

TRANSGENDER: THE POSSIBILITY OF ADDING A THIRD GENDER OPTION

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Within the South African context some people may experience a gender identity of the other sex. Due to the division of sex and gender into only two categories (male and female), it may cause some people to feel unaccepted and unfairly discriminated against. The purpose of this article is to determine whether adding a third gender option (transgender) would benefit and support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people to feel accepted. A mixed-method approach was used in gathering the data through a web-based questionnaire of 172 students. Basic statistics were used in conjunction with a proportional reduction of error measure and Goodman-Kruskal lambda to determine the strength of the association of variables. Research suggests in theory that the laws concerning sex and gender categories should be revised and reconsidered. In practice, research suggests that by adding a third gender it will provide support to LGBT people to feel more accepted.

Keywords: Gender; Race; Separate restrooms; Third gender.

Introduction

“If we are liberated we are open with our sexuality. Closet queenery must end” (Clarke & Peel 2007, p.1). Is it okay to want to change your gender? Whatever you think, you probably have some opinion which is neither necessarily right nor wrong. The saying above weeps for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people to come out and be accepted by society. One of the first affirmative studies conducted on lesbians were done by June Hopkins 1969. In the 1960s she was known as a clinical psychologist in England with the main interest on personality factors of lesbians. Her hypothesis stated that “there would be no personality factors that would be statistically significantly different between lesbian and heterosexual women” (Clarke, Ellis, Peel & Riggs 2010, p.17). The following terms Transsexual, transgender, transvestites, drag queens or kings, bisexual and queer are terms not immediately obvious to many people (Clarke et al., 2010). What appears to be normal to most people, that are being a man or woman, may become a very complicated matter to some.

People who express gender in ways not traditionally associated with their sex as well as people who express gender in non-traditional ways but continue to identify as the sex of their birth may be part of the LGBT movement (Clarke et al., 2007). This movement is at once celebratory and confrontational which highlights the importance of being different and the increasing acknowledgment of LGBT research. According to research by Clarke et al. (2007) personal, political and professional matters increase the tensions between and among LGBT people. Leaps forward in this respect were encouraged where South Africans are protected from labour discrimination based on their sexual orientation and the fact that same-sex marriage are allowed, there are still much work to be done. The Constitutional Court accounted for discrimination based on sexual orientation, but gender discrimination was left behind (Government Gazette, 2006). Although same-sex marriages are accepted in most of the countries the problem regarding LGBT people were not resolved. The solution is not to avoid this current LGBT movement but to embrace it. Therefore the significance of this research is to provide the LGBT movement with support to be accepted by society. If same-sex marriages are accepted, why is there still gender discrimination towards LGBT people? The current life style in the South African society does not incorporate for LGBT perspectives, for example people that do not relate to the gender assigned to them by birth may struggle with only two possible gender options. Do LGBT people choose the gender they prefer or do they choose the option obvious to mankind? Another example is the use of toilet facilities. Do LGBT people choose the gentleman’s toilet or ladies toilet facilities? By making use of unisex restrooms it could make the “no choice” an easier option when deciding which toilet facility to use and may prevent people to feel uncomfortable.

The research aim is to support this social change among young adults that could possibly benefit and assist not only LGBT people but also society itself. The question here is whether adding a third gender

option such as transgender will prevent gender discrimination and provide a support system for LGBT people to be accepted in society. There seems to be a lack of clarity in the scope of transgender people and this research attempts to help society gain a better understanding of LGBT people in the South African context. The research explores the historical bases of LGBT people in South Africa, gives a theoretical background on what is meant by using the words lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, presents a comparison of people's perspectives regarding the recognition of gender identity or expression and verification for LGBT people. In the reconstitution of the field, the perceptions of students were obtained by means of an anonymous web-based questionnaire regarding the recognition of LGBT people. The questionnaire was completed in privacy and because of this fact the responses could be seen as honest and valid.

