientation is more about where we need to be going (Stoltenberg, 1989).

Over the years, the term "queer," which originally meant odd or unusual, has changed significantly, especially in relation to LGBTQIA+ activism. Originally employed as a derogatory term to characterize people who did not conform to heterosexual standards, the term "queer" has been reclaimed by scholars and activists to refer to a wider range of identities and experiences. Particularly for LGBTQIA+ people of colour and other oppressed groups whose demands are sometimes disregarded by traditional gay rights movements this reclaiming represents a turn towards inclusivity.

The reclaiming of "queer" signifies a significant shift in the way identities are perceived and portrayed in society, in addition to a language change. It symbolizes the continuous fight for justice and equity among LGBTQIA+ people, emphasizing the value of intersectionality and inclusivity in modern activism.

The word Queer is new to Indian politics, and a queer movement is only at a nascent stage. Queer, shedding its link to homophobic past, the term "queer" now celebrate the unity and diversity of the progressive gay movement of the present and is consequently connected to the third wave feminism's critique of social attitudes and policies that oppress minorities. Queer itself simply describes someone or something that departs from what is considered normal or expected, it developed into a slur for homosexuals that could be used as a noun as in "Is she a queer?" or adjective, as in "He is so queer". In this context, the term reinforces notions of heterosexuality as normal, natural and desirable, at the expense of same-sex attraction, which is cast as normal, unnatural, and perverse. Difference, seen in this light is inherently negative whereas conformity is valued. Such usage also reaffirms the concept of sexuality as consisting of exact opposites (ex-straight /queer) rather than a fluid spectrum of attraction and desire that a person may experience over a lifetime or on a regular basis.

The rise of queer as a catch-all term represents a group endeavour to bring disparate identities together under one roof. The 1990s saw a surge in this movement, especially in the wake of the AIDS crisis, which inspired many members of the LGBTQIA+ community to fight for their rights and oppose structural discrimination (GLSEN, 2016). Organizations that emphasized the need for empowerment and emancipation for people from all walks of life, such as Queer Nation and ACT UP, were crucial to this change. In the context of the U.S. LGBT movement in the 1990s, the term "queer" became widely used, especially as a catchphrase for activist organizations such as ACT UP, a coalition of radical AIDS activists located in New York. This organization emerged in response to the systemic prejudice experienced by people with HIV/AIDS during a period of neoliberal policies and widespread heteronormativity in popular culture. It is distinguished by its militant stance and confrontational style. In addition to being irritated by the continued exclusion of individuals with HIV/AIDS, the activists were vehemently against the social standards that governed sexual identity and conduct (Oprah, 1993) (Menon, 2019)

The Term 'Queer' evokes not only personal choice but also political defence it suggests a questioning of what has often been referred to as compulsory heteronormativity. Queer politics argue that identities include general identities are socially constructed and have concrete material consequences. It is based on this premise that the movement seeks to share in the imposition of the strict binary division based on sex. Rather the queer movement argue that sexuality and identities based on sexual orientation occupy a continuum and are far more flexible than are generally understood. (Menon, 2019).

SEX, GENDER AND SEXUALITY: At the Crossroads of Identity and Culture

Sex, gender, and sexuality are all deeply and intimately related to the LGBTQ concept. The first of the three interconnected issues that need to be addressed is how sex, gender, and sexuality interact to one another; this leads to a variety of perspectives on desire. Secondly, how does sexuality translate a want into several likes? This desire may not be limited to people of different sexes. Thirdly, how to comprehend LGBTQ and what its resulting components are. As argued by Henrietta L. Moore

at the heart of all the discussions has been the notion of difference the difference of the female from the male, the normative from the non -normative the sexual practises from sexual classification the difference of race, gender, ethnicity and sexuality at the intersected mark of the physical bodies. (Henrietta L, 2007)

Sex, as we understood in the biological and enormous identify of an individual this is a biological factor. Gender, on the other hand the social 'coating' on the sex. Gender manifest, itself as being masculine or feminine. As documented by Simone de Beauvoir's (Butler, 1986,) 'One is not born', but rather becomes, a woman or 'cultural production of gender' or 'gender performativity' as outlined by Judith Butler (1990) subsequently resonate with the idea of becoming gender. Among many other things, sexual encounters are ways of communicating about desire, pleasure, suffering, and power struggles. Despite the overwhelming presence of master discourses of the pan-Indian or global order that aim to manipulate their trajectories, it is necessary to recognize that conceptions and expressions of sexuality are also locally constructed, as all of these are always composed in the scripts of local interactions.

TODAY'S YOUTH: The Catalyst of Change, Shaping Tomorrow Today

Young people have consistently been pivotal actors in significant social movements, profoundly influencing the course of human history. Young people are powerful agents of social change who actively seek opportunities to transform their communities and society at large. Their innovative use of media and collective action strategies have historically played a crucial role in advancing social movements, making them indispensable in the ongoing quest for equity and justice. As Chock (2012) emphasizes, young people are often at the forefront of social change, demonstrating a remarkable ability to mobilize around issues that matter to them. Their engagement is not just a historical phenomenon; it continues to evolve as they tackle contemporary challenges such as climate change, social justice, and political representation. Their involvement has been crucial in various progressive movements, including the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, the LGBTQ+ movement, successive waves of feminism, environmental justice, labour rights, and immigrant rights. Throughout these movements, youth have harnessed new media tools to create, circulate, and amplify the voices and stories of their causes (Chock, 2012). For instance, during the Civil Rights Movement, youth utilized platforms like MySpace and text messaging alongside traditional methods such as flyers and film screenings to disseminate information about pressing societal issues. They organized blogs and coordinated social media campaigns to advocate for their rights and raise awareness (Wainaina, 2024). Young activists often develop powerful concepts and employ creative forms of expression to highlight systemic injustices.

