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Moustache for All: Do You Have? Can You Have? A Study of Roles, Stereotype, Crisis of Masculinity and Identity

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Moustache for All: Do You Have? Can You Have? A Study of Roles, Stereotype, Crisis of Masculinity and Identity

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Abstract

Most people believe in a statement that ‘All men are same’, even most men have taken this thing for granted that at the end they are going to be entitled to the same statement. So most of them hardly try to question the basis of the same. A few men engaged in humanities or social sciences are aware of things; otherwise, most of the men merely step in this tangled zone of masculinity-femininity or the bigger picture as gender. It has been taken for granted that gender studies mean women studies, homosexuality is not even landed yet; there are no such concepts like masculinity/femininity/gender-inequality etc. Without questioning or inquiring the system, blindly believing later following whatever one has been asking to perform is the current state of role-performance of the society. Forget about gender equality. Still, men are not aware of how their deeds disadvantage their female counterparts. The paper investigates how sex-roles were assigned/imposed, implied and performed, and these sex-roles/stereotypes leads to identity assertion, conflict, violence etc. that results in disadvantaging women from their fundamental rights.

Keywords: masculinity, ecdysis of patriarchy, sex-roles, phallus- bigger the-better, homophobic-rhodophobic.

Bigote para Todos: ¿Tienes? ¿Puedes Tener? Un Estudio de Roles, Estereotipos, Crisis de Masculinidad e Identidad

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Resumen

La mayoría de las personas cree en la idea que "todos los hombres son iguales", incluso la mayoría de los hombres han dado esto por sentado. De esta forma, la mayoría de ellos apenas intentan cuestionar dicha afirmación. Unos pocos que están dedicados a las humanidades o las ciencias sociales son conscientes de dichas cosas; de lo contrario, la mayoría de los hombres simplemente pisan esta zona enmarañada de masculinidad-feminidad o la imagen más amplia de los géneros. Se da por sentado que los estudios de género significan estudios de mujeres, la homosexualidad aún no se ha alcanzado; no existen conceptos tales como masculinidad/feminidad/desigualdad de género, etc. Sin cuestionar o indagar sobre el sistema, se cree ciegamente en el desempeño de roles que ha ido construyendo la sociedad. Olvídate de la igualdad de género. Aún así, los hombres no son conscientes de cómo sus acciones perjudican a sus contrapartes femeninas. El artículo investiga cómo los roles sexuales fueron asignados/impuestos, implícitos y realizados, y como estos roles/estereotipos sexuales conducen a la afirmación de la identidad, el conflicto y la violencia. Lo que resulta en una desventaja para las mujeres y la consecución de sus derechos fundamentales.

Palabras clave: masculinidad, ecdisis de patriarcado, roles sexuales, falo- más grande, mejor, homofóbica- rhodofóbica.



Social-beings behave in a binary pattern, and every sphere of social-life is arranged in a binary-schema with well-defined boundaries and safeguards (social institutions) appointed to prevent any transgression. Social-institutions manage to place every being under the assigned role (based on biological sex, i.e., masculine and feminine roles for males and females respectively). This study discusses as for how following masculine roles not only disadvantage women but also become a problem for men too and to analyse these cognitive notions, stereotypes, society's expectation from men and their assigned roles by means of a binding framework. The targeted audience is the people, not accustomed to the disciplinary predicaments of humanities and social sciences. For instance, Young males (younger ones, who are just started adjusting with social systems), adult males (those are not familiar with the disciplines of gender, masculinity-femininity, patriarchy, sex-role division etc.). And last but not the least, the paper can be helpful to be used in social institutions (such as schools or any residential institutions) to make younger ones aware of such matters during gender-sensitisation programmes/campaigns. For instance, a model named Menstupidity ([Figure 11](#)) has been developed to address the social stereotypes of masculinities associated with body organs, which can help young males, to not become prey to toxic masculinity.

The paper addresses the characteristics (male-sex roles and roles transformed into stereotypes) that a man requires to fulfil the normative standards of masculinity. What are these characteristics, in what way and what limit one should possess these, and what can be the consequences, if one is not able to meet the defined criterion or what happens if one takes this privilege of being men for granted? With such intent, the paper deals with the theoretical assessment of the issues, presented in a cynical couplet form and the way these normative masculine roles/standards are being assigned, imposed or implied so far. An effort has been made to understand these issues through the lens of literature and to analyse the practicality of the same.

Theoretically, the paradigm shifts in masculinity can be traced as aligned to Kuhn's model of paradigm shift ([Figure 1](#)). Male sex-roles have been assessed accordingly under the stage of the current masculine

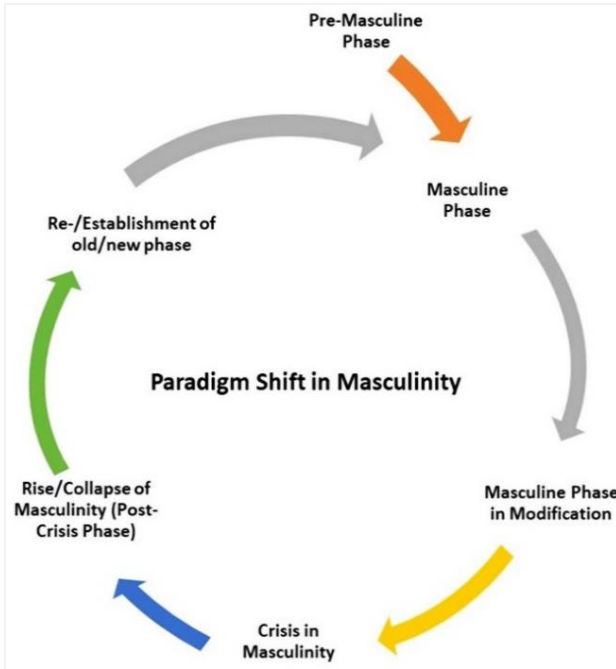


Figure 1. Paradigm Shift in Masculinity.

paradigm. It has been observed that the masculine phase has been targeted by anomalies and suffering from the crisis stage. The first section of masculine paradigm explains all the male-sex roles; those have turned into stereotypes (popularly called toxic masculinity). The second section discusses how the anomalies have brought the masculine paradigm on the verge of crisis. The last section elaborates the crisis stage of masculine identity following suggestions and conclusion. The final two stages (Figure-1), i.e., the Post-crisis phase followed by a new paradigm/model aren't predictable as it depends on society to decide that what kind of paradigm they want to live in. The actions of today will be structuring the new paradigm.

