

Forum: Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM)

Issue #1: Measures to address the safety of youth transgender persons

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Introduction:



The term transgender is known as an umbrella term that describes an individual whose sex assigned at birth, doesn't match their gender identity, behavior, or expression. Gender identity refers to an individual's sense of being and identifying as either a male, female or something beyond those terms. Gender expression is the way an individual communicates their gender identity through clothing, behavior, voice, hairstyles, Interests, and personality characteristics. The forms in which transgender people are discussed in popular culture, academia,

and sciences are evolving. This depends specifically on how aware people are regarding the topic, the knowledge they've obtained, and the level of acceptance they have regarding transgender people. Furthermore, there is a defined difference between sex and gender. Sex is something that is directly known and assigned the second an individual is born, meaning you cannot choose your sex. Someone's sex is a biological attribute, including a man or a woman, and is characterized by factors such as chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external anatomy.

On the other hand, gender refers to relatively new socially constructed norms, behaviors, actions, and characteristics that a particular society defines as appropriate for men or women. Someone's gender influences how they talk, behave, act, and how they feel about their identity. Although these two terms could easily get mixed up or conjoined in different cultures, communities, or societies, some factors differentiate them. Even though the term transgender might be new to some, these people have been in various indigenous, Western, and Eastern cultures from the past and all the way to the present day. Knowing that we have to acknowledge the hatred they've received. For instance during the periods of 2020 and 2021, in the UK there was a "National LGBT Survey" and there were 2,630 Hate Crimes with 88% of people didn't respond and 48% of people were unsatisfied with the police response they received, as well as it was found that transgender people, as a whole, are the community that suffers hate with most frequency. Even though this portion of data highlights the broad catastrophes transgender people suffer, it is essential to go into depth about the tragedies that transgender youths endure. For instance, overall, there is 1.8% of youth who identified as transgender. For the transgender youths, there is a notable and significant increase in depression, suicide and victimization, in comparison to cisgender youngs. Strikingly, there was been reports stating 1/3 transgender youths were attempting suicide, 1/3 of them being victims of sexual assault, and over half of them confirmed a minium 2 week period were they fell

under an undeniable depression due to their identity. This data was all collected through a sizable survey, capturing data from 118,803 high school students in ten US states and nine large urban school districts. Furthermore, there are countless surveys that are measuring the wellbeing of transgender youths in order to obtain knowledge about their well being and aim to take action against it. According to "LGBT in Britain, Stonewall ": 46% of trans people have thought about taking their own life, "Growing up LGBT+, just like us' ' states that: 65% of young trans people worry about their mental health daily, "National Young Chances Integrated Report, Metro Charity" informs us that: 32% of transgender young people miss lessons due to fear of discrimination, finally "School Report, Stonewall" informs us that 64% of trans pupils are bullied for being LGBT+ at school.

Definition of Key Terms

Transgender person: an individual who identifies differently from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender identity: An internal sense of an individual as either a female, male or other.

Sex: Biological attribute, including a man or a woman, and is characterized by factors such as chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external anatomy.

Gender: Gender indicates socially constructed roles, behaviors, and characteristics of girls, women, boys, men, and other gender-diverse people.

Gender dysphoria: a sense of inquietude that an individual might feel as they experience a mismatch between their biological sex and an opposing gender. This could potentially stem from certain hormones in the womb, genes, and cultural and environmental factors that an individual is exposed to. This all may lead to a progressive change of gender, yet, there is a high chance that they

might encounter mental and physical battles.

LGBTQ: Community of individuals who are not heterosexual including; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and more.

Sex-changing surgeries: These surgeries entail a process that includes a series of procedures which alter an individual's physical appearance in order to resemble characteristics of their wanted gender identity. These surgeries include penectomy (removal of the penis), orchiectomy (removal of the testicles), vaginoplasty (construction of a vagina), and vulvoplasty (construction of a vulva).

General Overview:

Physical dangers that youth transgenders face

Transgender youths can face many physical dangers as they often don't receive sufficient aid and support. They have a significantly higher chance to experience violence and bullying, which in response leads to emotional and physical taunting damage. For example, if they receive harsh rejection from their loved ones and family, that could open up possibilities for homelessness, putting them in a position of exposed danger. Furthermore, obtaining the appropriate healthcare for these individuals, specifically care that matches their gender identity, can be extremely tough for them. Through a study conducted in California from middle and high schools, collected between 2013-2015, were 335 transgender and 31,737 non-transgender youths were assessed, it was found that due to the stress of being treated inadequately, there was a 2.5 to 4 times higher chance of substance use for transgender youths as well as early on usage. Furthermore, a study released by "Journal of School Health", discovered that transgender students were 2.5 times more likely to use cocaine and methamphetamines in their life and to abuse prescription pain medication wrongfully, compared to non-transgender students. Finally according to a study