Youth movements exhibit incredible creativity and tenacity in their action, frequently functioning beyond conventional political avenues. Young people have some of the greatest connections to social movements, while encountering many obstacles, and they provide new ideas and innovative methods. LGBTQ+ kids of colour in the United States, for example, are prime examples of this innovative energy. They, spearhead transformative organizing efforts that go beyond LGBTQ+ issues and confront systemic issues like racism and inequality, while having experienced violence, oppression, and exclusion. These young activists have been instrumental in a number of contemporary social movements, highlighting the importance of eliminating racism in order to bring about true social change. Youth are among the most involved and active actors in social change, despite the fact that they are sometimes overlooked or underestimated in popular narratives. They are creating inclusive and empowering settings via the use of innovative approaches, media production, and creative initiatives. Even in the face of hardship, their tenacity and inventiveness show that they are capable of promoting significant social advancement.

PUBLIC SPACE: Foundation of Identity and Expression

The public displays serve not only to celebrate queer identities but also to advocate for systemic change. However, this visibility is not without its challenges. LGBTQIA+ individuals often navigate hostile environments where their identities are scrutinized or politicized. The fear of discrimination or violence can lead to a paradox where increased visibility exposes individuals to greater risks (United Nations) (2023). For instance, transgender individuals—particularly those from marginalized racial backgrounds—face heightened vulnerabilities in public spaces due to pervasive discrimination (Activist History) (2019).

STATE: Empowering Voices, Driving Change

The state, as the sovereign authority tasked with managing the public sphere and safeguarding the "common good," occupies a pivotal role in the life cycle of social movements. Its relationship with such movements, particularly those that challenge societal norms and advocate for transformative change, is inherently multifaceted and often contentious. Social movements, such as queer movements, seek to reform or reimagine existing societal structures, frequently questioning the state's legitimacy and demanding accountability, justice, and equitable policy changes. These demands often place the state in a position of resistance or negotiation, as it navigates the tension between preserving authority and addressing evolving societal aspirations (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015).

Historically, the state's role in institutionalizing social movements has been marked by dual tendencies: resistance and adaptation. On one hand, states have acted as adversaries to movements that challenge established hierarchies or threaten public order. Mechanisms like policing, legal constraints, and bureaucratic inertia are often deployed to suppress dissent and maintain the status quo. For instance, early LGBTQ+ rights movements faced systemic repression, with states enforcing laws that criminalized queer identities and lifestyles under the guise of preserving "public morality" (Narain, 2018). Such resistance reflects the state's inclination to protect its authority against perceived disruptions to societal harmony. For example, in countries like South Africa, the state embraced the queer movement's calls for justice by embedding protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation in its post-apartheid constitution. Similarly, the legalization of same-sex marriage in various nations underscores the state's potential to align its policies with the principles of equality and human dignity (Currier, 2012).

The interplay between the state and social movements is thus characterized by both conflict and collaboration. While states may initially resist demands that challenge their authority, sustained activism compels them to negotiate and, at times, embrace change. In this dynamics, the state does not merely respond to movements but plays an active role in shaping their trajectory by creating pathways for institutional recognition and also evolve in response to the voices of marginalized communities.

Ultimately, the state's engagement with social movements like the queer movement is a testament to the power of collective action to influence public policy and reshape societal norms. By institutionalizing the demands of these movements, the state not only addresses immediate grievances but also contributes to the broader democratization of society, fostering an environment where the dignity and rights of all individuals are upheld. This ongoing negotiation between resistance and inclusion exemplifies the state's dual role as both a gatekeeper of tradition and a potential architect of progressive change.

QUEER POLITICS: A New Norm

Dynamic and ever-evolving paradigm that challenges heterosexuality and heteronormativity and defies categorization, queer politics has arisen. Although queerness is variable and multifaceted, (Butler, 1990), (Sedgwick, 1990) (Halberstam, 1990) it always signifies a departure from traditional sexual and gender norms. Every expression of queerness has the power to challenge heterosexuality's constraints and binary conceptions of gender. But not all queer performances or movements take advantage of this transformative potential; rather, queerness frequently takes the form of an identity, a way of life, or a political tactic that radically reinterprets interactions with conventional standards.

Within the queer community, internal divisions have also been exposed by the rise of queer politics. Often, conversations simplify queerness to issues of gender identity or sexual orientation, concentrating on one's sexual preferences or place on the masculinity/femininity spectrum. Other manifestations of identity and sexuality are marginalized by this reductionist framing, which restricts the wider relevance of queerness. Furthermore, Western histories and circumstances frequently have an impact on these notions. According to Foucault (1978), sexuality in these settings evolved into a tool of truth and power that shaped both personal identities and social norms. The limits of LGBT activism and who is considered a queer subject are determined by this Western context.

The term "homonationalism," which was first used by Jasbir K. Puar (1998) to characterize the convergence of LGBTQ+ identities with nationalist goals, is still in its infancy and has not yet completely developed in Indian LGBTQ+ politics. According to Upadhyay and Ravecca (2017), queerness turns into a solitary identity and contributes to an imperceptible power disparity between square subjects. In the end, our "I" identity is determined by what we leave behind rather than by what we inherit, create, or recall (Darwish, 2009). It is not surprising that venues that are sensitive to the segregations of race, colour, and class also produce a critique of gay identity politics in addition to a radical critique of heterosexuality and the gender binary. (Haritaworn, 2017).

