

## Butterflies in the City: Capturing the Lived Experiences of Transgender Women in Cebu City

Kyla Presmei C. Depakakibo<sup>1</sup>, Jerome Montecalvo<sup>2</sup>, Jullia Mae Lumapay<sup>3</sup>,  
Faye Ernestina Cataluña<sup>4</sup>, Merry Erica Jean Ceballos<sup>5</sup>,  
Celeste del Socorro EdD<sup>6</sup>, Flordeliza S. Gagani, PhD(c)<sup>7</sup>

*Basic Education Department, Senior High South School, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines*

**ABSTRACT :** Social movements towards transgender visibility and acceptance gained significant emphasis in the 21st century. In the Philippines, transgender women are tolerated but not fully accepted. The study aimed to increase societal acceptance and decrease gender-based prejudice by exploring the challenges, experiences, and coping mechanism of the members of a marginalized community. Husserl's descriptive phenomenological design was used to capture and understand the meaning of the lived experiences of purposively taken four transgender women aged 21-27 years old from Cebu City, Philippines. Interview using a validated semi-structured interview schedule was used as the primary instrument; observation and focus group discussion (FGD) were triangulated to obtain data saturation. Responses were transcribed, coded and analyzed using Colaizzi's method. Six major themes emerged from the collected experiences on transgender identity and expression, discrimination and bullying, the importance of blood relations, unrequited love and relationships, and the desire to become a woman. The lives of the transgender participants can be described as transformative expression amidst challenges and external conflict. This research implies that transgender women make the conscious decision to assert and express their gender identity in the desire to be closer to the authentic self. It is recommended that further studies would be conducted on examining the lived experiences of a transgender being in different sectors and with varied scope.

**KEYWORDS:** Colaizzi, descriptive phenomenology, identity, transgender women

### I. INTRODUCTION

Anderson Cooper, journalist and TV personality once said, "The tide of history only advances when people make themselves visible [1]." It is in this desire for visibility that social movements emerged to campaign for RECOGNITION, acceptance, and rights of queer or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender, etc. (LGBT+) individuals. Activism towards transgender rights and visibility gained significant support in conjunction with mainstream discussions of gender and sexual orientation in the 21st century [2]. While both are related and integral aspects of the self, gender and sexual orientation are distinct from one another [3]. For instance, gender refers to "how individuals perceive themselves as male, female, both or neither [4]." Transgender individuals refer to people whose gender identity or expression do not match the biological sex they were assigned at birth [5]. Transgender people may also identify as transsexual if they desire to receive or have received medical assistance to transition from one sex to another [6].

The Philippines is considered to be one of the most tolerant countries towards transgender individuals [7]. Transgender individuals are also widely represented in Philippine popular culture and media.

But while there are no Philippine laws criminalizing homosexuality, there are no laws specifically protecting gay or transgender individuals either [8]. Previous studies have shown a majority of transgender women didn't feel accepted in Philippine society [9]. Although progress have been made in passing national legislations that would penalize discrimination against LGBT individuals, provisions were criticized to be non-specific and insufficient [10]. Transgender women were found to be more vulnerable to harassment and discrimination in the workplace [11]-[12]. Higher rates of unemployment [13] and higher risk of HIV were also reported among transgender individuals [14]. There is also the need for qualitative research on transgender individuals and the exploration of their lived experiences [15].

In this regard, this study aimed to increase societal acceptance of a marginalized community and decrease gender-based prejudice. The study focused on documenting authentic experiences and discussing contemporary issues relating to transgender women (TW) in the context of the Philippine setting, specifically in Cebu City. The study used Phenomenology and Existentialism to examine and contextualize TW challenges, struggles, and lived experiences. The study would benefit the transgender community, youth organizations, local government, social welfare workers, and future researchers.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to explore the lived experiences of transgender women in a particular Barangay in Cebu City in the year 2019. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the highlights of their experiences, challenges, struggles, coping mechanisms, and meaning of these experience for them.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### Materials and Methods

The study utilized the phenomenological method [16] to gain understanding of the lived experiences of transgender women. The study was conducted within a Barangay in Cebu City, Philippines which is described as a Class E demarcated neighborhood in the socio-economic classification [17]. Purposive sampling [18] was used to select the four participants required for the study. The participants involved met the following selection criteria: (1) a biologically born male who identifies as a transgender woman [30] (2) any individual who expresses their female gender identity by wearing clothes traditionally considered to be socially inappropriate for their biological sex [31], (3) a resident of the Barangay for at least two years, and (4) are between 20-40 years old. The study used semi-structured interview [19] and focus group discussion [20] to gather data. Data were recorded as agreed by the participants.