The study intends to cover all socio-cultural aspects and sphere, on which these masculine traits are being practiced such as caste, class, race, ethnicity, and religion-based hierarchies in order to assess dynamics of the power accumulation (resources based), control (control of women and other

marginalized sections; marginalised section includes all genders deprived of fundamental rights and necessities) and practice (in the form of assertion), as Indian society is channelised by caste-based division and control of power is mainly in hands of males. The analytic section relies on example from both local (Indian) and global level to provide a general position of masculinities throughout the world as patriarchy of India is not different than any other country's patriarchy, neither patriarchy in Hinduism is much different than any other major religions of the world. Instances from all over the globe will further help to assess the intensity of the prevalent forms of patriarchy and masculinities in specific. Assessing various forms of masculinities on a common platform will avoid the biasness of isolation, especially with diverse nature of global cultures.

Male-sex Roles, Stereotypes in Masculine Phase

“One day, I will have a moustache, and it will be a handlebar, or it can be a gunslinger. I am a late bloomer, but one day I will have,” said one of my colleague. Having moustache or not, does it matter? Growing a beard or moustache is deemed as a symbol of the masculine. Prior to Father's Day, it was surprising to notice that the seasonal merchandise corner in a gift gallery was bursting with greeting cards portraying moustaches. The point is not about keeping a moustache or growing beard or any other characteristics of manhood criteria but about the fact can you or cannot. Are you in position to achieve manhood and in what way/limit one can assert/perform that achieved manhood?

In 2017, in Limbodara village of Gandhinagar district of Gujarat (India), upper-caste men had allegedly attacked a Dalit boy for sporting/twirling his moustache in front of them ([Times of India, 2017](#)). Similarly, in Bhadraniya village of Anand district of Gujarat (India), another Dalit teen was beaten to death by upper-caste youngsters for watching the Garba¹ ([The Wire, 2017](#)). These incidents (Moustache and Garba) may seem like immature acts of youth at one hand, but on the other hand, one may observe it as an instrument or method to assert one's dominance or identity. If one carefully analyses both the cases, the victim belongs to the lower strata of the society and the perpetrator from upper caste. As per newspaper reports, victim's friends told that they were attacked because they belong to certain lower

caste and it is forbidden for them to watch the *Garba*. It is considered a masculine characteristic to twirl up moustache, and it is also a masculine characteristic to assert dominance but in this scenario how one can decide who will be right to call masculine as per norms of conventional masculinity. These cases are an exemplar of hegemonic masculinity where a Dalit identity represents the marginalised, subordinated masculinity and perpetrators at the top of the hegemonic position. Men are instructed to follow the norms, values and pass down the same model to their future generations by keeping in mind that no one dares to question the system. As mentioned before, caste and gender are two most important determinants of Indian society.

On historical relevance, masculinities are prevalent in all socio-cultural entities. Whitaker (2011) describe Indian masculinities and violence in ancient India through decoding Rig-Vedic literary works of poets and explains that how Indian masculinity has been constructed around all about men being brave, muscular, fighter or product for battle, dominant, violent or aggressive to provide a normative form to male dominance. Kakar (1978) justifies the violative and biased nature of masculinities along with the predictive nature of men's role in gender-based violence. In order to explain the uneven position of women in society, women's movement in India while unravelling the patriarchy bring forward the role of men and masculinities being practiced in social arena and how these sex-biased roles disadvantage women (women & women from lower caste group: rape, sexual assault, domestic abuses like marital rape, wife bashing, dowry-related crimes), girls (early marriages, female infanticide, technologies of neglect, absence of public healthcare services, herbal potions and ritual prescriptions, sex-selective abortions or foeticide, daughter-aversion or more preferences for sons, cultural neglect, trafficking and abduction, eve-teasing etc.), other marginalized sexualities (homosexuals & men from lower caste groups- emasculation, suicides, homicide, sex-selective killing) and also deprive them from the basic fundamental rights by restricting them into a defined territory of being masculine as normal, perfect and superior, whereas non-masculine as inferior, abnormal, and objects to be controlled. The couplets (Figure 2) illustrates the required criteria of manhood to fulfil the normative standards of masculinity. The masculine traits have been

framed in couplets to provide a concrete form to such abstract notions,

Moustache for All

We, the preachers, the teachers, choosers not losers, we are the mankind's sole
Be tough and rude, bring money-bring food, the way a man should play his role

We're told to learn-earn-stern and not to run, till one does not fall
We want that calibre of men, who rules and walks with fame to the hall

We, the protector - the sole elector, we cannot sit there and just brawl
We want gun in pant, in order to rant or at least a moustache for all

We do smink and stay away from the pink, boy we don't play with a doll
We tired of being skinny - we sick of fattism, why can't you make us Li'l slim 'n tall
Be brave, be strong, be big, be long, and remember you are no one's thrall
We want fair-skin, we want flesh in muscles or at least a moustache for all

You can't be a candy-ass, you can't be pantywaist, and you cannot be an ear'ole
We want that tongue, full of orotund, and guts in our ass instead of homo's glory hole

Don't be a queer, you need your mind clear, just men-women is enough to call
We want big Phallus, heart full of callous or just give us a moustache to roll

Don't let them defy when you can avoid, being shy or cry, you gotta keep big balls
Who asks for breast - we want hairy bloated chest, or please! A moustache for all

We are warrior - supremely superior, we got right to make them scrawl
Give us anything but nothing feminine, or a moustache might work for all.

