This paper shares the perspective with which PRISM, an activist forum working on issues of same-sex sexualities, approaches sexuality, and the way this perspective informs our activism. The paper begins with a brief introduction to PRISM. It then lays out the Indian context with respect to same-sex sexualities, within which we locate the response of the progressive movements and map the current work related to same-sex sexualities. The central section describes how PRISM came together as a forum and discusses some of the key shifts in our thinking, with examples of how our changing approach to sexuality has impacted our work. The paper concludes by discussing existing and anticipated challenges.

About PRISM

PRISM is a non-funded, non-registered, feminist forum of individuals based in New Delhi, India. PRISM is inclusive of all gender and sexual expressions and identities. PRISM’s mission is to raise issues relating to same-sex sexualities that fall outside the heterosexual norm, and to interrogate the norm itself.
Our understanding of sexuality begins with questioning the basic notions of sexuality. We question the concept of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ expressions of sexuality, and the equation of the biological male with masculinity and the biological female with femininity. We question related social concepts such as the primacy of monogamy, enforced heterosexuality and heteronormativity, and the institution of marriage, as well as the concept of sexual identity and behavior as fixed from birth.

We recognize that dominant ideologies— as manifested through individuals and institutions including the family and the State—seek to control and manage the sexuality of all individuals and groups, regardless of class, caste, religion, race, and sex. These efforts seek to maintain inequitable distribution of power, resources, suffering, pleasure, and spaces, to the detriment of full and free expression of human sexuality and people’s human rights.

In particular, PRISM focuses on issues relating to same-sex sexual expressions including those relating to self-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people (LGBT).i We seek to make these issues visible in mainstream society, to respond to human rights violations, and to link sexuality with the other axes of construction and control such as gender, caste, and religion. By highlighting these links, we seek to establish the need for progressive movements to engage with issues of marginalized sexualities as an intrinsic part of their mandate.
The Current Context of Non-Normative Gender/Sexual Expressions

Sexuality in India, particularly in the urban, middle-class context, is not discussed, or else discussion of sexuality is linked to gender (women) and restricted to reproductive health (primarily birth control) and sexual violence (primarily against women). It is not surprising, therefore, that non-normative gender/sexual expressions (e.g., same-sex sexual expressions) are largely invisible, and the issues related to these expressions are declared unimportant—even in the face of severe and wide-ranging human rights violations.

The most insidious violation is the assumption of heterosexuality as the norm, and the equation of biological men with masculinity and biological women with femininity. The consequences of these assumptions are isolation and fear for those who recognize themselves as outside the ‘norm’. They experience the constant pressure of hiding the truth about themselves, and live with the sense of being the only one who feels this way.

When non-normative gender/sexual identity is asserted or discovered, individuals may face emotional blackmail within the family, in-house imprisonment or eviction, job loss, coercion into marriage, harassment and extortion at the hands of the police, or conversion therapy at the hands of mental health professionals (typically including strong drugs and shock therapy). The particular violations experienced depend upon gender, caste, and class-related factors.

It is important to note that subversions and negotiations do take place. Some individuals manage to express their desires in subtle or overt ways, while others find strength in
traditional and emerging communities. Still others pose explicitly political challenges to heteropatriarchal norms.

Response of Progressive Groups

Organizations working in the development sector and movements struggling for human rights in India have largely failed to address sexuality issues. Sexuality is very close to the bottom of the hierarchy of priorities operating within the field of development (along with disability and female literacy).

The lack of emphasis reflects a belief that it is a luxury to discuss sexuality when faced by burning issues like poverty, starvation, and religious fundamentalism, and that sexuality is not a priority for poor communities. Such views have been expressed at meetings when groups who are reluctant to engage with sexuality are pushed to articulate their reasons. This reluctance to engage with sexuality in general indicates an even greater resistance to non-heterosexual sexualities.

While autonomous women’s groups have protested violations against non-heterosexual people, we have not seen a more positive, proactive articulation of a woman’s right to her sexuality. India’s progressive groups have not yet established a discourse that locates lesbian and other non-normative sexualities within a larger analysis of patriarchy, and identifies the challenges that these sexualities pose to a heteropatriarchal order. The manner in which sexuality is used to construct and sustain other inequalities—in the realms of gender, caste, and religion—has not been recognized.
Same-Sex Sexuality Organizing and Activism

The work related to same-sex sexualities in India involves a wide range of perspectives and activities, which can be broadly categorized into support groups, HIV/AIDS-related work, and more explicit political activism.