The South African Background

The regulation of sexuality through history and across cultures can reflect on the broader picture of cultural norms. Men or women "wanting" one another are nothing new. Already in Lot's time the men of the city of Sodom wanted to "know" men who were visiting Lot (Genesis 19:5-8). South Africans are protected by the law from labour discrimination based on sexual orientation and in 2000 it was extended to promote equality and to prevent unfair discrimination. According to the Constitutional Court it was unconstitutional to prevent South Africans from same-sex marriage before 2005 and in 2006 after the Parliament voted for a bill, they allowed same-sex marriages, although some of the members of the African National Congress (ANC) did not show their support of this new law. From 2008, the consent age regardless of sexual orientation was set at 16 because of the formal repealing of the provisions that discriminated (Government Gazette, 2006). It seems that South Africa has a diverse history and was the first country to outlaw discrimination and to give social status and rights to LGBT people in Africa (Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003). Because of the HIV-AIDS outbreak epidemic, most LGBT people in South Africa revealed their sexual orientation (Conron, Scout & Austin, 2008). This was probably done in order for them to qualify for the right to have access to life-saving medicines. Croucher (2002) concluded that the emergence and success of the LGBT movement and the overview of the liberation politics in South Africa cannot be understood outside the transition to democratic rule in South Africa. Removing apartheid did not enhance homosexuality, but it did provide an environment for gay and lesbians to mobilize in pursuit of their rights.

Same-sex conduct in South Africa was legalised in 1994. According to Swarr (2004) the first in the world to obtain constitutional protection after apartheid ended in 1994, based on sexual orientation, was the South African gays and lesbians. South Africa was among some of the first countries in 1996 which outlawed discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, gender and other grounds despite of the post-apartheid constitution, remained on the statute books and provided LGBT people with constitutional protection (Ruiz, 2009). It is also known that the South Africa Parliament passed the Employment Equity Act (EEA) in the 1998. It is believed that the white gay and lesbian people that wanted to join the South African Defense Force between 1960 and the late 1980s were forced to undergo sex change operations, because it was seen as the solution or cure for homosexual behaviour (Simo, 2000). In a documentary film named Property of the State 2003 the unfair treatment of the gay and lesbian soldiers in the South Africa military was exploited.

Theoretical Gender-Assignment Bases

Due to the different opinions regarding the following concepts, it is required to provide clarification and is used in this context in this article: (1) Gay and lesbian are people who self-acknowledge same-gender desires; where gays refer to men and lesbians refer to women (Perez, DeBord & Bieschke 2000, p.15). (2) Homosexuals are people who engage primarily in same-gender sexual behaviour. Although the term homosexual is often discouraged due to the fact that it is mainly focused on the sexual aspect of identity and its connotation of pathology. Homosexual people usually identify themselves as people who experience same-gender emotional desire (Perez et al., 2000, p.15). (3) Bisexual, according to Merriam Webster's Online

Dictionary (2011) can be defined as people possessing characters of both sexes or characterized by a tendency to direct sexual desire toward both sexes. (4) Transgender is seen by Whittle (2000, p.65) as an umbrella term including transsexual people, transgender people, transvestites as well as other groups of “gender variant people” such as drag queens or kings, butch lesbians and “manning” or “passing” women. It also refers to all persons who express gender in ways not traditionally associated with their sex as well as people who express gender in non-traditional ways but continue to identify as the sex of their birth. (5) Third gender is individuals who do not identify exclusively as a man or a woman (Conron et al., 2008, p.2).