Figure 2. *Moustache for All.*

practices, or characteristics in order assess the same. Instead of dwelling deeply in psychoanalytic, sociological, or gender debates, the couplets are framed and structured in a manner to provide a more realistic and less technical mirror view of the same. These couplets emphasise how such traits are inculcated through socialisation process and manifested to maintain the male-dominance in the patriarchal paradigm impacting both men and women. Kuhn (1996, p. 6-7, 23) defines paradigm as an accepted model/pattern/phase or in technical terms, an object for additional articulation and specification under new or straighter conditions. He further

asserts that a community living in a particular paradigm assumes that they know what the world is like and accordingly they set up rules and norms. The community tends to defend supposed beliefs at any cost. It also suppresses the novelties to keep alive their established norm/standard/values within society. But values do not question the structure they assume its continuity (Allen, 1975, p.21). To avoid social resistance, in this transferring process of values/norms, the values are modified with new symbols and meanings not to eradicate any social evil or to achieve equality but to control and maintain the patriarchal power structure.

These values and norms make the subject to follow the channel without affecting its course. It follows as:

1 (a). Men as ‘Sole’ Provider

*We, the preachers, the teachers, choosers not losers, we are the mankind’s sole
Be tough and rude, bring money-bring food, the way a man should play his role*

Figure 3. Men as ‘Sole’ Provider

1970s feminists pointed out the fact that academic historical writing has always been about men at higher social position (Connell, 2005a, p.27-28). Most of the work noted down since the invention of writing skills tells us about the accomplishments of men. Rarely have women been the subject of historical writings, if so, then mostly a heroic/tragic version of women. Women were always illustrated as trouble-makers. The loser/defeated man is considered as weak and waste as a discarded old ox. Patodi (1986b; 53–56 cited by Alter, 1992, p.67) narrates a conversation in which a king praised a wrestler being undefeated and asked those men who have defeated to give up wrestling. Historically, in any civilisation of any era, men as ruler/leaders/tutor/law or decision-makers, have occupied and controlled every sphere of public and domestic social-life by exaggeratedly elaborating in texts written on their life-histories considering men as the sole of mankind’s survival on earth. Being tough and rude has always been regarded as staunch pillars of hyper-masculinity. Burstyn (1999 cited in Kimmel & Aronson, 2004, p.417-418) defines the term hyper-masculinity

as an exaggerated model of manhood linked mythically and practically to the role of the warrior.

On men's role of breadwinner, Wally Seccombe (cited in [Connell, 2005a, p.28-29](#)) states that 'breadwinner' wage is the recent creation and far from the universally accepted concept that was produced around the middle of 19th century in the course of broad re-alignment of social forces in Britain. This gave men the power to control female sexuality in public and domestic spheres. Men working in the household are often considered unmanly. Working women and unemployment has put men and their masculine identity into crisis. Paid-work or being employed represents a robust masculine identity and holds a dominant position. A man can only have control and influence over his family/kinship members as long as he is economically well-established ([Morgan, 1992](#); [Hearn & Collinson, 2001](#)). Failing to fulfil the role of the breadwinner leads men into the trap of aggressive masculinity that often ends in domestic violence such as wife-beating/drug-addiction/alcohol consumption etc.

1 (b). Men as 'Sole' Bearer of Responsibilities

*We're told to learn-earn-stern and not to run, till one does not fall
We want that calibre of men, who rules and walks with fame to the hall*

Figure 4. Men as 'Sole' Bearer of Responsibilities.

Women can be an earner in conditions of widowhood or if one's husband's absence or disability. Prostitution as a profession is not qualified to play the role of the earner. Nyambi (2015, p.8) describes that a prostitute's identity despite successful earner was morally subordinated and denounced by the hypocrisy of a patriarchal society. The trio of learn-earn-stern explains the cycle of discrimination, control, and identity assertion. Every single male-child gets his birthright of patriarchal-dividend as Connell (2005a, p.82) puts it; "Men gain a dividend from patriarchy in terms of honour, prestige and the right to command." This birth-right allows men to get priority in various life choices over their female counterparts that result in sex-discriminatory practices. It is an experientially proven fact that preference is given to boys to study/learn. No doubt, now people are sending girls to school, helping them to achieve their goals but none of them has ever

supported a girl-child to play the role of breadwinner. (Neetha, 2004, p. 1687). Supporting a girl for higher education or getting her a job placement is not an effort to achieve equality but it is a formula to increase social esteem. Providing higher education and job opportunities are new ornaments of modernised society and adopted as ways to decorate the girls to find a suitable/profitable match. Lai (2008, p. 343-344) asserts that marriage transformed previously indirect ties into direct ones, such as in-law ties. While citing Lin and Westcott (1991); Stein et al. (1992), she further emphasises that through marital ties they [couple and relatives] enjoy the legal access to resources embedded in each other's network.

The breadwinner cliché remains reserved, untouched, and biased. The fear of losing manliness or the pressure of peers can be responsible for the aggressive nature towards women. Characteristics like being stern, harsh, hard, tough, fierce, rigid, authoritarian etc. have always been preferred to adorn a male-child.

1 (c). Men as 'Sole' Protector

*We, the protector- the sole elector, we cannot sit there and just brawl
We want gun in pant, in order to rant or at least a moustache for all*
Figure 5. Men as 'Sole' Protector.