Table 1. Participants of the Study

Participant	Code Name	Age	Occupation
1	White Butterfly	27	BPO Agent
2	Green Butterfly	27	Employee
3	Brown Butterfly	25	Unemployed
4	Blue Butterfly	21	Cashier

### Data Gathering Procedures

First, the researchers wrote a transmittal letter to the principal for approval of the research study. Afterwards, the researchers wrote another letter addressed to the transgender individuals asking them for their permission and consent. The participants had properly informed the participant's regarding the purpose and overview of the study. The identity and personal information of the participants were kept strictly confidential. Ethical considerations such as conflict of interest, privacy and confidentiality, informed consent process, vulnerability, recruitment, risks and benefits, and incentives were also considered.

### Data Analysis

Data were transcribed and analysed using the Colaizzi's method [21]. Significant statements, formulated meanings and emergent themes were taken from the verbatim. Transcripts were read and reduction method was done to obtain the themes. Bracketing, the suspension of the researchers' assumptions [22], was also observed. Data saturation was evident due to the ability of replication of themes and further coding is no longer feasible [23].

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Six major themes were obtained from an interpretive analysis of transcripts that characterize the lived experiences of transgender women as described by the participants. Each of the six major themes was labelled by a translated phrase actually used by one or more participants; this was done to preserve the transgender woman's own language in describing specific meanings. Themes, however, are not to be construed as independent of one another but as interrelated aspects of a single collective whole.

Table 2. Six Derived Themes of the Study

No.	Theme
1	“A man’s body with a woman’s heart”: <i>The Transgender Identity</i>
2	“Accept it; that’s how it is”: <i>Discrimination and Bullying</i>
3	“Family is Family”: <i>Importance of Blood Relationships</i>
4	“Why not me?”: <i>Unrequited Love and Relationships</i>
5	“Amidst the storm, Here I stand”: <i>Fighting for the Woman Within</i>
6	“Becoming a Butterfly”: <i>Being a Woman</i>

### Theme 1. “A Man’s Body with a Woman’s Heart: The Transgender Identity

All four participants identify as transgender women and use ‘transgender’, ‘ladyboy’, and ‘bayot’ (third gender) interchangeably to refer to themselves. Some participants prefer to use feminine names instead of their legal names to reflect their gender identity. Participant 4 described her choice of name in the following terms:

*“I decided to choose this name because I feel comfortable like (when) someone can call me [preferred name] ... I can say... I’m a real woman.” (T4, P1, L12-15)*

All four participants also associate their transgender identity as an expression of their true self. Participant 1 narrates it in this way:

*“Being transgender is (being) able to express what you truly feel. You show to the people that you’re just being true to yourself; you can dress whatever you want and you can wear make-up with no discrimination.” (T1, P1, L63-70)*

As transgender women, the participants encountered criticisms over their transgender identity. A participant’s description of the situation as follows:

*“They would tell me, “Why do you need to have sex with the same gender? What will you get from (being a transgender woman)? I would (ask them) “Why do you care when I am happy here?” (T4, P4, L135-139)*

The study found all participants desire to be accepted and recognized as women. As transgender women, this desire was actively demonstrated through various means of gender expression. As one participant aptly narrates:

*“Yes. (Having long hair) is the No. 1 thing that makes us a woman. That’s why we can’t afford to cut our hair...No. 2 is our face. Since we are women we need to glam up and be beautiful from bottom to top. No. 3 is our outfit. You should know fashion sense.” (T3, P22-23, L996-1006)*

Transgender women were also found to demonstrate gender expression through feminine clothes and the use of hormone pills:

*“I use panty and bra (as underwear).” (T2, P4, L17-18)  
“If you really want to be a transgender woman, you should start taking (hormone) pills around 13 years old. The younger you take your pills, the more feminine you’ll look as you grow older.” (T2, P9, L370-376)*

On top of this, some participants want to undergo sex change to fully transition into a woman:

*“I feel I am a woman. That’s why it’s really nice to pursue being a woman. That’s why it’s really nice to transition to have breasts, and a vagina.” (T3, P25, L1110-1113)*

However, Participant 4 has a different motivation to undergo sex change:

*“Yes, I want to transition and have a vagina and breasts so that (other people) won’t discriminate me. I need to have whatever is in a (biologically born) woman because I feel that deep in my heart, I am a woman.” (T4, p11, l488-492)*

These findings suggest transgender women view their gender identity as an integral part of their authentic self. Gender expression is found to be a visible and tangible extension of the individual's perceived gender identity. Physical changes and body alterations are generally made in the desire to become a woman. To be a transgender woman is to express one's identity as a source of genuine happiness despite criticism.