Support groups tend to be specific to particular identities (eg. lesbians) or amongst people who engage in same-sex sexual behaviour without ascribing to an identity (men who have sex with men), limited to a few metropolitan areas, and serve mostly middle- and upper-middle-class individuals. The work with men, in particular, does not theoretically engage with how gender and sexualities are constructed and are used to control not only sexual choices, but other social realities. The limited engagement of organizations that work with men who have sex with men (MSM) with other struggles for rights reflects this lack of theoretical engagement.

The work around the prevention and control of the spread of HIV/AIDS has tended to focus on modifying sexual behavior without exploring the underlying issues relating to homosexuality and its acceptance in society at large. In addition to challenging the ideologies that seek to oppress transgendered people as well as MSM, there is also a need to examine the privileges that accrue from being born a biological man in a patriarchal society. Marriage as a heteropatriarchal institution also largely escapes interrogation in MSM and gay men’s spaces. Organizations working on HIV/AIDS with MSM have, however, managed to create supportive spaces, including support groups, drop-in centers, and social events.
The other category of work related to same-sex sexualities is that of the explicitly political activist groups. This includes groups such as LABIA (earlier known as Stree Sangam) in Mumbai, PRISM in New Delhi, and other groups whose political activism combines with their role as resource organizations (such as Sangama, Humjinsi and Alternative Law Forum.) Members of these groups also tend to be involved with other progressive movements. Sangama is one of the few organizations in the country that works with poorer sections of LGBT communities to build links between them and other social movements.

Though organizations working with MSM tend not to be engaged with other progressive groups and movements, support groups for women are most often linked to one or more women’s organizations, although the nature and strength of the relationship varies. Until recently, there has been an absence of alliances between LGBT support groups, organizations working with MSM on HIV/AIDS, and organizations working for the rights of sex workers. This changed with the coming together of the Rainbow Planet—precisely such a coalition—at the World Social Forum, January 2004, in Mumbai.

PRISM’s Journey

Initial Formation

PRISM came into existence in August 2001. The seven individuals who came together to form PRISM had been actively involved in a campaign following the arrest and harassment on spurious charges of workers from Bharosa Trust and Naz Foundation International (NFI), organizations that work with MSM in Lucknow, a city in northern India.ii Some of us were members of LGBT support groups and others were involved in
sexuality related issues as part of our work within development NGOs. We came together
to form a broad platform for action and advocacy on issues relating to the human rights of
sexual minorities. Bharosa Trust and NFI had been functioning in isolation from other
organizations in the city, as is fairly typical of groups working with MSM. The events
surrounding their arrest underlined the reality that groups working on sexuality issues are
vulnerable to human rights violations and therefore cannot afford not to engage with
other NGOs and people’s organizations.

At first we called ourselves ‘The Thursday Forum,’ because we met on Thursdays, but
we soon named ourselves PRISM, which initially stood for People for the Rights of
Indian Sexuality Minorities. When we first articulated our mandate, we committed to
work with and across a multiplicity of subjectivities, unlike most LGBT groups, which
target specific sexual identities. We also sought to link with other movements,
recognizing that all forms of marginalization are connected. However, in retrospect we
feel that we did not clearly articulate how the different forms of marginalization are
connected or what the nature of our solidarity with other movements should be.

Encountering Intersectionality

Within the first six months of PRISM’s existence, the name was no longer an acronym.
This change signified a movement from the identity-based paradigm of sexual minorities
to an intersectional framework, which sought to locate sexuality—in a dynamic and
holistic way—in relation to other axes of social construction and control, such as gender,
religion, and class.
The process of questioning that led to these shifts in perspective was triggered by the participation of two of the members in the first Sexuality and Rights Institute, an intensive academic course organized by CREA and TARSHI in 2002. On engaging with critiques of identity-based politics at the Institute, the initial response of the PRISM members was one of fascination with the idea of intersectionality as well as a strong reluctance to let go of an identity-based framework. We argued with one of the resource persons that while intersectionality might work wonderfully in a Western context, here in India—given the silence that prevails on LGBT issues—there was a need to assert identity before it could be subsumed within a larger rubric.