The seduction of the pinkwashing and the effectiveness of the homonationalism demonstrate the complexity of the queer politics in various part of the world with nationalist Colonial and neoliberal agendas (Puar J. K., 2007). According to what is perceived, India's basic politics, which are confined to sexual identity, also involve these risks and frequently result in actualized violence against people who are the targets of them. In India, male-to-female transgender visibility and collectivization far outweigh any articulation by female-to-male transgender subjects within and outside of the query space. These bills further exacerbate the divide between the two groups, making female-to-male transgender subjects feel even more depressed and ostracized (Sutanuka, Shraddha, & B.Poushali, 2014). Discussions concerning transgender classification and its methods have been triggered in the community by the Transgender Persons Bill (2014) and the Protection Law (2016). Indian queer movements, especially pride marches, mainly reject corporate support and use intersectional strategies that connect caste and queerness, in contrast to Western contexts where pinkwashing is common. With an emphasis on inclusive and grassroots queer politics, this nexus provides a forum for contestation and resistance. The necessity for a more intersectional and inclusive conception of queer politics that opposes the reproduction of hierarchies within the movement itself is highlighted by this exclusionary dynamic. The recognition and visibility of various queer identities are thus shaped by internal power relations within queer politics, which also becomes a place of resistance to social norms.

QUEER YOUTH STATE AND SOCIAL MOVEMENT: Voices of change, Forced of solidarity

Social movements and street theatre have similarities as they both naturally create their narrative without being constrained by prewritten scripts. Intellectuals who watch these performances are frequently confronted with challenges when they attempt to impose particular objectives, strategies, or approaches that may have favourable or unfavourable effects. This analogy provides a compelling starting point for understanding the intersection of queer youth, the state, and social movements. Like street theatre, queer youth-led movements have organically crafted their narratives of resistance and liberation, drawing strength from lived experiences, grassroots activism, and community solidarity. These movements reject top-down frameworks imposed by external actors, instead embracing self-directed, dynamic approaches that challenge societal norms and institutionalized power structures. The state's role in this context becomes both a site of contestation and potential transformation, as queer youth movements push for accountability, justice, and systemic change.

Queer youth are at the forefront of the transformative movement, playing a vital role in redefining democratic ideals through their deep engagement and activism. The long-held belief that heterosexuality is the normative sexual behaviour is being challenged as discussions around LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other identities) gain visibility and legitimacy. By opposing cisnormative and heteronormative social systems, queer activism addresses long-standing injustices and promotes inclusivity in democratic institutions. It emphasizes how overlapping elements like gender, racism, and class influence the needs and experiences of queer kids and is rooted in identity politics and intersectionality. This shift is evident in the increasing prominence of diverse issues that were once confined to the private domain, particularly those related to sexual orientation and gender identity. This renegotiation paves the way for a variety of sexual orientations and identities, allowing non-conforming orientations to actively resist the ideology and practices of compulsory heterosexuality (Oprah, 1993)

The visibility of LGBTQIA+ issues has become too significant to ignore in contemporary society. Economic and cultural forces are reshaping sexual norms, disrupting traditional relationships between sex-gender orders and other social structures. As Altman (Dennis, 1982) notes, these changes reflect an evolving understanding

of identity, inclusion, and equity as society adapts to a more diverse and pluralistic framework of sexual and gender identities. Moreover, the role of visibility is paramount for queer youth. By asserting their identities publicly, they challenge societal norms and create spaces for dialogue about rights and recognition. Activist groups have utilized public spaces to make claims for equality, employing strategies such as protests and pride marches to disrupt heteronormative narratives (Activist History) (2019).

Being "straight" in the classic sense is that one complies with gender standards, where a man behaves in a manly manner in social situations, a woman represents femininity, and both are assumed to be inherently attracted to one another. Heterosexuality is established by this standard as both dominant and "natural." But when this idea of being "straight" is applied to the state, it represents a system in which heterosexuality is not only accepted as the sole acceptable sexual orientation, but also institutionalized and made lawful. Known as the "disciplining of desire," this phenomenon occurs when the state uses its legal tools to punish, discriminate against, and marginalize people who don't fit the heterosexual norm, especially those who have homosexual tendencies and defy the gender stereotype.

According to Narrian (2004) the "straight state" is one in which the legal system actively excludes and oppresses alternative sexualities, as those recognized by the LGBTQ+ community, while promoting and legitimizing heterosexuality. By doing this, the state upholds an oppressive system that denies different sexual orientations and identities equal rights and respect, with the help of conservative religious and social organizations

INTERSECTIONALITY: The lens of inclusion

The idea of intersectionality has had a major impact on the evolution of queer activism, influencing its strategies, goals, and inclusivity. In 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the phrase, which emphasizes how various forms of oppression, such as those based on sexual orientation, gender, race, and class, overlap and give people, particularly those from marginalized communities, unique experiences (Crenshaw, 1989). This paradigm has proven to be quite useful for LGBTQ activists as they navigate the complexities of identity and struggle for social justice.

HISTORY OF QUEER YOUTH ACTIVISM: Pathway for queer voices

Queer activism has its roots in periods of resistance that questioned repressive conventions and called for LGBTQ+ people to be recognized and treated equally. The Stonewall Riots of 1969, which are frequently cited as the impetus for the contemporary LGBTQ+ rights movement, were among the most important turning points in this conflict. The police raid at the Stonewall Inn, a well-known homosexual club in New York City, sparked the riots. LGBTQ+ people were subjected to systematic harassment, criminalization, and discrimination at that time. Instead of allowing tyranny to prevail that night, the bar's patrons—many of whom were young, gay, and from oppressed communities, such as Black and Latinx people—resisted police brutality. Over the course of several nights, the riots turned into a potent symbol of resistance to structural injustice (Blakemore, 2023).

During this period of activism, youth were especially important. Their bravery and defiance of the established quo galvanized the LGBTQ+ community at large and spurred group action. Leaders who fought for the rights of underrepresented groups within the queer community, such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, came to prominence both during and after the riots (Zinn Education Project) (1969). Numerous LGBTQ+ organizations were founded as a result of the Stonewall events, and the first Pride marches were conducted a year later to honour the rebellion (Wainaina, 2024).