### **Theme 2. "Accept it; that's how it is": Discrimination and Bullying**

The second theme quickly emerged as participants described their experiences of discrimination and bullying. Relationships of family, co-workers, public, out groups, and even the transgender community contributed to the participants' belief that "discrimination is a fact of life" for transgender women. One participant described the situation in the following terms:

*"My lesbian friend advised me to just accept (discrimination) because it is how it is. What's important is we didn't mind them. We didn't bring (other people) down." (T4, P4, L599-603)*

Discrimination was found to often emerge from external conflict with TW's gender identity. The following excerpt deals with the issue of discrimination in public areas, whether it be in the participant's hometown or current residence:

*"At that time I didn't really dress up like this but I just wore skinny jeans and t-shirt. Really, you'll be made aware when they'll call you bayot while you are walking on a crowded public area. But in (my hometown), their term is bantot - like a curse word or a baklangkabayo (third gender horse)." (T3, P22-23, L996-1006)*

Transgender women were also found to experience discrimination, verbal abuse and harassment in public and private institutions, and even in the workplace:

*"When I enter the mall entrance, I try to pass the women's line but the guard would tell me that I should go to the men's area." (T2, P6, L255-260)*

In summary, transgender women were found to accept discrimination and bullying as part of life. The participants encountered external conflict because of her gender identity and expression. As transgender women, participants were found to experience conflict in their hometown, community, workplace, and public and private institutions. Transgender women were also prone to verbal abuse and sexual harassment.

### **Theme 3. "Family comes first": The Importance of Blood Relationships**

Another common theme that has emerged in the participant's narrative was the importance of the nuclear family and other blood relations to transgender women. Transgender women were found to primarily work and provide for the family's financial needs regardless of previous conflict and strained relationship:

*"Even though (my family) discriminates me because of my gender identity, I still support their needs." (T4, P7, L267-269)*  
*"Whatever happens, whatever calamity comes in your way, family is family." (T-FGD, P9, L399-403)*

Transgender women have also cited family as the primary motivation to work. A participant described the situation as follows:

*"Though I am bayot, I am a big help to my family. I always make sure that whenever I go to work, I always think of my reason why, and my priority is my family. So every pay day, I send my money to my family to suffice their needs." (T1, P7-8, L307-313)*

In addition, transgender women expressed concern on how their experiences as a transgender woman would affect their family:

*"Until now my parents don't know about what I've been through; about what I've experienced. If they know, they might feel hurt." (T3, P11, L463-466)*

*"I'm now focused on helping my family. Before, my siblings would simply take advantage of me. Sometimes, they would just sell my clothes (without my permission). But I just accept everything they've done to me. I would still persevere and work hard for my family." (T3, P8, L334-337)*

These findings highlight how transgender women prioritize and give importance to family relations. Transgender women were found to continue to work and provide the family's financial needs regardless of strained relationships, and mixed responses to their gender identity.

#### **Theme 4. "Why not Me?": Unrequited Love and Relationships**

Transgender women reported varying experiences regarding love and relationships. All participants agree in their romantic and sexual preference of men. Among the four participants, two have previous and current experience on love. One participant narrates:

*"The biggest failure or the biggest trial (I had as a transgender woman) is love; failure in love. I think love is not meant for transgender individuals. Based on my experience, no man has ever loved us, unlike the (biologically born) women whom they really make effort in relationships. I've experienced that in high school. I always believe that you should first love yourself if you don't want to lose everything." (T-FGD, P9, 393-398)*

Sub-themes identified under this theme include one-sided love, being the second option, and loving even if it hurts. Excerpts from the interview are as follows:

*"If he knew that I'm into him, he will play with your feelings which he knows that you're hurting and still play with it. So, you'll actually feel that you don't have any option to continue the relationship. At the end of the day, I always end up crying." (T1, P7, L272-279)*

Another sub-theme that emerged under this theme is that transgender women often feel the second choice especially when biologically born women are involved. Transgender women also feel they should accept this as part of life:

*"No man would last long with us, because men will always look for women. That's the hardest thing for us. When we see our men together with another woman, it hurts, but we just accept it." (T-FGD, P9, L399-403)*