The Institute exposed us to the theoretical frameworks and evidence of how sexuality and identities based on sexuality are socially constructed. We were also challenged to examine the possibility that our ideas about sexuality were rooted in assumptions—for example, the assumption that sexuality is at the core of identity. Looking at this assumption as a product of a specific historical phenomenon helped loosen the grip of identities on how we thought about sexuality.

We learnt to recognize the limitations of looking at sexuality in isolation from other axes of construction and control. We also learnt that it was imperative to understand the role of sexuality in the play of other forces such as fundamentalism and existing sex and gender systems.

Before the Institute ended, both PRISM members agreed that the meaning of our acronym should change. We were even tempted to rechristen ourselves ‘People for the Right to Sex…More!’ On our return to Delhi, we talked incessantly with other members
of PRISM about the issues that had come up during the course, particularly about identity-based politics.

### PRISM’s Critique of Identity-based Politics

Identity-based politics, while a mainstay of much political organizing, has tended to create restrictive and homogenous concepts of community. Since all members need to adhere to the ‘norms’ of the community, participating in an identity group runs the danger of being limiting. Identity-based politics also has the potential of being exclusivist and of creating hierarchies of oppression.

Identity-based LGBT politics in the West has, in the past, demanded that participants claim one of the few available identity categories and be rigidly conformist within it. Hierarchies within the movement are demonstrated by suspicion of bisexuals, widespread discomfort with inconsistent behavior and appearance, and the belief that there is a right way to be gay.

Identity based politics most often assumes that same sex desiring people relate to their sexuality as being at the core of their personhood. In a context such as India, we need to recognize that relating to one’s sexual desire (be it same-sex or otherwise) as a defining aspect of one’s ‘being’ holds true only for those who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual or as one of the many indigenous sexual identities. There are however much larger numbers of people who experience same-sex desire, but do not ‘identify’. Any description of ground level reality needs to recognize that those who identify are in a sense a ‘subset’ of a much larger category of same-sex desiring people. This articulation
becomes particularly important in the Indian context where the ‘mainstream’ tends to stereotype same-sex desiring people as being ‘westernized’ and elite. Identity-based politics does not help us to see the common roots of various oppressions, such as the connection between the persecution of the Muslims as the ‘other’ in India and the persecution of same-sex desiring people. Identity-based politics is, therefore, antithetical to the very diversity that it arises from.

While recognizing the dangers of pursuing identity politics as an end in itself, we believe that in a context in which same-sex desire is so deeply stigmatized, the meaning that identities hold for individuals (including the authors) and communities cannot be underestimated. Also for the sake of political action, especially in the face of violations of rights, identities are useful to mobilize people as communities and create a sense of solidarity and power. Those who engage in identity-based politics, however, need to be cognizant of the dangers of the same inherent in identity-based politics.

An Evolving Position on Gender-Neutrality

The work PRISM did on the Sexual Assault Bill—draft legislation prepared by women’s groups to bring about changes in the existing rape law in the country—demonstrates our perspective prior to our exposure to intersectional thinking. PRISM members attended meetings called by women’s groups and lawyers and contributed to the debates on the bill content as well as the drafting process. A key question discussed was whether the law should be gender-neutral. (At present the rape law is gender specific, meaning that only a woman can file a rape case against a man. A gender neutral law would mean that a woman or a man, could file a case against a woman or a man.)
PRISM took a strong stand against gender-neutrality except in separate provisions for minors. Our position was informed by our feminist stand as well as our understanding of LGBT issues in India. We believed that the law needed to reflect the statistical evidence around sexual assault, which indicates that most perpetrators are men and most subjects are women. We also believed that affirmative action for women in India was still the need of the hour.

We felt that the levels of prejudice in Indian society—including the police force and the judiciary—as well as the inability and/or unwillingness of LGBT people to disclose their identity, precluded the effective use of a gender-neutral law by people subject to sexual assault within same-sex relationships and encounters. We could easily envision the misuse of gender-neutral provisions. Consensual LGBT relationships would become vulnerable to false allegations of sexual assault brought or encouraged by family members and women raped by men would become vulnerable to false allegations by their rapists.