Gender identity or inversion theory of homosexuality can refer to how people identify themselves for example as a female, a male, both or neither (Clarke et al., 2010). In order to explain sex or gender reassignment surgery the term gender identity was often used, but did not refer to putting people into categories such as female or male (Money, 1994). It is important to understand the difference between a person’s gender and his or her sex. A person’s sex refers to the amount of X and Y chromosomes and their external appearance, for example, physically looking like a woman or a man. In addition Clarke et al. (2010) argued on the one hand that the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ cannot be thought of as separate theoretical concepts. Gender may refer to how the person feels about his or her sex, for example, someone may feel like a man in a woman’s body. Gender identity can be influenced by hormone levels and many other biological factors. One example given by Clarke et al. (2010, p.268) to explain these two concepts is to say that “sex is often viewed as primary and gender is the cultural ‘icing’ on the biological ‘cake’ of sex”. Gender identity may also be influenced through social factors such as family and the media.

On the other hand Deaux and Stewart (2001) noted that the traditional concept of gender identity generally refers to an early awareness of oneself as a male or a female. Gender queer became commonly used by the youth at the turn of the 21st century, because they felt that the gender that was assigned to them at birth did not correspond to their gender identity. A variety of terms can be used when defining or referring to gender queer, examples are transboi, third-gendered, multi-gendered or even boydyke (Beemyn, 2007). Attitudes are shaped in social groups through a person’s membership in that specific group and can be called the Social identity theory (Foley, Ngo & Loi, 2006). This is where one evaluates the group to which they belong compared to other social groups. Foley et al. (2006) also argued that the perceptions of discrimination are based on one’s social identity rather than the characteristics of being a male, female, both or neither. Swarr (2004) said that it is politically relevant and critical for self-perceptions of individuals to accept gender identity or expression. In 2004, the identity categories may have had methodological difficulties and argued that the term transgender only implied two sexes or genders and that the term “drag” should rather be used because it indicates a rupture that there might be between gendered appearance and sex. Swarr (2004) also indicated that it is socially accepted when playing with gender, but it is looked down upon in transgender identities. The assumption is made that these terms, such as male or female; white or Black, may be fixed, but their meanings are unlikely to be fully consistent and therefore must be reworked because of everyday practices and a changing world (Swarr 2004). It is interesting to know that the Thai Society refers to transgendered females as male-to-female transgender (MtF TGs) (Winter 2006). According to Weisgram and Bigler (2007) there are people that favour the teaching of children on gender, but others worry that knowledge of that kind can influence people by increasing their reluctance to enter heterosexual relationships.

Reparative Approach

In the argument against gender identity or expression for lesbian and gay people, Beemyn (2008) is of opinion that it will become difficult for society to foster gender binary fusion if the gender queer quantity increases among the people. In addition, Louw (2005) argues that by definition the retention and creation of an institution exclusively for lesbian and gay people would be a violation of

equality. According to The New York Blade (2006), Tony Blair blocked a proposal that would ban discrimination against gays. The move stirred a controversy, especially among religious conservatives. A survey done by Conron et al. (2008, p.6) showed that most non-transgender participants were against the gender identity for lesbian and gay people. Different reasons were cited such as “Why do they have to ask people if they are transgender?” and “Why cannot they just say male or female?”

Furthermore Nicolosi and Nicolosi (2002, p.16) argued that there is no such thing as a ‘gay child’ or ‘gay teen.’ “We are all designed to be heterosexual. Confusion about gender is primarily a psychological condition, and to some extent, it can be modified”. Newman (1977) a therapist, speculated that parents who are confused about their own gender identity leads to their children’s transgender feelings. According to Hill and Menvielle (2009), Grossman and his colleagues completed studies in connection with transgender and indicated that when most Trans youth told their parents about their homosexuality, their parents reacted negatively. Their reactions included statements such as ‘you need counselling’ or ‘gays or lesbians are unwelcome in our family events’. Because of these responses, many transgender people feel unsafe at home and choose to leave their parents, leading to rare contact with their family. Kogan (2009, p.677) stated that there is “no record to support the conclusion that the plain meaning of ‘sex’ includes anything more than male and female”. In light of the traditional dual conception of sex, transsexuals may not claim protection under the USA Federal Law from discrimination based solely on their status as a transsexual (Kogan, 2009).