The concept of protection/role of the protector seems the biggest irony as men have been designated as protector to stop men. What is out there to be afraid of or why and what kind of protection we are dealing with? Is it survival, emotional, or physical, so that men have appointed themselves as Director, Control of Protection Department. Griffin (1971, p. 30) explains this dichotomous situation where at one hand, men behave sexually aggressive and on the other hand plays the role of protector. May West (cited by Griffin, 1971, p. 30) asserts that "Every man I meet wants to protect me. Can't figure out what from." Brownmiller (1975, p. 16) also states that "creatures who were her predators, some might serve as her chosen protectors." She further distinct the category of familiar men as protector and non-familiar men or strangers to be afraid of. It's a general conscience that considers men culprit first and protector later. As Kimmel and Aronson (2004, p. 809) cites Kimmel (2000) that

Men constitute 99 percent of all persons arrested for rape; 88 percent of those arrested for murder; 92 percent of those arrested for robbery; 87 percent for aggravated assault; 85 percent of other assaults; 83 percent for all family violence; 82 percent for disorderly conduct. Men are overwhelmingly more violent than women.

The role of protector often gets challenged in the intra-conflict situation. During the militancy period in Punjab, men, those were considered a symbol of strength and bravery gets questioned by young men who drew their power from militant affiliations. The entire militancy period challenged the manliness of Punjabi society that prided itself in being protectors and safeguards of women (Dagar, 2002, p. 32).

Sexual-Division of tasks/spheres limited women to household chores, whereas it was considered non-masculine for men. Paid work has been seen as a significant influence on definitions and performances of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002). An unemployed male, who sits all day at home and does nothing, is considered unmanly.

On the symbolic part, the weapons like gun or pistol have been often used as symbols to denote phallus, sexual aggressiveness, or male potency. Gun in pant/trouser, the colonel, the shotgun, nuclear missile, and the pocket rocket are some commonly used terms to denote a phallus (Eckert, 2011). For instance, Punjabi music videos portray gun as necessary as air to breathe (Masculinities and Violence, 2017). It is a cliché that gun is a penis-symbol as well as a weapon. By defending gun ownership, one is defending hegemonic masculinity at both symbolic and practical level (Connell, 2005a, p. 212). Ranting around with a gun or giving threat while denoting phallus are often used activities to assert masculine identity.

1 (d). Man, a ‘Perfectly-Crafted Model’ to Idealise

*We do smink and stay away from the pink, boy we don't play with a doll
We tired of being skinny - we sick of fattism, why can't you make us Li'l slim 'n tall
Be brave, be strong, be big, be long, and remember you are no one's thrall
We want fair-skin, we want flesh in muscles or at least a moustache for all*

Figure 6. Man, a ‘Perfectly-Crafted Model’ to Idealise.

The quatrain explains the stereotypes practised through various means of racial, physical, or verbal forms of discrimination. The lenses of conservative societies consider smoking and drinking ill-mannered. Drinking alcohol is regarded as a manly act, and it is believed that the consumption of such drinks gives strength and supports the internal mechanism of the body to perform courageous acts. Drinking is considered a symbol of royalty, high social esteem, and a solution to increase manliness/potency. Whitaker (2011, p. 149) cites a Rig Vedic excerpt, “pībā sómaṃ śásvate vīry ā ya” that means drink *sóma* (alcohol) for everlasting manliness. Whitaker (2011, p. 151-156) also asserts that drinking is considered a men’s birthright. Sminking² only becomes a social evil the moment women enter in this sphere. The reason behind such restrictions is nothing else but control of female bodies, behaviour, or sexuality in particular as Foucault (1978, p. 104) in the process of hysterization of women's bodies asserts that "feminine body was analysed-qualified and disqualified-as being thoroughly saturated with sexuality."

Boys were often guided to avoid pink colour objects, toys, or clothes whereas girls were encouraged to buy everything in pink which is why most of the boys discard the objects that come in pink colour because it is considered feminine (*Masculinities and Violence*, 2017). Buying anything in pink challenges the masculine status and to avoid the same, men discard pink at every choice. Cahill (1989, cited by Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009, p. 281) state that pre-school boys were scolded by their peers for misbehaviour because of failing to grasp the pattern and wear dresses or pink ribbons. He further asserts that heterosexual fathers often reprimands pre-school sons who play with dolls or wear fingernail polish or pink clothing. A male-child playing with dolls becomes the target of bullying, isolation etc. Mentioning bullying and isolation, body-shaming explains men’s pretentious behaviour. It is believed that body-shaming implicitly provides a kind of boost to avoid the non-masculine traits among youths. Some primitive people used shaming as a technique to help a child to stand up, to self- realisation or to realise relative measures of size and power (Erikson, 1968, p. 110). Leonard and Nelson (2011, p. 156) also note similar facts that in schools, teachers often rely on shaming instead of any other force to motivate their students. Being too fat/skinny/short/tall/dark are characteristics to be considered odd. People with such characteristics do

often get isolated and face several mental disorders at a later stage if bullied/tortured. Hanlon (2012, p. 72) states that “Boys’ fear of being labelled inferior within the gender hierarchies of schools ironically contributes to the bullying of those perceived as different, disabled, weaker, or gay.” It is a commonly accepted fact that people feel ashamed accompanying those who have such bodily characteristics. The biases are deeply embedded in society, and everything is being performed under the superior-inferior criteria. In the context of Indian men, it is anomalous that they want their skin fair (not Black or dark brown) but desires Black hair (not white). Back’s (1994, p. 177-178) term “doubling of fear and desire” explains the dichotomous situation of Black masculinity where at one hand they are mistreated for their skin colour, violent nature and on the other hand, they are desired for their sexuality or Black Machismo.