In the today's changing times, Stonewall continues to stand for tenacity and the continuous struggle for LGBTQ+ equality. It serves as a reminder that the struggle for rights and recognition is profoundly rooted in acts of collective defiance and solidarity. The legacy of Stonewall is not only celebrated during Pride Month but continues to influence contemporary activism aimed at attaining justice for all marginalized communities (Britannica)

QUEERNESS IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES AND INDIA'S PERSPECTIVES : A new wave of freedom

A comprehensive review of the goals and objectives of the Indian LGBT movement can be found in the anthology *Because I Have a Voice: Queer Politics in India* (Narain & Bhan, 2005). With its "multiplicity of desires and identities," "defiant political perspective," and term that goes beyond the binary notions of "homosexual" and "heterosexual," it presents queer as more than just a name for non-heteronormative identities. According to this viewpoint, queerness is inextricably linked to more general concerns about caste, religion, class, gender, and other societal factors. It emphasizes the importance of standing in solidarity with other oppressed groups while also calling for inclusion within them.

Beginning in the late 1980s, increased knowledge of the AIDS pandemic profoundly changed the way that sexuality was discussed in India, opening the door for conversations that went beyond the conventional legal and demographic medicine frames. Increased validity in discussing sex outside limited limits that had traditionally concentrated on violence against women or population control resulted from the urgency of confronting HIV/AIDS. International financing for HIV/AIDS prevention either improved already-existing organizations by supporting sexuality programs or sparked the creation of new NGOs devoted to sexuality.

In India, the 1990s saw a surge in the LGBT youth movement, which was fuelled by educated, urban youth fighting for rights, visibility, and social acceptability. Through media campaigns and the establishment of safe spaces for the queer community, important activist groups like the *Naz Foundation*, *Humsafar Trust*, *Sabrang*, and *Good as You(GAY)* came into being, among addition to receiving international assistance, public health campaigns raising awareness of HIV/AIDS, especially among MSM and Kothi communities, also resulted in an upsurge in harassment under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. Despite having different areas of specialization, these three organizations have joined in their support of LGBTQ+ visibility and rights, achieving great progress in overcoming social, legal, and cultural obstacles. In India, the Hijra community has played a significant role in promoting LGBTQ+ rights by fighting for things like legal recognition, social acceptance, and electoral representation. Their main goals as activists were to raise their sociopolitical standing and get legal frameworks to recognize their distinct identity. Despite facing different challenges than gay and lesbian activists, they were closely linked to the larger LGBTQ+ movement. The contributions of the Hijra community strengthened the movement's collective struggle for equality and inclusion by highlighting intersectional issues and highlighting the multiplicity of gender and sexual identities in Indian society. Founded in 1991, the AIDS Bhedbhav Virodhi Andolan (ABVA) was among the first organizations in India to place the debate within the broader context of human rights while integrating the issue of gay rights with more general concerns for the health and well-being of gay people (Balasubramaniam, 1996). The first protest against police persecution of LGBTQ+ people in India was organized by ABVA on August 11, 1992. The police's use of sexual violence against males cruising for men in Delhi's Central Park, Connaught Place, was the subject of this protest. ABVA was the first organization to challenge Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code in 1991, making history in the process. The seminal essay *Less Than Gay: A Citizen's Report on the Status of Homosexuality in India* was a significant turning point in the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights in India and set the stage for queer politics and legal reform efforts in the decades that followed. These initiatives, which included phone helplines and safe spaces, opened up avenues for the political expression of non-normative sexualities and sparked a frenzy that significantly altered Indians' attitudes toward and responses to men having sex with men (MSM). The Indian Penal Code's Section 377 made same-sex acts illegal, which prompted police to target homosexual males, especially MSM. These groups were stigmatized even more by the link between HIV/AIDS and unprotected sex, which classified them as "high-risk." When foreign non-governmental organizations tackled the public health crisis, they unintentionally strengthened the misconception that homosexuality was a "Western import," which exacerbated social rejection. In India, where homosexuality was illegal and viewed as a social contaminant, this led to a hostile atmosphere for LGBTQ+ people.

With the growth of television and economic liberalization, the 1990s were a pivotal time for sexual conversation in India. The introduction of sexually provocative information by Western media sparked political debate that questioned patriarchal systems and heteronormativity while also tackling previously

unacceptable subjects. The intricate relationship between cultural stigma, legal discrimination, and public health was also brought to light by this change, highlighting the necessity of more nuanced approaches to LGBTQ+ issues in India. It also demonstrated how, even with the best of intentions, global health initiatives may inadvertently strengthen regional biases if they are not appropriately contextualized. The landmark decisions in *Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India* (2018) and *NALSA v. Union of India* (2014) have made considerable progress for LGBTQ+ rights in India. Transgender equality took a significant step with the *NALSA* case, which acknowledged transgender people's ability to self-identify and obtain legal recognition as a third gender. Section 377 was overturned in the *Navtej Singh Johar* case, decriminalizing consenting same-sex relationships. The legal environment for LGBTQ+ people in India has changed significantly as a result of these decisions, which were impacted by Section 377's colonial beginnings. Despite the importance of these court rulings, the struggle for complete equality and social acceptability is still ongoing. These counter-heteronormative movements' rise in India is indicative of a major change in public and political attitudes toward acceptance and acceptance of non-normative sexualities.

Theoretical Approach to study Queer Movement

According to Marxist approach, the queer movement is an opposition to the capitalist system's upholding of heteronormative structures. By supporting particular gender roles, sexual behaviours, and family norms that are consistent with capitalist reproduction and labour organization, heteronormativity acts as a means of preserving the status quo. By defying these expectations, gay groups fight against long-standing power structures and promote a society that is more equal and inclusive.

Traditional Marxist class theory might not exactly connect with the queer movement's emphasis on intersectionality, identity politics, and cultural resistance. Some theorists contend, however, that the movement's criticism of normative systems advances a larger fight against capitalism frameworks (Hennessy). In summary, queer youth movements exemplify how marginalized groups can influence societal norms and expand democratic frameworks through their persistent advocacy for dignity and recognition.