Like all other employees, such protection extends to transsexual employees only if they are discriminated against because they are male or because they are female.

Affirmative Approach

The argument in favour of gender identity or expression for lesbian and gay people, Julie (2007) described that support groups can enhance their ability to draw attention when they adapt to human right strategies to a type of wrong or just to become more a significant group. Grewal and Kaplan (2001) concerned that it would be helpful in post-modernity for transnational in getting to understand sexualities and its specifics. Hill and Menvielle (2009) found that the traditional views of transgender was that by not accepting homosexuality would help reduce transgender and increase heterosexuality. It can be assumed with confidence that this statement of the traditional views of transgender is not realistic in the 20th century. Conron et al. (2008) argued with the statements made by Hill and Menvielle (2009) that transgender categories (they added three transgender categories) are more useful than two response options. If lesbian and gay people are presented with only two options such as being a female gender or male gender, they may be misclassified as being non-transgender people. For example people who are born male, but identify their gender as being female thus being in reality and in real life transgender people. This research suggests that female to male and male to female transgender people have different health profiles and because of this should preferably be given transgender subgroup options when for example completing a form. There are young adults who recognize that they are a gender that is different from their birth gender, often may struggle, be ashamed and in denial of who they really are, due to the fact that they do not understand those feelings they are experiencing (Beemyn, 2007). According to the Contemporary Sexuality volume (2008) feeling out of place and uncomfortable in their birth gender can be influenced through the internet, media and television in a positive manner due to the fact that it can promote teens to explore their gender identities and feel that they are not alone.

A survey done by Conron et al. (2008) showed that some transgender participants were relieved that the questionnaire had a transgender option when asked what gender they were. The specific questionnaire had the following options when it came to gender: Female; Male; Transgender, male-to-female; Transgender, female-to-male; Transgender, do not identify as exclusively male or female; and Not

sure. The majority of the respondents made positive remarks regarding these options. Besides this Mallon and DeCrescenzo (2006) found that it is very easy to blame gender variant children if they struggle to adapt to the traditional gender norms. Children can experience feelings of depression, low self-esteem, anxiety; anger and may even become suicidal due to a poor fit of the traditional gender and a lack of support.

Socially attractive skills and characteristics can play an important role when it comes to feelings of depression and anxiety. Having a positive self-perception can reduce such negative feelings and emotions (Hoffmann, Powlishta & White 2004). According to Lee and Lee's (2006) study several parents showed promising support for the under-studied homosexual "species". Parents mentioned that the following five aspects could be used as part of an affirmative approach: verbal support, inclusion in family events, acceptance of significant others (including partners and gay friends), non-disparate treatment and also by showing unconditional love to their homosexual children.

In the Thai society study done by Winter (2006) it was found that most parents but particularly mother parents supported their transgendered children by accepting and encouraging them to express their transgender form. Many people believe that family cannot play a part in the development of transgender. If people had the ability to influence such development most families would rather aim to oppose it than to encourage it. The results of that study indicated that 61.2 percent of the respondents gave the explanation of transgender in terms of biology and 29.4 percent explained that transgender was caused by friends. The authors of this article also agree with the argument in favour of gender identity or expression for lesbian and gay people in South Africa. The authors believe that it will create a more positive perception for LGBT people and by adding a transgender option people can more quickly acknowledge and embrace their identities. Because such individuals may have different health profiles, they believe that a person should be declared as a transgender person by professional doctors, and will not be able to change their transgender back to being male or female. Transgender should not be seen as disorder, but rather as a third gender. Another topic that came to light while reading the literature was the use of unisex restrooms. By making use of unisex restrooms it could make the "no choice" an easier option for LGBT people when deciding which toilet facility to use and may prevent people to feel unaccepted.