As every man competes to keep themselves above the line of normative-masculinity but every man cannot flaunt his bare body. The gym provides a platform for the construction of gender identities (Johansson, 1996, p. 32). In gym masculinity, men do not, needs any social criteria or physical traits like skin colour/hair on the chest or on head etc. In gym masculinity, the issue of black and white masculinity fades away and focuses on muscles-based identity. Mansfield (2005, p. 16) cites Birrell (1988, 2002) as to how masculine ideology is being constructed and male-power has been produced through sport. Movies, music videos, and popular media imageries further feeds such notions.

1 (e). Men’s Standardized Sexuality

*You can’t be a candy-ass, you can’t be pantywaist, and you cannot be an ear’ole
We want that tongue, full of orotund, and guts in our ass instead of homo’s glory hole*
Figure 7. Men’s Standardized Sexuality³⁴

Along with homosexuality, some heterosexual men also face the challenge who has been disqualified for the masculine tag. Some heterosexual men and boys are too expelled from the circle of legitimacy (Connell, 2005b, p.258). Abusive terms such as candy-ass, pantywaist, and ear-‘ole are used to bully homosexual to protect the traditional power structure of patriarchy and make them believe that they are mentally sick and damaging the hetero-

normative model. A sensitive, submissive man is considered dysfunctional. Discussing men's importance in battlefield Sahgal (2015, p. 14) cites an excerpt from Mahabharata that *Vidura* while infusing a sense of masculinity into his sons said, "the forgiving man, the meek man, is neither man nor woman." To avoid the consequences (because of their submissive and sensitive nature), most of the men try alternatives to acquire masculine characteristics. For instance, eating spicy food to get a heavy or rotund voice. "Mirchi khaane se awaaz jananion si nahi rehti, bhaari ho jati hai" (One can get rid of the thin voice of women by having spicy food, and his voice will become heavy and intense.) (*Masculinities and Violence*, 2017).

In Punjab, a men's voice (*Zubaan*) define masculinity. The expression like "Zubaan taan mard di hundi hai" means a men's voice is trustworthy, 'Jo apni zubaan to mukar jaave, oh banda nahi' means one is not a man if he cannot keep up to his voice/promised words. The conceptualisation of body organs representing abstract notions are very common. The courage factor in masculine weighing scale is measured by the amount of guts (synonym for courage/bravery) one contains. The belief that fear resides in mind or heart; the place of guts varies from region to region in different body organs of man. McCartney's (1918, p. 18-38) work tries to explain the link between body organ and popular cognitive notions of society. McCartney cites Frazer's (1890) work that the liver is considered the seat of courage. In the context of Indian society too, the beliefs are connected to body-organs. The common slangs used to measure guts in man's body are; "Jigar mae dum" as guts in Liver, "Pichwade mae dum" as guts in Ass/Anus, "Gurdae mae dum" as Guts in Kidney, "Seene mae dum" as guts in Chest, "Ragon main khoon hona" as guts/courage in veins/blood, "Tatto mae dum" as having/keeping big balls, "Aag mootna" as urinating fire means aggressive nature, and 'Danda'ch dum' as guts in bones (*Masculinities and Violence*, 2017). Men who lack such guts also gets attacked with abusive terms like lily-liver, candy-ass, lady-finger, mother's boy, yellow-belly etc. (Connell, 2005b, p. 258).

Studying metaphorical concepts can help to understand the cultural model of society (Sihaan, 2008, p. 71). Men do not see the concept of guts as a characteristic to achieve in life but as the realisation of the self. Homophobic people believe that homosexuals are born without it, and

heterosexual needs the self-realisation to gain the strength of assumed hereditarily transferred guts/courage.

1 (f). Men's Phallic Manhood

*Don't be a queer, you need your mind clear, just men-women is enough to call
We want big Phallus, heart full of callous or just give us a moustache to roll*

Figure 8. Men's Phallic Manhood.

Every individual who transgresses the binary-schema theory of gender is designated as odd/queer. The term third gender is very recent in legal practice. Societies are accepting and treating them equally by providing opportunities through special schemes and reservations but legally, not socially. Fear of having homosexual people around explains the Warner's (1993) term "fear of Queer Planet." The society (furnished with gender-biasness) is still not in agreement to go beyond the conservative/traditional gender-division. Homosexuality and queerness still fall under the stigmatized and marginalised category (Dasgupta & Gokulsing, 2013).

The big phallus represents high fertility and manhood. Masculine is associated with phallus and feminine with the lack (Osella & Osella, 2006, p. 200). Big phallus proves the manliness and helps men to increase their social prestige via sharing sexual experiences. As society behaves in bigger the better style, Cameron (1992, p. 371) assessing terms used for penis finds out that penis is often compared with the name of giant beastly animals to resemble the power of being masculine by use of exaggerated metaphorical terms such as King Kong, King of the Jungle, Simba etc. Men with small-sized phalluses often face pressure from their partner and this challenges their masculine status. Osella and Osella (2006, p. 134) explain the fear of males on their first-night of wedding worrying about the size of phallus and doubts about the ability to satisfy their bride sexually. The fear of being labelled as non-masculine because of the small-size of phallus can lead men to anxiety disorder. The sexually satiated partner lowers the chances of incidents like adultery and promiscuity. Doniger and Kakar (2002, p. 29) cite Kamasutra that male having a small size of phallus can lead his sexual life in distress. The excerpt follows as: "But if a lover has a small penis, no matter how long the man works, women, they say, do not

grow very fond of him, because he does not relieve their itch." (Doniger & Kakar, 2002, 29).

1 (g). Femininity, a Curse

*Don't let them defy when you can avoid being shy or cry, you gotta keep big balls
Who asks for breast - we want hairy bloated chest, or please! A moustache for all*
Figure 9. Femininity, a Curse.