by SPSS 22, talking about suicidal rates among transgender youths, 56% of the youth reported a previous suicide attempt and 86% reported suicidality. Additionally, if an individual were to proceed in going through taking special hormones or have surgery to affirm their gender, it is a long process with countless risks involved. The process entails a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, a letter of recommendation from a certified therapist, allowing the person to begin their hormone journey, alongside their doctor. Later on, a period of time where they live their life and present themselves as a member of the opposite sex, then finally, a confirming surgery to officially alter the individual's body forever. Knowing the procedure, there are numerous risks involved, including bleeding, infection, poor healing of incisions, as well as the risk of the accuracy regarding the surgery. Not to mention, daily struggles such as headaches, depression, fatigue, etc. To help them stay safe, we need to ensure they have access to good healthcare, counseling, legal protection, and supportive communities where they feel accepted.

Impacts on the mental health of transgender youths

The deep rooted emotions transgender youths deal with on a daily basis are firmly impacted by their experiences and external factors that surround their environment. These individuals endure mistreatment, physical and emotional harassments, and unjust neglect from their treasured loved ones, simply due to their new identity. These truly negative experiences can rapidly lead to feelings of depression, anxiety, self doubt, self isolation, which impose these individuals to truly thrive and exceed in their own skin. Due to the absence of essential human needs such as strong emotional connections, these young people can turn to extremely harmful remedies, substance abuse or shameful intrusive thoughts, as they view the complex situation there, impossible to escape. External factors such as denied access to proper and fitting healthcare or extreme bullying in public spaces can further intensify the lack of a content and sustained

mentality, worsening thousands of youths' situations. It is crucial for transgender individuals to be exposed into healthy and open minded environments in order to eradicate hatred and despise of this community. Providing them with adequate and successful help, such as having access to support groups, focusing on youth transgender identity issues can help flourish these people and as well as improve their emotional resilience and status, to a significantly greater one.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Iran: Iran is classified as a generally homophobic country, to further contextualize this, their leaders described homosexuality as “moral bankruptcy” or “modern western barbarism”. This simple example already clearly shows the hatred inside the community of Iran and makes us question the safety of LGBTQ members. Iranians have gone to such extreme lengths due to this unreasonable hatred that, according to Amnesty International there have been around 5,000 killings of gays and lesbians since the 1979 Iranian revolution. Now, knowing this, Iran isn't all that horrific as the government's actions towards transgender people are not extremely strict and prohibiting. Interestingly in 1983, a law was passed enabling the acceptance of transgender people as well as the availability for sex reassignment surgery, as well as they can take loans out in order to successfully proceed with the surgery. In all, even though Iran doesn't support the LGBTQ community as a whole, there are still some expectations for some particular groups.

Honduras: Honduras is an extremely dangerous place if you identify within the LGBTQ community, more specifically, a global study discovered that Honduras has the highest numbers of transgender murders, in comparison to its population. Knowing that, we must also take into consideration the fact that Honduras, as a country, has high rates of violent crimes, regardless of the

individual's sexual orientation. Although, the "Inter-American Commission on Human Rights report" states how most of the murders LGBT members tragically suffer, typically tend to go unpunished. Even though Honduras is generally a quite homophobic country, there are still some aspects of hope for the community seeing as LGBT activist Erick Martínez is a candidate for the Honduran congress and believes Honduras is slowly changing for the better.

Uganda: Uganda is not a safe place for any member of the LGBTQ community. It is quite an unsafe country for anyone wishing to identify within this group, a good indicator to know this is by looking at the number of LGBTQ refugees in the country. There were about 1800 LGBTQ refugees at Friends Ugandan Safe Transport Fund, a US-based Quakers association. This small portion of data already gives us an idea of how horrendous conditions were for all LGBTQ members.

Sweden: Transgender rights in Sweden are one of the most progressive in the whole continent of Europe. Sweden was the first country to make gender altars legal, in 1972. In 2008, transgender identity was added to a new imposed unified discrimination code, becoming effective by the first of January of 2009. Furthermore, this country plans on advancing their system for transgender individuals to have the possibility of embracing who they chose to be, therefore they plan on by July 2025, implement a new law stating that individuals who please, are legally allowed to change their gender, starting from the age of 18-16 years old. Additionally, they would make this process a significantly shorter one by reducing the consultations with doctors, as that would be enough in order to advance with the surgery

Timeline of Events

- 1931 The first ever sex-reassignment surgery occurred in Berlin Germany, at the Institute for Sexual Science.
- 1952 A woman named Christine Jorgenson, was the first American to have a public sex reassignment surgery, and it was one of the first to be exposed to the media.
- 1966 The Compton's Cafeteria Riot in San Francisco occurred when a transgender woman resisted her arrest by throwing coffee at a police officer, which shows the start of the resistance of police overpowering towards transgender people.
- 1972 Sweden becomes the first country to allow transgender people to legally change their gender, along with sex reassignment surgery.
- 1978 The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association was created, now known as WPATH, which basically enforced good living standards and care for transgender people.
- 1980 Gender dysphoria was recognized as a disorder, introduced by DSM-III.
- 2002 The Sylvia Rivera Law Project was founded, which basically strived for the rights of transgender people, specifically transgenders who struggle with a low income and are people of color.
- 2018 The American Academy of Pediatrics came out with a policy statement that was supporting gender-affirming care for transgender youth. Due to this, many states began to create and introduce passing laws, banning conversion therapy for minors.
- 2022 "The National Center for Transgender Equality" released the largest transgender survey of US history with more than 90,000 participants.