These findings prove that TW are romantically and sexually attracted to men. However, TW were found to have unrequited romantic relationships with men. Transgender women view romantic relationships to be temporary because they believe men will always search for biologically born women. Though their love brings them immense emotional pain, TW chose to continue to do so. Participant 4 provides an apt description that encapsulates this phenomenon:

*"I cannot accept why he cannot choose me. I love him so much and I gave him everything he wanted, but nothing happens. This is what I keep asking myself, 'Why not me?'" (T4, P13, L546-551)*

#### **Theme 5. "Amidst the Storm, Here I Stand": Fighting for the Woman Within**

Another common theme that has emerged among the participants is the different ways TW deal with challenges and various conflicts they experienced. Transgender women were found to cope by having friends who are members and allies of the LGBTQ community. Having LGBT+ friends and allies become safe spaces for transgender women to fully express and be themselves:

*"I feel comfortable with my friends especially my classmates because they're ok with me being a transgender woman...they'd invite me to parties and events." (T2, P7, L269-271)*

Transgender women were also found to practice *dedmaor* not minding what other people say, as a coping mechanism.

Other coping mechanisms transgender women practice include fighting back, adapting to different environments, and having faith in God. Transgender women also use humor and a positive outlook in life to deal with conflicts and criticisms. One participant gave a message to her past self in this way:

*"But now that you're [preferred name], always have this thought that life should always keep (on) going. No matter what your struggles are, you should fight. Like continue on keeping people happy; continue on turning their lips into a smile. A lips of an angel." (T1, P23, L1010-1016)*

Regardless of coping mechanism, all participants expressed their desire to be respected and accepted for who they are. One participant remarked:

*“We need acceptance, we need to stop bullying and we need to stop discrimination so there will be justice between straight men and transgender women.” (T-FGD, P18, L812-815)*

Thus, findings under this theme reveal transgender women as resilient individuals who use various coping mechanisms in dealing with external conflicts. Regardless of coping mechanism, TW were found to continue to fight for their transgender identity. Transgender women were also found to desire acceptance and respect from others.

#### **Theme 6. “Becoming a Butterfly”: Being a Woman**

The final theme emerged from the participants’ use of the butterfly as a metaphor to describe and give meaning to their lived experience. Three out of four participants used the butterfly in different contexts to illustrate their life experiences and challenges. The third participant used butterfly as the result of the transformation she went through as a transgender woman:

*“I describe myself as a caterpillar because you should accept all your experiences, all the pains and sufferings, all the discriminations, you should accept it all because you don't know. Maybe you'll be successful and happy someday. After all I've been through, I had to undergo several processes in order to surpass them until I became a butterfly.” (T3, P31, L1336-1334)*

One further confirmed her use of the butterfly to describe herself during the FGD with the following statement:

*“I started as a caterpillar or me as a man then I became a butterfly and into a woman.” (T-FGD, P18, L790-799)*

Other participants used the butterfly to describe themselves in relation to its beauty and the participant’s perception of oneself. One said:

*“I chose butterfly because it's attractive then it can travel to other places. Then, it can make different things and it is also attractive to other people. Thus, I can really say that several people appreciate me and I can inspire others as well.” (T2, P9, L382-386)*

On the other hand, participant 4 used the butterfly to illustrate her goals and dreams in life:

*“It's just like I'm a butterfly. I want to fly; I want to go to that place because my goals are there.” (T4, P7, L382-386)*

In summary, transgender women used the butterfly as a symbolic metaphor to give meaning to their lived experiences. The butterfly is used by the participants in different contexts ranging from the end result of personal transformation to the perception of the ideal self. The transgender woman’s desire to reveal their true selves to the world can be summarized in this participant’s statement:

*“We want to show to people that even though we are (transgender women) we can help the world. Whatever you're capable of doing, so am I.” (T2, P9, L382-386)*

## **V. DISCUSSION**

The transgender woman’s gender identity and gender expression as being true to oneself is presented in the first major theme. Previous studies have shown transgender individuals’ lived experiences include conforming to traditional social norms, hiding the aspects of identity they felt were not accepted, to self-acceptance and the realization that they are normal, just different [24].

In the second theme, transgender women consider discrimination and stigma as part of life, and experience external conflict in various situations. Transgender women are generally tolerated but not fully accepted in Philippine society, and that transgender women are vulnerable to sexual harassment [9].

They are also found to provide and sustain their respective family’s financial needs regardless of previous conflict and strained family relationship; found to experience discrimination within their respective family as reflected in the study’s third theme. Jose [25] found transgender women lose family support and experience greater harassment, discrimination and violence at home than the non-transgender siblings.