Judith Butler's Theory of Performativity

To comprehend how LGBT youth negotiate and defy social norms, Butler's theory—which holds that gender and identity are not innate but rather are created via repeated social performances—is essential (Butler J. , 1990). This study examines how queer identities are socially constructed and contested within the movement, drawing on sociological theory, specifically Judith Butler's work on performativity and social constructionism. By combining participative and ethnographic approaches, the study offers a comprehensive picture of how LGBT youth are redefining democratic values and supporting the continuous fight for social justice and equity.

The idea that gender is a daily, repetitive behaviour influenced by cultural standards of masculine and femininity is known as performativity. Butler argues that gender functions similarly, as it is not a necessary quality but rather a performance that is constantly reinforced by societal standards and repeated deeds. According to Butler, sex is created and established as "pre discursive" before culture, which works as a politically neutral surface. (Butler J. , 1990). Cultural standards instil gender roles in children from a young age. Girls, for example, frequently learn how to dress and position their bodies in ways that conform to conventional ideas of femininity. According to Butler (1990), these behaviours prepare girls for typical adult responsibilities including childrearing and providing care. These gender stereotypes are unintentionally maintained by both men and women in their everyday actions as adults. Gender performativity can be seen in even seemingly insignificant actions, such as choosing a gendered title on a form, like "Mr." or "Ms." The frequent, socially enforced stylizations of the body and conduct defined by cultural norms make gender one of the first characteristics individuals notice about others, not because of biological differences.

According to Butler's theory, gender is performative, which emphasizes how social conventions shape and limit identities. These conventions are resisted by movements such as the LGBT youth movement, which aims to build a more just society that values difference rather than imposing uniformity. Social legitimacy and acceptance are restricted to individuals who fit into one of two strict gender categories, which makes these

rules fundamentally oppressive. These restrictions are especially difficult for young people who identify as LGBT, who frequently encounter prejudice and struggle to live up to social norms when expressing non-conforming identities.

Methodology

The research made use of a mixed method approach to study the queer youth movement in the city of Vadodara and the nearby areas. This integrated approach helps provide a comprehensive understanding of the movement in the city. The methodology permits an exploration of the cultural, social, economic and political dimensions of such movements, allowing an insight into the trends, patterns and effect of these movements on the lives of those involved and associated with such movements.

The method employed, in-depth interviews of two key informants a transwoman and a gay person. They provided a detailed view on their life as a member of the queer community. The use of Interview method helped us collect information on the lived experiences and personal narratives which are essential in understanding the complex nature of the queer movements in India. It helped in highlighting the emotional and the cultural aspects of queer activism.

Questionnaire were sent via e-mail to various individuals relying on the snowball technique of sampling to reach out to some of the individuals who are still in the 'closet'. We received seven responses, which brought forth the reality of discrimination that is still faced by them even as we have so many programmes organized to create awareness and seek equal rights for them. Questionnaire used both open-ended as well as closed-ended questions to get demographic data as well as the opinions and thoughts of the respondents towards the influence of inter-sectional identities and how they navigate the many challenges faced by them. An ethnographical study of the various spaces used by the members of the queer community provided a better understanding of their lives.

CASE STUDIES FROM URBAN AREA, VADODARA: A tales of pride

Redefining Royalty and Resilience as India's First Openly Gay Prince- Case study of Manvendra Singh Gohil:

In 2006, Manvendra Singh Gohil, the prince of Rajpipla, Gujarat, became the first Indian prince to come out as gay. In addition to defying long-standing social conventions, his coming out made a substantial contribution to the visibility and support of LGBTQ+ rights in a nation where these concerns are frequently demonized. This case study explores Gohil's life story, the social obstacles he encountered, and how his support of LGBTQ+ rights in India affected those rights.

Manvendra Singh Gohil, the sole son of Maharana Raghubir Singhji and Maharani Rukmini Devi, was born on September 23, 1965, into the Rajpipla royal line. He received a formal education and was first married to Chandrika Kumari of Jhabua state. He quickly became aware of his sexual orientation, though, and in 2006, he came out as gay in an interview with a local newspaper, garnering a lot of media attention. His family and community reacted negatively to his announcement. According to Gohil, his parents tried to "convert" him back to heterosexuality by pursuing medical procedures including brain surgery and electroshock therapy. In the end, these attempts failed because American physicians refused to carry out these surgeries, stating that homosexuality is not a mental illness. "Violation of human rights" is how Gohil characterized these attempts, emphasizing the emotional toll they imposed on him. Gohil rose to prominence in India as an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights after coming out. He got the support of *HUM SAFAR* trust, established in Mumbai, and *NAZ foundation* who works largely on Men excluding female-born person in urban location A strong support from the parent body, inspired Manvinder ji to start the trust who work for the queer community and thus the Lakshya Trust was born in Vadodara, Gujarat, a group devoted to supporting individuals impacted by HIV/AIDS and encouraging the LGBTQ+ community.

Prejudice against sexual minorities and marginalized populations often stems from ignorance. In the context of the queer movement, this lack of understanding fuels discrimination and stigmatization. The movement

seeks to challenge these prejudices by educating society, fostering acceptance, and advocating for the rights and recognition of queer individuals. He highlights the importance of education in the fight against discrimination and homophobia. Reaching out to rural populations, where traditional ideas on sexuality are frequently more ingrained, has been a crucial component of his work in order to question and alter those inflexible beliefs. The journey of Manvendra Singh Gohil is a powerful example of the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of embracing oneself as one is. In addition to empowering several LGBTQ+ people to come out and live authentically, especially in conservative and rural environments, his candour about his sexual orientation has demonstrated that social transformation is achievable even in deeply ingrained cultures. He has dispelled long-standing preconceptions about masculinity and royalty as a royal figure, proving that LGBTQ+ identification and traditional Indian values can coexist. His personal hardships—such as being rejected by his family and being the target of public demonstrations—have brought attention to the agonizing discrimination LGBTQ+ people face, but his bravery.

