

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Student Research Symposium Posters

Apr 26th, 2:00 PM

The Impact India's Socio-cultural Environment has on its Residents Perceptions on Homosexuality.

Harpreet Manko
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://rdw.rowan.edu/student_symposium



Part of the [Hindu Studies Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you - share your thoughts on our feedback form.

Manko, Harpreet, "The Impact India's Socio-cultural Environment has on its Residents Perceptions on Homosexuality." (2019). *Student Research Symposium Posters*. 4.
https://rdw.rowan.edu/student_symposium/2019/apr26/4

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences, Events, and Symposia at Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Symposium Posters by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works.

The Impact India's Socio-cultural Environment has on its Residents Perceptions on Homosexuality.



Researcher and Presenter, Harpreet Manko

Research Question



How have ideologies on gender roles, and sexuality, in Indian societies and cultures affected views on homosexuality in the country of India?

Introduction



LGBT Pride Parade in Bangalore, India
Wikimedia

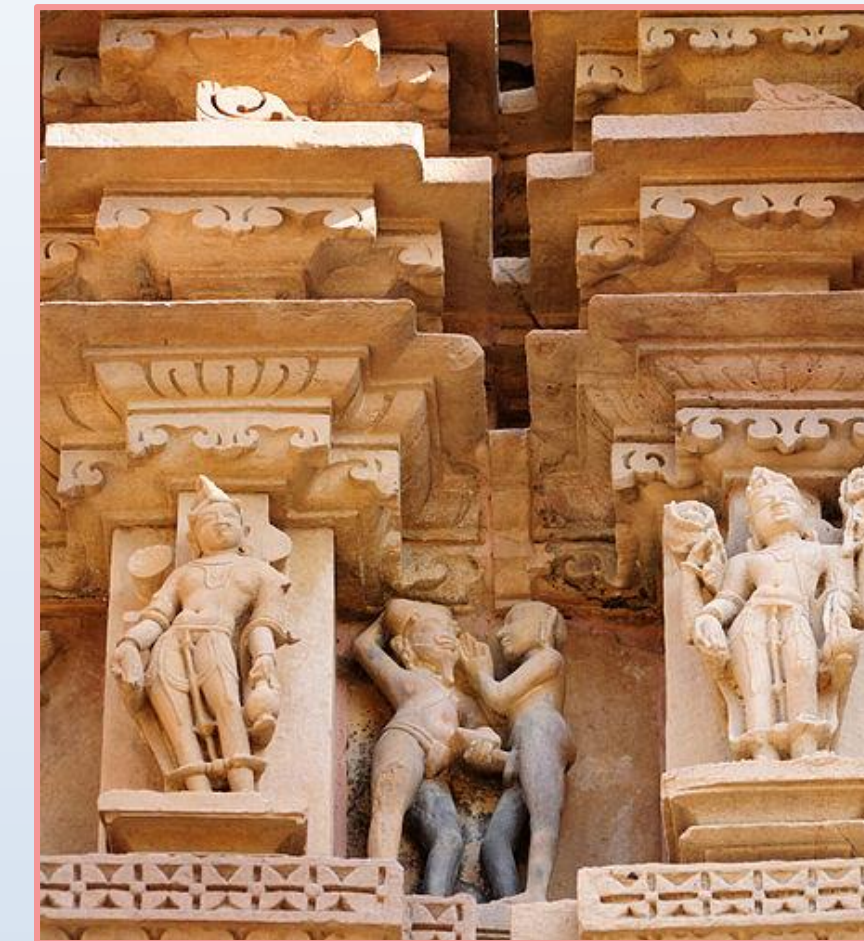
While homosexuality exists in all civilizations of life and has been seen in various perspectives by all peoples, it is often seen as a taboo subject matter. Especially when considering the more religious, rather heteronormative environment that is seen in Indian communities.

The purpose of this research is to analyze and understand how a heteronormative environment, coupled with fairly traditional ideals on gender roles and sexuality, can instill/lead to thoughts of homophobia.

Research Methodology

In order to answer the research question, research was conducted over the course of 10 weeks. Research materials included:

- Histories of the LGBT movements in India
- Informal interviews with Indians (both residing and not residing in India)
- Photos of deities engaging in androgynous and homosexual actions
- Scholarly articles on different religious theologies throughout India
- Scholarly articles on gender roles, and sexuality in India
- Textual analysis of religious scriptures



Ancient Khajuraho Group of Monuments
Wikimedia

Research Findings

- The Hijra population (known for their transgender and intersex identities) are looked down upon for not following into stereotypically masculine gender roles
- Women are consistently placed in lower standings than men

Traditional sexuality and gender roles lead to the dismissal of people who do not fall into them.



A Hijra man at a LGBT Pride Event
Wikimedia

Limitations

Barriers I had encountered:

- Complete awareness/information
- Inability to travel to India to perform research first hand
- Time

If ever given the time, proper accommodations, a team, and the opportunity, I would gladly research this topic first hand.

Travelling to India in search of this answer would not only expand our understanding of socio-cultural differences in another country, but also give us the opportunity to offer what knowledge we can to them.

Conclusion

After the 10 week period, discoveries included that:

- Homosexuality is never directly spoken ill of in religious Indian scriptures
- Though the Hijra population are seen in religion as almost descendants of religious beings, they are dismissed as eunuchs, placed in low caste societies, due to their sexual identities
- There are mixed reviews on homosexuality by Indian peoples as a whole
- The amount of LGBT Indians that are "out" is rising
- Due to proper norms, sexuality is not commonly discussed, leading to lack of proper education on sexual health

While the Indian population displays signs of forward expansion in terms of gender roles and sexuality, it is not yet at the stage of accepting the rather newer culture. With time, I feel India will break free of their old ideologies and hopefully expand their education on the matter.

Mandelbaum, David G. "Sex Roles and Gender Relations in North India." *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, no. 46 (1986): 1999-2004.

With this article, Mandelbaum discusses the norm requirements that are expected of men and women in India.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the College of Humanities & Social Sciences at Rowan University for granting me the resources, and the opportunity to conduct my research. I would also like to thank Dr. Whitney Cox, and Dr. Ashley Lierman, for guiding me through this research, and instilling a love for this topic that I did not know existed.