Method

This research had the primary objective to investigate whether adding a third gender would benefit LGBT people in South Africa. The secondary objectives were to explore the historical bases of LGBT people in South Africa, where it came from and how it fits in with post-apartheid; confer a theoretical background on what is meant by using the words "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender"; present a comparison of people's perspectives regarding the recognition of gender identity or expression for LGBT people; draw a conclusion based on every perspective in order to declare a typology.

Due to this predicament faced by South Africa concerning the identities of national citizens the grounded theory of inquiry was the most appropriate to use, because it was grounded in the views of participants (Creswell, 2009). For the purpose of this article data had to be collected in order to develop a theory from it. The Social Constructivist philosophical view holds more meaning for qualitative research by which it holds the assumption that the researcher seeks complexity and understanding of the citizens' views regarding the recognition of gender identity or expression for LGBT people (Creswell, 2009). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) noted that if the researcher wants to explore the subjective meanings of the citizens' views on the recognition of gender identity or expression for LGBT people, a constructivist philosophical view should be followed. This study seeks to develop a theory, and therefore followed an inductive approach.

The data collection was done by non-standardized qualitative interviews that were conducted

electronically by using a designated website. The sample consisted of 172 respondents who completed the questionnaires. These respondents mostly aged between 26-29 and 46 and older were referred to the website through emails and Facebook and short message service. The respondents were students at the University of Pretoria (UP) and students at the University of South Africa (Unisa). The questionnaire on the website consisted of open-ended, closed, dichotomous, multiple-choice and semi-structured questions administered online in order to probe for the respondents' views and feelings (Creswell, 2009). Bethlehem (2010) found that a new way of collecting data is through using web surveys. The research has shown that if one needs to access large groups web surveys are the best to use due to the simplicity thereof and it being cost-effective. The results of web surveys may also be biased due to the fact that there may be substantial differences between people having access to and having no access to the internet.

The data that had been collected regarding the respondents' phrases or answers was summarized. A systematic approach to analyze qualitative data can be referred to as content analysis. The approach is used to summarize how the respondents perceived the questionnaire, to analyze the responses to the open-ended questions or semi-structured questionnaires by using the IBM SPSS. Statistics 20 Data Editor program. This data analysis procedure provided the researcher with a deeper meaning of the society's understanding of transsexual individuals.

Results and Discussion

Focusing on the measurement and comparison of respondents' perspectives regarding the recognition of gender identity or expression, the questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part consisted of demographic questions and the second part of perceived transgender perceptions. In the first part the demographic details of the respondents' profiles were explored. The recorded frequencies of the demographic details are referred to as the characteristics of the respondents' profiles. The following characteristics are reported on here: gender, sex, race, age, home language, highest level of education/qualification and marital status. When asked about their gender, 67.5 percent of the respondents indicated that they were females and the same percentage also indicated that their sex was female. The majority of the respondents were white (57.5 percent), with 36.2 percent African, 2 percent Indian and less than 2 percent coloured. The ages of the respondents varied from 17 with more than 23 percent over the age of 46. Due to Unisa being a distance learning institution, many of the students may be of an older age. The respondents were well educated with 72 percent holding a post-grade 12 qualification and 23.1 percent either a master's or a doctorate. About half the respondents were married, divorced or remarried while the other half were either single or in a relationship (never married).

The second part was subdivided into separate sections. The Section A focused on the respondents' perceived perceptions regarding homosexuality which were asked on a dichotomous response scale with only 'yes' and 'no' options. Based on the findings, it can be noted that most of the respondents, 86 percent, first heard about homosexuality before the age of 20. While 50 percent of the respondents stated that they had no homosexual friends, the majority (73 percent) of them stated that they have no homosexual family members. When the question on whether the respondents' community accept homosexual people more than half (55 percent) of the respondents perceive that homosexual people are accepted by their community. The question about the current status of the respondents' emotions and opinion regarding homosexuality was based on a 4-point scale that consisted of the following options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Disagree', and 'Strongly disagree'. The reason for not using a