He has advanced legal activism significantly through his work with Lakshya Trust, fighting for greater protections for LGBTQ+ rights and helping to remove Section 377. His initiatives to dispel stigma, especially in relation to HIV/AIDS, and to increase understanding of the LGBTQ+ experience in India have also had a long-lasting effect on national and international discussions on human rights and inclusivity. A powerful reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the ability of awareness, empathy, and education to bring about significant change is provided by Manvendra's narrative.

2. A Woman by Identity, A Man by Society- -A case study of a resilient person in search of true self- Maya Kohli

Maya Kohli, a trans woman, represents the struggle of asserting personal identity within a society deeply rooted in traditional gender norms. She highlights the societal tendency to ridicule transgender individuals rather than accepting them, particularly in male-dominated regions like North India, where rigid cultural beliefs often reject non-binary identities.

While rural communities may appear more accommodating due to spiritual beliefs, this acceptance is limited and confined to certain roles. Maya emphasizes the importance of education in challenging stereotypes but criticizes segregated initiatives, such as exclusive LGBTQ colleges, for reinforcing separateness rather than fostering inclusion in mainstream spaces. Cultural attitudes towards gender and sexuality vary across India. States like Bengal and Manipur, influenced by egalitarian traditions, offer better acceptance of non-traditional roles, whereas northern and southern regions remain conservative and restrictive. Media has played a role in shaping perceptions, though acceptance is often superficial and conditional.

Maya observes that the growing exposure to media has prompted younger generations to explore their identities. However, she critiques pride marches for prioritizing festivities over meaningful dialogue, advocating for conversations with societal leaders to create lasting change. Ultimately, Maya underscores the influence of family and socialization in perpetuating binary gender norms. She calls for systemic change through education, advocacy, and inclusive policies to dismantle deep-rooted prejudices and create a society where diversity is celebrated. Her story serves as a reminder of the resilience and courage required to challenge societal conventions while pushing for genuine acceptance and equality.

Insights

The queer youth movement exemplifies how marginalized groups can challenge binary structures of power and advocate for dignity and inclusivity within democratic frameworks. As they navigate complex social landscapes, their activism not only reshapes societal norms but also contributes significantly to ongoing discussions about equity and justice.

In India, the quest for dignity within the queer movement is a reflection of a larger fight for acceptance and understanding, underscoring the crucial role that the state plays in elevating the voices of LGBTQIA+ people. There have been major advancements in recognizing and protecting the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community

since the historic 2018 decision that decriminalized homosexuality under Section 377. But there are still many obstacles in the way of complete equality and acceptance.

The Indian government has started to take action against the systemic discrimination LGBTQIA+ people experience. Committees have recently been established to define rights for LGBT people and guarantee them access to healthcare, social welfare benefits, and legal safeguards against harassment. One example of a rising governmental recognition of the rights of the queer community is the creation of a committee led by the Cabinet Secretary to review policies that protect their interests. LGBTQIA+ representatives have been included in consultation processes at the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, marking a significant step toward more inclusive policies. These initiatives are essential to creating laws that allow LGBTQIA+ people to publicly represent who they are without worrying about prejudice or violence. But even with these encouraging advancements, there are still large gaps. Due in major part to same-sex marriage's continued illegality, a significant portion of the LGBTQIA+ community is still denied basic rights and protections. The Supreme Court's 2023 decision against same-sex marriage highlights the persistent opposition from a range of social and political groups. Although the decriminalization of gay conduct is a significant step forward, activists contend that it is insufficient in the absence of complete legal reforms that address marital equality and anti-discrimination laws. The stigma and prejudice against LGBTQIA+ people continue to have a significant impact on how society views them. Many people still encounter rejection from their communities and family because of their gender identity or sexual orientation. This cultural environment emphasizes how important it is to continue advocating for and educating people in order to foster acceptance and understanding in society.

CHALLENGES OF THE QUEER: In search of Identity

The legalizing of same-sex partnerships in India gave the LGBTQ+ community hope, but they continue to face significant social obstacles such as stigma, exclusion, and lack of acceptance. These enduring disparities are highlighted by Vadodara research, particularly in fields like public policy, healthcare, education, and social inclusion. Family support is essential for LGBT people to feel accepted, but many still experience severe prejudice at work. Despite their skills, possibilities are frequently blocked by cultural biases, exposing a disconnect between the lived reality of LGBTQ+ individuals and legal advancement. In order to achieve true equality, this gap must be closed, promoting social acceptance in addition to legal rights. The study unequivocally shows that, despite legal successes, a thorough social change is necessary to resolve these persistent problems and provide complete equality and inclusion for the LGBTQ+ population. The road to dignity is far from over; in addition to legislative improvements, cultural shifts that support stigma and prejudice must also be made. LGBTQ+ activists have pointed out that unless queer people are completely accepted by their families, communities, and employers, true equality will not be achieved (CJP Team, 2023).

THE STRUGGLE FOR ACCEPTANCE AND EQUALITY: Stronger together

To truly embrace all identities—whether they are non-binary people, masculine women, or feminine men—while appreciating the distinctive contributions they make to society, the demand for love and acceptance goes beyond simple tolerance. This method creates an atmosphere in which compassion and sensitivity are viewed as our commonalities rather than our flaws. We can actively combat and destroy the widespread culture of hate that marginalizes people based on their identities by embracing such an inclusive worldview. This hate is frequently disguised as humour or social criticism.