Most of our culture is built-up around religious thoughts, not on psychoanalytic theories. The psychological methods like to open up, speak freely, confess, and be forgiven are peculiarities of modern society. Most of the men prefer to stay behind the shadow, hiding from themselves, and other people (Oftung, 2000, p. 155). Pretending tough, strong, and brave are idealised to maintain social conformity in male roles. The Freudian concept of suppression of desire/feeling explains the situation of masculinity in the making (Freud, 1900, p. 217) through various forms of suppression mentioned in quatrain before. Goody (1997, p. 416) cites Ghail's research (1994, p. 38) that tough boys often end up with a new generation of emotionally-disabled men by developing a cynical behaviour to hide their feelings. He further explains that boys do not often find a safe space to talk about their feelings of vulnerability.

Men express themselves freely with their female partners, but they never open up to their male friends (Masculinities and Violence, 2017). Every man remains introvert to their male friends regarding their emotional facet. One aspect can be that men feel more secure with female partners assuming that they will not disclose their secrets because they have the power of dominance over them whereas in case of male friends, they cannot assert their dominant position.

It is important to work along with men and helping society to wipe out social taboos and stereotypes. White (2000, p. 39) explains that "patriarchy may have had a makeover, it has not gone away. While I still maintain that it is important to 'bring men in.'" Men are under surveillance/judgment every moment of their life. At every event, they are judged for their behaviour, and a single incident can cast them out of the circle of legitimacy. Men become placeless in cast-out situation, he doesn't belong

to category of women because he has taken the benefit of patriarchal-dividend, he does not belong to category of homosexuals because of his belief in hetero-normativity, and he does not belong to the category of men because due to certain reasons he has been labelled as non-masculine/impotent/effeminate. To assert his masculinity, one chooses the aggressive ways, adopting violent nature to stay above the masculinity line. Expressions like "having big balls", "grow a pair", or "keeping big balls" explains the valour, courage, fertility/potent manhood.

On the other hand, muscles on the chest represent masculine tag as long as it remains like muscles the moment it gains fat, one becomes the part of mockery of having breasts (Masculinities and Violence, 2017). Filault and Drummond (2007, cited by Murray & Hopkins, 2014, p. 115) defines macho man's look with a hairy chest and bulging muscles. Men with the hairless chest are considered effeminate/kid. A body full of hair is considered a masculine sign (Eckman et al., 2007, p. 16). The trend of the hairless, sizzling, and toned-chest is a recent concept promoted through mass media. No doubt it does put an end on desperate need of hairy chest but also replaced it with new criteria of manhood. Men in the race of competitive-masculinity are concurrently controlled by multi-disciplinary socio-regimes resulting in new masculine symbols to assert the same. For instance, in Punjab, keeping handlebar moustache with body fitting white clothing, stickers/tattoo of moustache and gun on vehicles (on car-windows, number-plates, fuel-tanks etc.) are new ways of asserting masculine traits (Masculinities and Violence, 2017).

1 (h). Men as Binary Superior

*We are warrior - supremely superior, we got right to make them scrawl
Give us anything but nothing feminine, or a moustache might work for all.
Figure 10. Men as Binary Superior.*

The low inclusion of women in the military can be credited to their non-violent/less-aggressive nature. War/battlefield has always been defined as the place where aggression, violence, roughness, or savagery can be found at its best. Women as a warrior are only seen in few heroic followed by tragic stories/incidents but the warrior status is still considered a key

symbol of masculinity (Morgan, 1994, p. 165). A male is socialised to fight for his people, community, or country and he will be known for the valour, courage he has shown in the battlefield. Sahgal (2015, p. 14) cites an excerpt from Mahabharata (V.131.30) that "standing tall, keeping the effort on (udyama) (in the battlefield) means 'manhood (paurasham)." A warrior is believed highly masculine (non-effeminate, hyper-masculine, callous etc.) Beauvoir (1989, p.111) demonstrates women's subordinated position in society as a result of men's biological privilege. She states that women never got the chance to decide for or position herself in society. It was always men who decide. Men controlling women's roles/activities makes women, their better-half less and a slave more. Wollstonecraft (1792, pp. 221-274) used terms like 'slaves of power', 'slavery of marriage', 'slaves of injustice', and 'slaves of pleasure as they are slaves of man' respectively to explain women's position in social and political life under control and so-called protection of fathers, brothers, and husbands.

Women have been considered inferior and blamed for making troubles. The expressions like Eve's apple, Pandora's Box etc. have been used to label women as misfortune and men their victims. All the stories/legends have been constructed in a manner portraying men as hero/saviour whereas women as cunning, intellectually inferior, and biologically defective. A man can desire anything but not a feminine trait or characteristic. He may welcome people referring them with nasty words [like "men as a liar, dogs, selfish asshole, douchebag, dick, prick, bonehead, knob, etc. (Luu, 2016)"] but he will try to avoid every moment that can associate him with a characteristic of women. He may have sometimes yelled and desired for a power to understand women but figuratively not literally. In the fight of staying in between the circle of legitimacy (to take the benefit of patriarchal dividend), men have to follow the normative standards of the masculinity. And for the same, one tries to assert himself best in all chores of the patriarchal-regime. The status of masculinity can be challenged by a mere statement or allegation, and that can bring down him from the top level to the bottom of the hegemonic masculinity. And that is why the smallest way of asserting masculine identity matters. Then, it can be a moustache/hairy-chest/big-phallus/toned-body/body-tattooing/piercing/using symbols of weapons on the vehicle or ranting around with a gun.