Likert type scale with a neutral option was because the authors wanted the respondents to think about what is being asked and to make a decision about it. The findings illustrated that only a few (11 percent) of the respondents reported that they do not understand the concept homosexuality. However more than one third (38 percent) of the respondents reported that they do not accept homosexuality. As a result, the authors found that it does not mean that the respondents embrace homosexuality if they only accept it. This can be assumed, because from the findings, more (72 percent) of the respondents specify that they do not embrace homosexuality although 62 percent accept homosexuality. Even though 62 percent of the respondents accept homosexuality, most (70 percent) of them believe that it is not healthy for same-sex relationships. This was the case in both the men and women same-sex relationship question. The respondents were asked to give their current status on whether they believe that homosexual people are accepted in South Africa. More than half (51 percent) of them believe that this is not the case and that they are not accepted in South Africa.

Section A focused on the respondents' level of acceptance which were asked on a Likert type scale that consisted of the following options: Poor, Fair, Average, Good, and Excellent. Nearly half (49 percent) of respondents indicated that they do not accept LGBT people. On the whole (58 percent) of the respondents accepted that there should be equal rights for LGBT people, furthermore only 31 percent accept sex-reassignment surgery. Therefore the assumption can be made that if more people vote for equal rights for LGBT people, the less people will vote for sex-reassignment surgery. The following four questions were based on a percentage scale. How important is it to you to connect socially with gay and lesbian people? Generally (71 percent) of the respondents' feel that it is not important to socially connect with gay and lesbian people. How comfortable do you feel around gay and lesbian people? From the responses 54 percent of the respondents feel comfortable around LGBT people.

On the question of the importance of a gay and lesbian support group or social network, 52 percent felt that it is not important to have a support group. However when asked about the importance of a gay and lesbian social network for them, 78 percent of the respondents' pointed out that a gay and lesbian social network group is not important for them. From this the assumption can be made that the respondents feel that gay and lesbian people can have a support group and social network, but when it comes to the respondents personally, they feel no need for such a group or network. Therefore it is all right to have such groups and networks, but most of the respondents will not be part of such groups and networks when not being LGBT. However that being said, only 15 percent of the respondents are aware of a support group and that only 1 percent of the respondents belongs to such a group.

Section B consisted of a dichotomous response scale 'yes' and 'no' and also open-ended questions were based on the third gender option. Due to people feeling that the gender that was assigned to them at birth does not correspond to their gender identity, a third gender option can maybe help them to feel accepted and reduce discrimination. Therefore a third gender could include either gay, lesbian, bisexual, and homosexual or a combination of these. This could enable people of a third gender to indicate their preference and to feel accepted socially by doing so. The respondents perceived the terms sex and gender in a variety of ways. Some respondents believed that there is no difference between sex and gender, that gender is used as a euphemism for sex, or that both words mean one is male or female. Others perceived it as carrying two different meanings. The first is that sex indicates male or female organs and gender indicates a psychological state relating to behavioural characteristics. As stated by respondents, this psychological state may be prescribed to the nurturing received during childhood, or choice that one can make in terms of behaving in a masculine or feminine manner. The second perception indicated that respondents viewed gender as the physical assets and that sex specifies one's sexual orientation. Respondents also associated the question with the fact that men should be masculine and women should possess qualities believed to be more feminine. According to respondents, it can then also occur that one does not feel comfortable in one's own body and attempts to express themselves in terms of different behavioural traits than that associated

with the specific gender or sex. Failure to express oneself fully in terms of the chosen sex or gender may lead to a feeling of resentment of your own body. A few respondents also associated the word sex with sexual intercourse. The last view indicated that a number of respondents believe gender dictates one's sex or that sex dictates one's gender.