We also strongly objected to the fact that the first recognition of same-sex behavior in law would be negative. In the present heteronormative context, gender-neutrality would provide homophobia with a legal, civic space to express itself. Homophobia now expressed in terms of familial coercion and abandonment, pressures to marry, workplace hostility, and extortion by police, would then be expressed in the form of threatened or actual allegations of sexual assault.

In more recent conversations, we have explored connections between this gender-specific position and our identity-based approach. One member argued that in gender-specific
and identity-based approaches, means eclipse the end. In other words, in the effort to
respond to immediate realities, we lose sight of our future goals.

Gender-neutrality, or intersectionality, on the other hand, targets an ultimate ideal: legal
provisions that enable all people, regardless of gender and sexuality, to access justice.
Both gender-specificity and identity-based politics run the danger of reinforcing
essentialized differences, as between men and women or heterosexuals and homosexuals.
We wondered if our stand against gender-neutrality would have been different, had those
discussions taken place after we started developing our critique of identity-based politics.

At present, the debate within PRISM continues.

Beyond Identity-Based Politics

PRISM’s understanding and conceptualization of issues has largely been transformed. In
our initial articulation of objectives, we acknowledged a multiplicity of identities and did
not want to limit ourselves, for example, to identity-based issues (as if issues could be
neatly assigned to separate groups). We were also committed to respecting identities that
were not covered by LGBT categories.

We now understand that responsible, effective work involves more than simply
recognizing a growing multiplicity of identities. This liberal, multiculturalist position
leaves the bases of oppression untouched, and may even cause further isolation. One of
the dangers inherent in identity-based politics is that only those of a particular identity
category can advocate for issues related to it. We believe that work around sexual rights
should not only be a matter of extending LGBT to LGBTQKJH, iv it should generate a
pan-social/political discourse on how and why sexuality is constructed and employed to suit heteropatriarchal ends.

Our understanding of intersectionality is one that sees oppressions not as parallel, but as interwoven, simultaneously acting, and mutually constitutive. We do not adhere to the additive approach in which an individual checks off her oppressions on the basis of caste, sexuality, religion, or disability.

Building Alliances

Over time, the perspective of intersectionality between sexuality, gender, caste, class and religion, has greatly clarified alliance-building for PRISM. We have tried to establish links with other movements by highlighting the connections between the marginalization of sexualities and ideologies such as patriarchy and religious fundamentalism. We have interacted with children’s rights groups, engaged in raising awareness of the general public, and participated in a call for the decriminalization of sodomy. However, the bulk of PRISM’s efforts at alliance building have so far involved women’s groups, because several members are also part of the women’s movement and the group shares a common understanding of patriarchy.

Building alliances with an intersectional perspective requires an in-depth understanding of the ideologies and perspectives that we want to engage with to highlight links with sexuality. However, becoming familiar with a range of theories about oppression and resistance, and their translation into practice, requires time and space that is already scarce. As a result, we have only begun to highlight the connections between sexuality,
Engaging with Women’s Groups

PRISM has consistently argued that issues of sexuality ought to be part of the women’s groups’ core mandate. When they fail to recognize that violations based on sexuality are their issues too, progressive groups are failing to be true to their own goals of justice. Also, they stand to gain a great deal by engaging with the discourse on gender and sexuality from an intersectional perspective.

16 Days of Activism and the Lesbian Suicides

Toward the end of 2002, we worked to get women’s groups in Delhi to address the issue of lesbian suicides as part of a campaign on violence against women. The effort was initiated as part of the ‘16 Days of Activism’ towards the end of 2002. Between October and November of that year, newspapers had reported on three lesbian couples that had committed suicide in different parts of the country—all young women who chose death because their relationships with each other were not accepted in their societies and by their families. In two of the three cases, the young women were being coerced into marriage.

When we drew the attention of the women’s groups to the suicides, their response was immediate and positive. It was interesting, however, that they asked PRISM to initiate a response, to which they promised to lend their support. We asked why a group working on issues of sexuality should be primarily responsible for this activism. Was it not
fundamentally an issue of violence against women that all groups involved in the campaign needed to address? While the group recognized the validity of this argument, the work—the composition of a leaflet—was still done by PRISM:

Was Suicide the only Choice for these Women?
Violence against women means rape, sexual harassment, and bride burning.
Violence also happens every time a woman is married against her will. It happens every time a woman feels guilty for wanting to be happy and every time that a woman must die because she is unacceptable to society.
Lesbian suicides are a result of society's attempt to restrict women's choices and control their lives.
We Protest these Deaths as Violence against All Women.