2. Masculine Phase in the Modification

Newton's first law of motion (law of inertia) precisely explains the cause of drift in masculine phase. For an extended period, the masculine phase was in rest or was moving in particular track maintaining consistency but started drifting by anomalies or what Kuhn (1996, p. 6) call it "tradition-shattering complements." These tradition-shattering complements include all those events/incidents/achievements of women's right-based movements that challenged male-dominance in the society. The earliest instances of such anomaly are of the Pre-Hellenistic period, (Agnodice of Greece, 400 BC).⁵ Very few events are recorded that openly challenged biased sex-role division as most of the time such raised voices were suppressed and masculine-dominant society maintained its consistency throughout the Hellenistic period, Renaissance/Reformation and post-renaissance periods. But the age of Enlightenment implanted the idea of women's rights, Olympia de Gouges publishes Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the [Female] Citizen, and later Mary Wollstonecraft's 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' came in 1791 and 1792 respectively. It took enough time for people to replace geocentric belief with heliocentric and our society is in that transition where the concept of heliocentric (gender equality here) belief has been introduced but not accepted.

Two significant periods, Age of Post-Enlightenment (1800-1900) and Age of Globalization (1900-2000) turned the whole conservative society upside down. They are like two-half, in which, first half set the plot and second-half decided to act. In first-half, major events like establishing college for women (in Massachusetts, 1838), Seneca Fall's convention for women's rights (1848), Stowe's anti-slavery novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (1852), achieving women's right to own property (1869-70) helps to set the plot for later generation to work on. The prompt response from later on generation in the second-half, i.e., Age of Globalization (1900-2000), moved little further by using the premise laid by first-half revolutionaries or in the first-wave of feminism. The world-war slows down the pace of revolution, but it rises again around the 1960s with the second wave of feminism putting an end to discrimination in equal pay right (1963), employment (1964), education (1972), and right to avail paid maternity leave (1975). Whereas second-wave feminists focused on family,

workplace, sexuality, and reproduction rights of women, the third-wave of feminism discarded the concept of women as feminists and focused on gender equality or in other words, to understand the true meaning of feminism. For instance, the formation of CEDAW (1981), adoption of Gender Equity in Education Act (Congress, USA, 1994) etc. But all those protests/achievements are not enough, climax (gender-equality) is in mind, but it is not still in nearest sight. The age of Digitalization (2000-present) has unbiasedly provided a platform (for both men/women of any class, caste, colour, race etc.) to achieve what one had imagined/worked (outcasting old by starting fresh or maintaining old) for so far.

This platform laced with equal-access to opportunities is beneficial for both oppressor and oppressed. If oppressed gets a chance to get rid of oppression, oppressor also gets equal opportunities to maintain one's doing through various modes such as modifying slavery, dominance, power/identity assertion etc. For a long time, guards of masculine phase tried/trying to suppress these novelties/anomalies, but at present, the masculine phase has been challenged so far and propelled in the midst of identity/masculine identity-crisis by these anomalies/tradition-shattering complements.

3. Crisis in Masculinity and Identity

An understanding needs to be established between crisis, identity, and masculinity to avoid misapprehension. Masculinity is an identity in itself. Masculinity and identity share some common characteristics such as both are defined as inherited and achieved. The present study follows the achieved concept of identity and masculinity. It was assumed by sex-role theorists of the first generation that roles were defined well so that socialisation worked smoothly so far and performing sex role was rigorously a good thing (Connell, 2005a, p. 23). The masculine phase has survived so long that society has taken this paradigm for granted. But now keepers of this shattered-masculine paradigm has realised that their model has been attacked and unshielded. A paradigm feeds on its rules/norm, but crisis loosens the rules (Kuhn, 1996, p. 80). The crisis has made them take some initiative to modify its outdated model to survive. As these masculine identities have created new space (virtual via social media), learned new

ways to assert (via makeover/assigning new symbols and meanings to old identities), structured and portrayed in a way or given the face of so-called 'normal' behavioural pattern that society can hardly notice its steady transformation. Instead of reducing, modernisation/digitalisation has reinforced the traditional masculine structure via modifying/assigning new symbols and meaning and maintaining the dominant culture of patriarchy. The youth are socialised accordingly and assured that acquiring traditional masculine character (modified here) is the only way to be a man. So does think Amrinder: "What do you want to be, when you have your adult age-id in your right side of back-pocket?"⁶ I asked a schoolboy of 10th standard. "A police officer he said. Because he has that ruab (public figure here), when he enters in the street, people do respect (fear) him, and he becomes the centre of the attention" (*Masculinities and Violence*, 2017).

To maintain the social conformity, teenagers represent an appropriate medium of passing down the modified traits, and also provides a platform for experimentation and later in practice. For youth, old generation seems outdated and this situation let in the Erikson's (1968, p. 91-96) fifth stage identity vs identity confusion. And this stage provides the platform for patriarchy to step in and mould itself by leaving behind the character of traditional, outdated role model- the ecdysis process of patriarchy. The youth plays the role of a mannequin that helps to enforce social conformity in the male role.

It is often taken-for-granted that men will be men, they won't and can't change. Men's behaviour is considered static, unchangeable. The expression or metaphors used in day to day activities and practices has been believed to be changeless. As Allen (1975, p. 14) state that 'reality of everyday life, is taken for granted as reality.' In response to that few things needs to be mentioned here. A man or any human being is like a canvas on which society draw what they want to. This canvas is painted through brushes of socialisation and to make it worthy (operational/useful), roles are portrayed (imposed/assigned) by various artists (institutions like family, schools, mass media etc.). Connell (2005a, p.23) suggests that social processes can change role norms through social institutions by transmitting new expectations. One has to understand that these roles and behaviour can be improved. Masculinities are not simply different neither they are fixed but fluid and subjected to change (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The

masculine model has changed over time, and it was different in different situations and societies for all men of all ages within a male population (Madrigal, 2006). All one needs is the right direction and approach. Gender identities are not inherited but socially constructed and non-static. Meyer (2013, p. 3) cites Foucault (1976-1980) that in every society it is a discourse that determines the validity and invalidity of knowledge and knowledge are controlled by society thus society holds power. In particular most of the societies, it is men who hold power and position to implement any change, so it will always be in men's hand to discard that is outdated/of no use.