Respondents also stated that the difference between gender and sex relies solely on a lifestyle choice and the use of different terms is the attempt to justify the behavioural orientation they have chosen, for example being gay or lesbian. A few respondents are also of the opinion that gays or lesbians are only confused and that the gender and/or sex you were born was correctly chosen. There are, however respondents that felt the question was vague and required a more specific description to enable answering. Some respondents also felt that they cannot relate to the posed question or that the question was not applicable to them and therefore did not answer it. According to some respondents the term transgender can be explained as a person undergoing surgery to alter their current sex or gender organs and replace it with that of the opposite sex or gender, whether at birth or at a later stage in life. Other respondents described the term as simply being straight, gay or lesbian, one's sexual identity. The term transgender according to most of the respondents can also be regarded as the feeling of not belonging to the sex or gender group you are born to and who cannot conform to the behavioural traits of their current sex or gender. This was also explained by respondents as a man stuck in a woman's body or a woman stuck in a man's body. According to the respondents it can also imply that one is attracted to others of the same sex or gender or that one experience the need to portray abnormal or behaviour rather associated with the opposite sex or gender.

Respondents also perceived the term to mean a mixture of both sex or gender in other words a person possessing both male and female organs. Respondents are also of the opinion that the term encompasses people confused about their sexuality or who is attracted to both men and women simultaneously. Another opinion is that transgender can be regarded as people who possess characteristics of both. Other respondents were unsure what the term transgender means or that it means nothing at all to them. A respondent also noted that the research is not necessary in society and will not create any worth and seeks to complicate matters further. Another respondent felt that God made all in His image and that one should not try to change who you were created to be.

Respondents were of the opinion that adding a third gender will expose someone who is experiencing problems with their sexuality. They are also of the opinion that the creation of transgender would assist in preventing discrimination and would initiate respecting such individuals within society as well as respect for themselves. Creating the third gender will allow people to identify themselves truthfully and some respondents indicated that although the term transgender does not officially exist, the aspects relating to it is already part of society. Creating the terms will also, according to some respondents lead to benefits to these individuals because of understanding and recognition by the public which in turn will lead to a greater overall satisfaction with their lives.

Some respondents did not agree with the suggestion to a third gender group. A variety of reasons were as to why they are of this opinion. Some indicated that there are not enough LGBT citizens to justify the creation of the third gender group and hence the gender is not necessary. Another reason provided against the third gender group is because only man and woman were created and therefore when experiencing any confusion in terms of sex or gender one should 'choose' one of these existing sex or gender. The concern of discrimination against those labelled as transgender was also an apparent concern for the respondents. It was stated that the creation of the third gender will enable people to concentrate more on differences between them and therefore discrimination might escalate. Some respondents also do not believe in the

terms gay and lesbians and therefore thinks there should not be a third gender. It was also stated that creating a third gender will increase confusion around the subject of sex or gender and should hence not be created. Lastly it was also stated that it's not the classification of genders that forms the issue but rather how people reacts causes the issues. When asked about discrimination against transgender people, some explained it as discrimination against something you do not understand. Religious beliefs are also regarded as a reason for the discrimination due to the perception that transgender individuals are living against God's plan for them and they are moving against the Christian believes. Respondents also perceive South Africans as discriminative because they do not even consider the possibility of someone being something other than male or female and therefore treat them with disrespect or confusion. Society does not understand why they are different and because they are seen as out of the norm, society does not accept them. Awareness of this state of mind is therefore necessary.

Respondents are of the opinion that transgender individuals are discriminated against regarding employment opportunities and employment applications. Abuse also surfaced as a result from respondents. Respondents felt that transgender individuals are also discriminated against in terms of marriage. According to respondents, it is inequitable that, in some countries, transgender individuals are not allowed to marry a person of the same sex. Respondents also feel that individuals naturally born as hermaphrodites are discriminated against even though it was not chosen by these individuals. Human rights were another manner respondents felt in which transgender individuals were discriminated against. Another reason for discrimination was due to the uncomfortable feeling that transgender individuals evoke in others. Some respondents do not know in which way transgender individuals are discriminated against, or if they are discriminated against at all.