The articulation in the leaflet and the way it links gender and sexuality gives us confidence that it is possible to work within an intersectional framework while doing justice to the specificities of women’s lives outside of social norms.

Sharing a New Sex-Gender Paradigm

PRISM has proactively sought to be invited to feminist forums to draw the attention of women’s groups to the experiences of women who have same-sex desires, and the response has been immediate and positive. PRISM has also been engaged in pointing out what the women’s movement can gain from a serious engagement with issues of non-normative sexualities.

One of the study groups initiated by PRISM focused on transsexual and transgender issues. Gender is normally interrogated within the women’s movement by challenging
gender-stereotypic roles, while taking the facts of female and male as given. Exploring transgender experiences enables us to completely break down the binary equation of the feminine with the biological female and the masculine with the biological male. Moreover, the facts of sex reassignment surgery require that we interrogate our exclusivist, biologist understanding of sex and its relation to gender and society.

This perspective enables a more in-depth examination of how people experience womanhood in our society, and the various ways that gender expression transgresses boundaries of biology and socialization. Finally, we can question the distinction between sex as biology and gender as socialization, which has been fundamental to feminist gender discourse. Such questions hold liberating potential for all of us, not only transgender and transsexual-identifying individuals.

Asserting Identities within an Intersectional Framework

In the course of our activism, we have tried to highlight links between axes such as gender and sexuality, and we have also strategically drawn upon identities. PRISM participated in drafting two resolutions at the Indian Association of Women’s Studies (IAWS) Conference held in Bhubaneshwar in 2002. One of the resolutions represented the first time that an IAWS conference passed a resolution addressing women’s same-sex desires and the other highlighted the links between religious fundamentalism and sexuality.
Intersectionality and Solidarity

Whether we have sought to point out the dangers of excluding sexuality or the value of including it, our aim has been to establish that all those who are fighting for rights need to engage with issues of sexuality as part of their ongoing work—not merely as allies. This is an important implication of intersectionality: subscribing to a particular identity is not a criterion for the ability to speak for an identity-related issue.

The response of women’s groups—and others committed to equity and justice—to violations faced by women because of their sexual orientation or behavior should be informed by an understanding of how sexuality is used to construct and control all women. The response should not only merely be that of allies defending a sexuality minority whose rights are being threatened, but an invested response.

Solidarity building with LGBT activists has not always been easy since some sections of LGBT communities have failed to see the connections between sexuality and issues such as communalism. For instance, we abstained from attending the first Asia-regional-level conference organized by the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) held in Mumbai in October 2002. PRISM argued that claiming some issues only as gay and delinking sexuality from other aspects of our lives, in the interests of ostensibly furthering the LGBT cause, is an ethically irresponsible position.

We continue to believe that there is a direct and obvious link between the marginalization of individuals and communities on the basis of sexuality (behavior and identity) and religious fundamentalism, patriarchy, caste-based discrimination, and class oppression.
Challenges

Incorporating Sex Work Issues

Feminist activists working in the area of sexuality are beginning to critique heteropatriarchal structures and challenge basic tenets. They are questioning the hierarchy of desires that privileges lifelong monogamy within marriage and stigmatizes promiscuity, interrogating the relationship between intimacy and sex. PRISM will continue to work on these issues, as we build an understanding of sexual rights informed by a more progressive morality. Issues relating to sex work need to be incorporated into these discussions and understandings.

Engaging with LGBT and MSM Groups

Part of our unarticulated inclination not to engage with more members of the existing LGBT communities might stem from a higher degree of expectation of shared politics with LGBT organizations—an expectation that has sometimes been disappointed. However we see it as our limitation that we have not made more of an effort to build solidarity and to work together. Also generating dialogue with LGBT and MSM support groups on issues of gender and sexuality would enable us to deepen our understanding of identities and subcultures and facilitate critical reflection on gender and sexual expression, particularly with respect to restrictive stereotypes.
An Alliance Formed in Lucknow

The relationship between Bharosa Trust, Naz Foundation International, and Lucknow women’s organizations began when the workers of these two NGOs were arrested in 2001. The women’s organizations rushed to the rescue of the workers, though they had little exposure to LGBT issues. The relationship has grown in wonderful, organic ways since then. The young men from these two NGOs attend all the major public events organized by the women’s organizations, providing whatever support they can. Working with the women’s groups, they are now involved in anti-communalism activism as well (a big change, since their groups had been exclusively focused on MSM sexual behavior). One of the women’s organizations recently conducted a gender training with the kothis linked to Bharosa Trust, exploring issues such as roles and power within relationships.

