

**Gender and Sexual Diversities (GSD) and Socio-Cultural Identities-Identifying the Challenges Associated with the Construction and Contestation of Gender Identities and Social Integration among Muslim Youth in Pakistan and Germany**

Dr. Munir Moosa Sadruddin

Visiting Researcher, Centre for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies

Humboldt University of Berlin

[munirmoosa@yahoo.com](mailto:munirmoosa@yahoo.com)



Sexuality and gender identity is imperative to individual's well-being. However, diverse gender and sexual minorities are vulnerable in Pakistan due to the socio-cultural sensitivities (Haider, 2008).

Exploration and disclosure of gender identities other than the established continuum are considered as a stigma in Pakistan (Steinke et al., 2017). LGBTQs are the marginalized segment of Pakistani society. There is a lack of social acceptance towards them due to uneven socio-cultural structures. This social oppression has isolated them, and has developed negative consequences like mental stress, self-injury and self-blame.

Youth living in Germany carries hybrid identities (Haug, Mussig, & Sticks, 2009). According to the Center for Mellemostudier, "Young Muslims increasingly tend to identify as Muslim and as German, and consider themselves as active part of German society" (2010, p.1). Although a large segment of German population is tolerant to LGBTQs, several Muslim German organizations do not accept Muslims carrying diverse sexual and gender identities. Discrimination from the relational and cultural units has developed social isolation among them (Council of Europe Publishing, 2011).

It is predicted that young Muslims desire to reconcile their sexual and gender identities with belief, but "traditional values continue to play a significant role in young people's views of gender preference" (Ripperger, 2012).

In my viewpoint, socio-cultural transformations, local and global articulations, socialization and adoption of contemporary practices have potentials to negotiate diverse gender and sexual identities.

This small-scale narrative research will identify the challenges confronted by the Muslim LGBTQs community in Pakistan and Germany.

**Note:** I am thankful to Dr. Gabriele Jähnert, Zentrum für Transdisziplinäre Geschlechterstudien, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for inviting me as Visiting Researcher.

## References

Center for Mellemoststudier. (2010). *Muslim youth cultures in Germany: Between fun, protest, and service to society*. Author.

Council of Europe Publishing. (2011). *Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe* (2nd Edition). Strasbourg Cedex: Author. Retrieved from [www.coe.int/t/commissioner/Source/LGBT/LGBTStudy2011\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/Source/LGBT/LGBTStudy2011_en.pdf)

Haider, S.K. (2008). Gender dysphorics in Pakistan. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 45(2), 135-147.

Haug, H.S., Mussig, S., & Stichs, A. (2009). Muslim life in Germany A study conducted on behalf of the German conference on Islam. *Nürnberg: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees*. Retrieved from [www.npdata.be/Data/Godsdienst/Duitsland/fb6-muslimisches-lebenenglisch.pdf](http://www.npdata.be/Data/Godsdienst/Duitsland/fb6-muslimisches-lebenenglisch.pdf)

Ripperger, S. (2012). *Attitudes to sexuality among Muslim students in Germany challenging homophobia*. Qantara. Retrieved from <https://en.qantara.de/content/attitudes-to-sexuality-amongmuslim-students-in-germany-challenging-homophobia>

Steinke, J., Root-Bowman, M., Estabrook, S., Levine, D.S., & Kantor, L.M. (2017). Meeting the needs of sexual and gender minority youth: Formative research on potential digital health interventions. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 60(5), 541-548. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.11.023>