When we consider the advancements since 2018, it is important to recognize that real equality necessitates not just legislative changes but also a shift in public perceptions, which calls for cooperation from all generations. LGBTQIA+ representation can be improved and the required legislative reforms can be pushed for by interacting with political parties and non-state entities. The LGBTQ+ movement stands out as a significant social movement due to its collaborative nature and ability to drive both gradual and transformative societal changes. Rooted in challenging social norms and power structures, it aligns with conflict-based theories of social movements by advocating for marginalized identities. Queer people are in a position to question current power systems and fight for their rights because they make up a significant section of the population and have a unique political consciousness based on their gender identification. Anyon (2008) The LGBTQ+ movement's ability to change from a common identity to meeting societal demands will

determine how well it adapts both intellectually and organizationally. Its growing organization is essential to promoting awareness and preventing discrimination.

Social movements are essential for opposing hierarchies of power, promoting fairness, and calling for justice. While working outside of established state agencies, they use the state as a platform to advocate for structural reforms like inclusive laws. The state's function has changed from only ensuring security to attending to individual and collective issues. It is both a savior and an enemy, a focal point for dissatisfaction and a response to the demands of social movements.

Through its actions, it not only ensures LGBT people receive justice, but it also expands democracy to include diversity and equality. The LGBTQIA+ community has become much more visible in India in recent years, especially when it comes to debates around democratic representation and rights. But even with this increased awareness, the community still has a long way to go before it can truly be represented in politics. Although several political parties have started to include LGBTQIA+ topics in their manifestos, there are still surprisingly few queer people in elected office. There are currently no publicly queer lawmakers in India's Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament, despite the fact that LGBTQIA+ concerns are being discussed more freely. If the community's concerns are to be truly heard in the political sphere, this absence draws attention to a crucial representational gap that must be filled (Times, 2023).

Although many politicians claim to support LGBTQIA+ rights, activists have noted that this does not always convert into proactive measures or laws that give the group more influence. For example, several parties have promised to implement anti-discrimination laws and recognize same-sex civil unions, but these pledges are frequently not followed through on (FairPlanet, 2024). LGBTQIA+ people now have the ability to vote, which is a big step in the right direction. Political parties may not be entirely committed to embracing LGBTQIA+ people in their ranks, as seen by the dearth of openly gay candidates in elections. The cycle of the queer community's demands and concerns being marginalized in legislative talks is sustained by this exclusion. Political parties must aggressively support and encourage queer candidates in the future. This could entail putting in place rules that promote diversity within the party and setting up forums where LGBTQIA+ people can voice their opinions and fight for their rights.

A lot more has to be done to increase the LGBTQIA+ community's visibility in India so that it can result in meaningful representation and involvement in democratic processes. The demand for greater representation is about appreciating and acknowledging the variety of identities in society, not just about being fair. We cannot hope to address the particular difficulties that the queer community faces and create a more equal future unless we have inclusive representation.

Suggestion for Future world

A ray of optimism, the Queer youth movement emphasizes that even a simple act of acceptance, such as smiling, may bring about significant change and boost the spirits of society as a whole. Although there has been some improvement, it has been sluggish, and discrimination—even in Western nations—remains pervasive. The ongoing marginalization of LGBTQ+ people worldwide is the problem, not their lack of recognition. The battle is still going on, and politicians frequently ignore their demands. We need more social centric development, dedicated attorneys, LGBTQ+ advocates, and NGOs pursuing justice if we are to see significant change. To create an atmosphere where each person feels appreciated and included, legislators, activists, families, and friends must work together. Policymakers, activists, families, and friends must work together to create an atmosphere where each person feels appreciated and included. Paul McCarthy's thoughts on human tenacity and the strength of the human spirit reaffirm that there is always hope for change—that even in the most, dire circumstances, there may be a brighter future just waiting for us to discover it. This hope—a glimmer of light pointing us in the direction of a future of equality, acceptance, and freedom—is personified by the Queer youth movement.

References

- A Brief History of Civil Rights in the United States: The Stonewall Riots.* (n.d.). Retrieved from Howard University Law Library.
- An Overview of HIV/AIDS Epidemic and its Prevention in India. (n.d.). *National Task Force on AIDS.*
- Balasubramaniam, V. (1996). Less Than Gay: A Citizen's Report on the Status of Homosexuality in India. *ABVA*, 57-58.
- Bhattacharya, N., & Jairath, V. K. (2012). Social movements, popular space and participation: A review. *Sociological Bulletin*, 61(2), 299-391.
- Bhattacharya, S. (2016, January 4). A Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name: Exploring the Marginalized Status of Lesbians, Bisexual Women, and Trans-men in India. *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 105 -120. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/12259276.2014.11666192>
- Blakemore, E. (2023, June 2). What was the Stonewall Uprising? *National Geographic*. Retrieved 2024, from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/stonewall-uprising-ignited-modern-lgbtq-rights-movement>
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Collective Behavior*. Prentice-Hall.
- Britannica. (n.d.). *The Stonewall Uprising and a New Era of LGBTQ Activism*. Retrieved from Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/video/did-you-know-Stonewall-Uprising/-274585>
- Butler, J. (1986,). Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex. *Yale French Studies* ,, 72, 35-49. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/2930225>
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Chatterjee, S. (2018). *Queer politics in India: Towards sexual subaltern subjects*. Taylor & Francis.
- Chock, S. c. (2012, December 17). Youth and Social Movements: Key Lessons for Allies. *Berkman Center Research Publication*. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2199531>
- Crenshaw, k. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*;(1). Retrieved 2024, from <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>
- Currier, A. (2012). *Out in Africa: LGBT Organizing in Namibia and South Africa* . University of Minnesota Press.
- Darwish, M. (2009). *A River Dies of Thirst: Journals*. (C. Cobham, Trans.) Archipelago Books.
- Davis, K. (1959). *Human Society*. Macmillian.
- Della, D. P., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Dennis, A. (1982). *The Homosexualization of America: The Americanization of Homosexuality*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Envoy, U. Y. (n.d.). *Queer Youth Dialogues* . Office on the secretary general's envoy on youth .
- FairPlanet. (2024). Queering the vote: Fighting for Visibility in India's Election. *FairPlanet*.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (Vol. 1). Pantheon Books.
- GLSEN. (2016). *LGBTQ HISTORY TIMELINE REFERENCE*. GLSEN. Retrieved from GLSEN: <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/LGBTQ-History-Timeline-References.pdf>
- Halberstam, J. (1990). *The Queer Art of Failure*. Duke University Press.