To determine and measure the strength of the association of the variables, a proportional reduction of error (PRE) measure known as "lambda" (symbolized by the Greek letter λ) or as Goodman-Kruskal lambda was calculated. Lambda, a measure of association, reflects the proportional reduction in error when values of the independent variable are used to predict values of the dependent variable. Lambda was used to determine and measure the strength of the relationships between the following variables with both race and gender: (1) do you have any homosexual friends; (2) does your community accept homosexual people (3) whether they accept homosexuality; (4) they believe that that homosexual people are accepted in South Africa; (5) do you think adding a third gender would benefit the South African gay and lesbian citizens; (6) what sexual orientation label best describes you; (7) do you think that transgender people are discriminated against; (8) the current status on understanding of homosexuality; (9) the level of acceptance on equal rights for gay and lesbian people.

By means of inferential statistics it was determined that the current status on understanding of homosexuality and the level of acceptance on equal rights for gay and lesbian people did not seem to have any significant effect with regard to race on the web- based survey. However, the majority of white respondents understood the concept homosexuality, while the black or Africans had the lowest understanding of homosexuality. Although the understanding level probably varies, there are respondents in each race group that do understand the concept homosexuality. The second significant finding concluded that Africans are less in favour of providing equal rights to LGBT people in contrast to the white respondents that favour equal rights to LGBT people. There was also a significance difference found when comparing the different races on how comfortable they feel around gay and lesbian people. The Africans feel very uncomfortable around LGBT people compared to the white race where they feel more comfortable around LGBT people. When reading and analysing the table it is important to remember that it is not assuming null hypothesis, the authors used the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis and is based on the chi-square approximation.

Based on the literature LGBT people still experience gender discrimination, although the Constitutional Court protects people from unfair discrimination. From this the gap was identified that although most South Africans are aware of LGBT people some of the cultures struggle to accept this new movement. Therefore in order to support LGBT people to be accepted in society which was the primary objective to investigate, the conclusion was made that by adding a third gender option it would possibly eliminate this struggle of being unaccepted and rejected. The historical bases of LGBT people in South Africa, where it came from and how it fits in with post-apartheid suggests that it makes the understanding of LGBT people easier. In addition one of the secondary objectives was to confer a theoretical background on what is meant by using the words “lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. By providing a theoretical background it was found to be helpful in the current post-modernity for transnational in getting to understand sexualities and its specifics.

The thought that by not accepting homosexuality it would reduce transgender and increase heterosexuality was clearly proven wrong and not realistic. The results based on the comparison of the respondents’ perspectives regarding the recognition of gender identity or expression for LGBT people suggests that most people first heard about homosexuality at a very young age. The analysis based on only this research suggests that Africans are more conservative towards LGBT people and that the white race is more open to new developments. The reason for this can be supported by the differences found in cultures. In addition, the results have also showed that the African race do not agree that by adding a third gender it would support LGBT people and where the white race feel that it will provide support.

Recommendations

It is recommended that people take care in thinking about gender discrimination. LGBT is not something new and will never go away. LGBT is a lifestyle given to people without choice, just as being a man or woman was given. The unique contribution of this article is that it is attempting to include everyone in society and to make society aware of the LGBT movement. This is of importance, because any person might have a child, friend or family member that is part of this LGBT movement that is too afraid to come out and be accepted. This article is based on only 172 respondents and because of the relative small sample; this research cannot be generalized to the entire population but gives an indication of the perceptions and feelings of people. In qualitative research studies, subjectivity is accepted because according to Maree (2008) it cannot be eliminated.

This article lays a foundation that could serve as bases for further South African research in the field. It can be concluded that the above symposium presents substantive evidence that “transgender people thus raise particular questions for the law ” (Meadow 2010, 830). The conclusion drawn based on every perspective is that there is more research needed. We cannot say that by adding a third gender that things will get better or that people’s perspectives will change, but what we can say is that things must change in order to get better.

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