This informed society that even though transgender people still suffer discrimination in the workplace and medical care, there is an exceeding and overwhelming majority that report a more successful lifestyle after transitioning.

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

The UN recognizes all the hate and trauma transgender youths have faced. The UN tries to monitor all the hate crimes that transgender people have to endure including discrimination, harassment and murders. Knowing that, they've developed some rules in order to stabilize the unjust hate oppressed upon them. Some of them are investigating hate crimes against them, training police, judges, and staff to support the transgender victims, including gender identity in hate crime laws, allowing legal gender changes to proceed easily, making sure of fair access to healthcare, and finally, protecting transgender children and respecting their identities. Furthermore, a specific resolution would be one on June 17, 2011, by the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), where it gracefully adopted its first resolution, regarding rights for transgender individuals. This step forward for the community, called for an end to sexual discrimination as well as it became a priority issue for the UN. In addition, the council expressed significant concern in regards to the violence and discrimination these individuals were facing simply due to their sexual orientation and therefore ordered a study in order to gain insights on the extremity of these violations as well as planned the measures to attempt and resolve them. Moreover, there are nine essential international human rights treaties, these UN treaties aren't specifically about transgender rights, yet, they've been integrated to a great extent over time. In the past 5 years, the inclusion of LGBTQ,, in their concluding observations, embedded in all treaties, has increased 2 and a half times, from 54 references in 2014, to 138 in 2018. Additionally, from 2016–2018, those

references were integrated in half of the concluding observations, as well as from 2017-2018 the UN Human Rights Committee, incorporated LGBTQ issues in their reviews of every State. Finally, one last event that the UN did for this abundant community, would be the hosting of a global campaign to promote equal rights for LGBTI people in 2013, thoroughly helping the development of the transgender rights.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

All of these regulations imposed by the UN will continue to help and support this struggling community for many years, as the norms not only ensure their safety, yet, they ensure the ability to live a happy and fulfilling life. Furthermore, the treaties imposed will assist in the recognition of transgender rights in order to progress with their battle against certain refusing societies. Moreover, the transgender community has been expanding immensely. Knowing that before, being transgender and identifying inside this community was something obscure and never seen before, there wasn't a lot of action to try and resolve some surfacing issues regarding that community, yet, seeing as throughout the years the transgender community has been fighting for more rights, there have been many steps forward for them. For instance in Minnesota during 1993, it became the first U.S. state to include gender identity in its Human Rights Act, prohibiting discrimination in finding jobs and housing. Furthermore, during 2016, Obama demanded that public schools must allow transgender students to use bathrooms matching their gender identity, as well as many schools have created school programs that consist of training staff and students on LGBTQ+ issues, in order to encourage inclusivity for everyone. Moreover, on the healthcare system for these groups of people, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a policy in 2018 that mentioned providing supporting care for youth individuals who choose to go through a gender changing surgery, enforcing the resources to justified medical and psychological support.

Possible Solutions

Despite the detrimental challenges that transgender youths face in their daily lives due to their identity, there are achievable measures that can be taken in order to create a decrease in the hate crimes suffered by their community. Firstly, schools or educational centers should integrate gender diversity information, accessible to not only the students but all staff members in order to successfully obtain a more inclusive and knowledgeable environment. Secondly, there could be protests and campaigns in order to promote certain law changes in particularly discriminative countries, ensuring these youths adequate rights to a safe education, healthcare, and a significant decrease in bullying. Furthermore, the integration of specialized mental health care services, targeted specifically for these communities, would greatly benefit these individuals as it would provide a safe, supporting, and healthy environment leading to more comfortability within their identity. If all these regulations were to be implemented, there would be an exceeding possibility where transgender youths accepted and can thrive without fear.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

SDG 3 is good health and well being. This SDG aims to ensure individuals have healthy lives, as well as promote well being for all age groups. Furthermore, it promotes mental and physical health through development of healthcare, sexual healthcare services, substance abuse and many more. Protecting the safety of transgender youth is directly related to this goal, since it includes both physical and mental health. Transgender people constantly are encountered with many issues, such as discrimination, regarding the access to healthcare. By creating policies and regulations that ensure the security of transgender youths having healthcare access, it can help target their particular health needs. Additionally, making sure their mental health is well taken care of and they are

not exposed to unsafe environments is crucial since transgender youth are more exposed to mental health issues due to the social stigma and discrimination.

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