- Haritaworn, J. (2017). *Queer Lovers and Hateful Others: Regenerating Violent Times and Places*. Pluto Press.
- Hennessy, R. a. (n.d.). Thinking Sex Materially: Marxist, Socialist, and Related Approaches. In *The Sage Handbook of Feminist Theory*. Sage Reference.
- Henrietta L, M. (2007). *The Subject of Anthropology: Gender, Symbolism and Psychoanalysis*. Cambridge Polity Press.
- Hidden in Plain Sight: The Global Compromise on Queer Life in the Urban Public Sphere. (2019). *Activist History*.
- Hilton, K., & Siegel-Stechler, K. (2024). *Queer Youth Are Powerful, Diverse, and Engaged—but Struggling with Mental Health*. Tufts University.
- ICMR's Tryst with HIV Epidemic in India: 1986-1991. (n.d.). *PMC - PubMed Central*.
- Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York University Press.
- Klepacki, G. (2021, 6 16). *Queer: A 25 Year History, A Blooming Identity*. doi:10.15760/honors.1119
- Love, Homophobia and the AIDS Panic in 1980s India. (2015, September 30). *The Caravan*.
- McAdam, D., McCarthy, J., & Zald, M. (1996). *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. Cambridge University Press.
- Menon, K. &. (2019). *Social movements in contemporary India*. New Delhi: Sage publication India Pvt Ltd.
- Mukherji, P. N. (2013, March). Social Movements, Conflicts and Change: Towards a Theoretical Orientation. *ISA eSymposium for Sociology*. Retrieved from <https://www.isa-sociology.org/uploads/files/EBul-Mukherji-March2013.pdf>
- Narrain, A. (2004). *Queer 'Despised Sexuality', Law and Social Change*. Books of Change.
- Narrain, A. (2018). *Queer: Despised Sexuality, Law and Social change*. Oxford University Press.
- Narrain, A., & Bhan, G. (2005). *Because I Have a Voice: Queer Politics in India*. New Delhi: Yoda Press.
- Oommen, T. (2010). *Social Movements II: Concerns of Equity and Security*. Oxford University Press.
- Oprah. (1993). *the Politics of Desire: A New Prerspective on Sexual Identity*.
- Petersen, A. (1998). *Unmasking the Masculine: Men and Identity in a sceptical age*. SAGE Publications.
- Popa-Wyatt, M. (2020, March 04). Reclamation: Taking Back Control of Words. *Grazer Philosophische Studien*. Retrieved 2024
- Popa-Wyatt, M., & Wyatt, J. (2018). Slurs, Roles and Power. *Philosophical Studies*, 175, 2879-2906.
- Puar, J. (1998). Transnational Sexualities: South Asian (trans)nation(alism)s and Queer Diasporas. In D. L. Eng, & A. Y. Hom (Eds.), *Q&A: Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Duke University Press.
- 'Queer' History: A History of Queer. (2021). Retrieved from National Archives.
- Rao, M. S. (2000). *Social Movements in India*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors .
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet*. University of California Press.
- Shah, G. (2002). *Social Movements and the State*. SAGE Publications.
- Shah, G. (2004). *Social Movements in India: A Review of Literature*. SAGE Publications.
- Sharma, D. S. (2021). Challenges faced by the LGBTQI community a competitive study between India and Australia. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (TURCOMAT)*, 12(4), 1105–1109. Retrieved from <https://turcomat.org/index.php/turkbilmal/article/view/607>

- Singh, P. (2017, March 30). At home with their queerness: same-sex relationality and the Indian family in advertising media. *Feminist Media Studies*, 17(5), 721-736. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2017.1298144>
- Snow, D., Soule, S. A., & Kriesi, H. (2004). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Srivastava, S., & Sumit. (2014). Disciplining the desire: Straight state and LGBT activism in India. *Sociological Bulletin*, 63(3), 368-385.
- Stoltenberg, J. (1989). *Refusing to be a man: Essays on sex and justice*. New York: Penguin Books.
- (1969). *Stonewall Riots*. Zinn Education Project. Retrieved 2024
- Sutanuka, B., Shraddha, C., & B.Poushali. (2014). *Transgender Visibility in India: Perspectives and Challenges*.
- Tilly, C., & Tarrow, S. G. (2015). *Contentious Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Times, H. (2023). 108 MPs vocal on LGBTQI issues; No clear representation in India's Lok Sabha. *Hindustan times*.
- Touraine, A. (1981). *The Voice and the Eye: An Analysis of Social Movements*. Cambridge University Press.
- (2023). *United Nations*. United Nations.
- Upadhyay, N., & Ravecca, P. (2017). Queer, Beyond Queer? In O. Sircar, & D. Jain (Eds.), *New Intimacies, Old Desires: Law, Culture and Queer Politics in Neoliberal Times*. New Delhi: Zubaan.
- USAID. (2020). *Youth and LGBTQ+ Participation in Nonviolent Action*.
- Wainaina, A. (2024). Youth are our future? Think again. LGBTQ+ youth activism is already making an Impact.
- Wallace, A. (1956, April). 'Revitalization movements'. *American Anthropologist*(58), 264-281.
- Wandrekar, J. R., & Nigudka, A. S. (2020, April 24). What Do We Know About LGBTQIA+ Mental Health in India? A Review of Research From 2009 to 2019. *Journal of Psychosexual Health*, 2(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/2631831820918129>

Copyright & License:

© Authors retain the copyright of this article. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.