Realizing a Longer-Term Vision

So far, PRISM has been involved in organizing and participating in specific events. Although the response has been heartening and we have grown in our political understanding, PRISM now needs to focus on longer-term agendas. This has begun with an effort to document human rights violations related to same-sex practice and identity faced by women in Delhi.

A recent heartening development is the creation of a forum called Voices Against 377. Voices is a coalition of progressive groups in Delhi, including women’s groups, human rights groups, groups working on issues such as health and education, sexual rights and queer activist groups. The coalition was initiated by PRISM in response to law reform processes relating to Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which criminalizes sexual acts
At the beginning Voices was ‘driven’ by PRISM. There were points when we thought that generating participation beyond urging others to take on specific tasks was a losing proposition. Persistence and strategizing followed. In just a few months, we are at a place where there is a high degree of ownership of the forum by member organizations. There is also a growing need felt by members to rename ourselves, since the collective activism has already begun to move beyond Section 377 to larger issues relating to the marginalization of same-sex desire. In fact there are discussions underway to include all forms of non-normative sexualities, which several groups feel connects better with themselves as individuals and with their work within organizations. We see Voices as a concrete manifestation of PRISM’s politics of intersectionality.

Coping with Internal Challenges

PRISM’s fluid and unstructured configuration has its advantages. It makes for openness, creating a space in which even those who do not come regularly for meetings—including people from other cities and countries—feel comfortable. It also means that there is always ample space for those who want to get more deeply involved in PRISM’s activism.

However, we have recognized that there are limitations to working in this unstructured way. The group might benefit from the formalization of a system to establish a greater sense of accountability in terms of responsibilities undertaken. Similarly, a better articulated process of decision-making would enable more members to accurately represent PRISM and its positions. Although intra-organizational structures are often
considered bureaucratic, they can promote more efficient, transparent functioning. We have begun a process of defining some systems but these have not, as yet, taken root.

We are also challenged to maintain a shared political understanding in a forum as open and fluid as PRISM. It is necessary to create time and space to engage specifically on jointly articulating PRISM’s perspective, especially with newer members. There is the need for us all—new and seasoned members – to interact around shared perspectives.

This does not mean, however, that we need to have a common position on every issue. The discussions of various political issues, from different perspectives, are far more important to us than reaching consensus. None of us would deny the thrill of sitting around a working lunch discussing language, behavior, identities, sex, pleasure, gender, violence, monogamy, marriage, laws, ageism, class, religion, the workplace, families, lovers, bisexuality, heterosexism, sexual harassment, biases, appearance… interspersed with personal anecdotes and jokes. As evening approaches, we are splayed out in our chairs, our eyes glazed, innocuous remarks follow unintended trajectories to end in slightly mad proposals, and we disband, calling out reminders to each other about everything we need to do before we meet again.

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i Our use of LGBT is shorthand for a diverse range of subjectivities that do not neatly fit these categories. Most groups working on these issues use this term.

ii Early in July 2001, policemen were led to a Lucknow park in which volunteer outreach workers from Bharosa Trust were working with MSM. A few men were arrested,
including an employee of Naz Foundation International. The police later raided the offices of both organizations, confiscating educational material that they chose to categorize as pornographic. They arrested four other staff members. The men were charged under the anti-sodomy statute (Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code) and under other laws such as those pertaining to indecent representation of women.

iii CREA and TARSHI are Delhi-based NGOs that work on issues of gender and sexuality. See also Chapter 7 in this volume.

iv Other than the LGBTQ (Q for Queer), the J, K, and H stand for indigenous sexual identities of jogappas, kothis and hijras.

v Section 377 has been a source of a range of human rights violations against same-sex desiring people.