Suggestions

No one said performing male-roles supposed to be easy, but nobody said that it's supposed to be that hard, so in case if one cannot perform such roles he will be cast out and left to choose such alternatives that can negatively impact their female counterparts. Instead of being adjusting to the same model, it will be men who have to decide to bring change. It is necessary to understand that gender biases, masculinity/identity assertion based violence can be changed through the socialisation process and policies. Speaking of policies, most of the men are not aware of how assertion of their masculine identity disadvantages women and reason behind this may be the lack of quality to speak out whatever they are suffering from. Men often suffer from the inability of expressing their feeling due to the absence of an emotional language (Ghail, 1994, p. 38, cited by Goody, 1997, p. 416). Here, policies (awareness programs for men too) can play a significant part. The point is, if we know that men are perpetrator/culprit then policies/programmes should be targeted to fixing the fault in men not by the so-called protecting victim through schemes. Schemes for women are quite well-defined to end resource-accessibility or opportunity based discriminatory practices but not violence-related. There are a handful of organisations/programmes active to make men aware of their misdeeds/hazards done by performing traditional masculine roles.

Programs carried out to raise gender-sensitive conscience among male students proved inadequate that further level up the scale of differentiation. For instance, adult-education is being delivered in schools separately for

boys and girls which is not much different than distinction implanted by social institutions during the socialisation process (*Masculinities and Violence, 2017*). Hiding or isolating it from anyone will only reinforce the taboo, it will not help to break it. We need to bring men in (*White, 2000, p. 38-39*). Mere accusations will not contribute dismantling this patriarchal infused tangled model of masculinity.

The model of Menstupidity (*Figure 11*) shown here is prepared to address and challenge the patriarchal structure sustaining through various stereotypes (associated with body organs of a human body, and) practised via various masculine traits. It is to suggest that by introducing such methods in gender-sensitisation programmes in institutions of socialisation (like in schools or any other institute of learning) and further guided to avoid such stereotypes may help in reducing toxicity of masculine roles leading to toxic mental growth among teenagers. As the study maintains throughout that “being submissive is not harmful, being toxic is”.

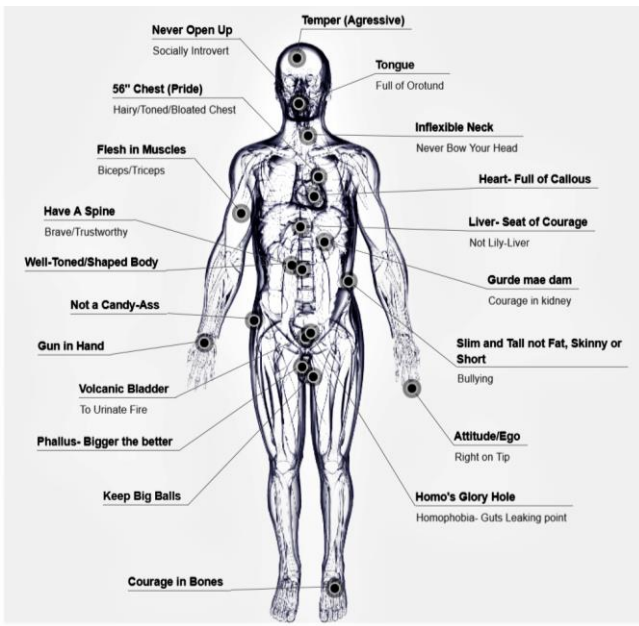


Figure 11. Model of Menstupidity

Conclusion

Though the question raised in the introductory part remains unanswered that who has the right to keep a moustache, but it provides an alternative to focus on a broader aspect of the so-called taken-for-granted notion of “All men are the same, and they cannot change.” To conclude, it might seem little idealistic to suggest to put an end to sexism, violence, patriarchy but the key suggestion of this study is to make men realize their unpremeditated misconduct by bringing together most of the stereotypes and their unconscious misdeeds in the spotlight to provide a face (to such abstract notions) in order to re-evaluation of the self, and to emphasise that gender notions are fluid and subjected to change along with introducing the process of patriarchy being modified, assigning new identity and meaning through new symbols or bearers of male-dominance. The crisis has provided a platform to bring in the necessary changes in policies, a way of tackling such sensitive issues, and an opportunity to act as long as the iron is hot. The moment metal will regain its colder form it will be difficult to mould it. The society is in high-rise crisis stage, and one must act with all efforts/focus (effective policies targeting men too and along with women rather in isolation) before it starts ebbing away. No doubt, it will be a great achievement for the human race if we will find a sign of life on some other planet. But my question is for whom? We aren't in a position to make society better here, what we will do with another planet? Kuhn (1996, p. 39) asserts and it befits validly that we humans are defining new puzzles without solving the previous ones.

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Notes

- ¹ Garba, also spelled 'garaba', singular 'garbo', type of Indian dance commonly performed at festivals and on other special occasions. (See; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, for more details on Garba Dance).
- ² Sminking is a slang word for smoke and drinking at the same time.
- ³ Guts here refers to bravery, valour, courage, and daring character.
- ⁴ Homo's glory hole refers to anus and here, it is an expression often used to bully homosexual people, here, men are expressing their fear of becoming homosexual assuming that hole in the ass/anus leaks guts and makes men non-masculine.
- ⁵ Agnodice (400 BC, Greece), first female gynaecologists, she was caught and vindicated but allowed to continue as her patients came to her defence.
- ⁶ Keeping wallet or anything (handkerchief, Id-card etc.) in right side of the back-pocket of pant is considered manly as it gives a perfect masculine shape to buttock and it looks appealing to women and it also represents status of wealth as a well-shaped heavy wallet is considered symbol of wealth. (Masculinities and Violence, 2017).

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