In the fourth theme, transgender women are romantically and sexually attracted to men, but are often engaged in unrequited relationships with them. Majority of Filipinotransgender women were found to be sexually and romantically attracted to men [13]. However, some successful romantic relationships were found out to be built around support, negotiation, communication, and compromise [26].

Furthermore, various coping mechanisms of transgender women were classified. Participants have cited praying and having faith in God as means of finding strength to keep on going in life. Studies showed that religious coping strategies have a distinctive and positive on the mental health of transgender individuals [27].

The final theme gave meanings to their experiences through the use of butterfly as a metaphor. The butterfly has been previously used by transgender individuals around the world to symbolize the transformation or metamorphosis from birth gender presentation, to gender identification and expression that matches the individual's self [28]. However, the study's findings present other uses of the butterfly metaphor by transgender women. Aside from transformation, the butterfly is also used to describe the transgender woman's perception of herself, and her future aspirations.

All six themes reveal that transgender women continue to express their gender identity despite meeting challenges and external conflict. The various coping mechanisms transgender women have only further strengthen their desire to fully express and embody their gender identity. These findings suggest that a transgender woman makes the active choice to assert and express her gender identity as an attempt to become her authentic self. Through the lens of existentialism, it can be argued that there is intentionality in the experiences of transgender women; the participants continue to identify as a transgender woman in spite of the numerous restrictions imposed by the social-cultural environment. All six themes are also supported by de Beauvoir's view on existentialism, specifically her view on authenticity. For de Beauvoir, authenticity refers to "living one's life with an accurate appraisal of one's humanity... on not accepting societal and cultural expectations and on staying true to oneself [24]."

## VI. CONCLUSION

After careful analyses of transcriptions, significant statements, and formulated meanings from individual and focus group interviews, the essence of the lived experiences of transgender women in Barangay Luz, Cebu City might read as follows:

*A transgender woman is having a man's body with a woman's heart, and the freedom to express her true self. As a transgender woman, discrimination, and persecution is considered to be part of life. A transgender woman works and lives for her family; for her, family is her first priority. In the desire to be loved and to belong, a transgender woman gives everything she has in a relationship, even if it is unreciprocated. A transgender woman doesn't pay attention to what people say nor gives up when her storms approach; she values respect and chooses to stand up, fight back, and remain unapologetic of who she is. A transgender woman describes herself and her experiences as a butterfly: transformative, and beautiful.*

All transgender women reported positive and negative experiences relating to their transgender identity. The changes in their physical appearance reflect their gender identity, and their desire to become a woman. Actions of family, co-workers, friends, lovers, and even fellow members of the transgender community contribute to their perception that "discrimination is a part of life" and relationships are often one-sided. Transgender women value family and view it as their main motivation and first priority. Transgender women express their gender identity in the desire to cope with external conflict, be true to themselves, and receive acceptance and respect from others. Finally, transgender women view their lived experience as a transformative process, an opportunity for self-growth, and a source of inspiration to fully embody their gender identity.

Several recommendations resulting from this study concern way in which the transgender community, local government officials, family members, youth organizations, social workers, and future researchers can improve the quality of life of transgender women.

First, transgender community should unite and empower their fellow transgender individuals to encourage love and acceptance among each other. Second, local government officials should create and implement more laws and policies to spread awareness and protect transgender women from discrimination, bullying and stigma. Third, family members, especially those who have transgender relatives, should have open communication and break barriers in order to foster a mutual nurturing relationship wherein they will be able to accept and respect the transgender community. Fourth, youth organizations should initiate information dissemination projects and create support groups that would provide opportunities for transgender women to foster mutual love and relationships. Fifth, social workers should spread awareness and conduct community based programs to address the needs and concerns of transgender woman. Lastly, future researchers should suspend bias and prejudice when conducting similar studies in order to obtain authentic lived experiences,

challenges, coping mechanisms, and meaning. In addition, this study recommends to conduct individual interviews and a Focus Group Discussion involving a larger amount of participants from different sectors and various backgrounds to examine the lived experience of transgender individuals and other members of the LGBT+ community.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Maya, M. (2016). *Quotes for People Struggling with their Identity*. Retrieved from: [www.bustle.com](http://www.bustle.com)
- [2] Morris, B. (2016). *History of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Social Movements*. Retrieved from: [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)
- [3] Gender Spectrum. (2018). *Understanding Gender*. Retrieved from: [www.genderspectrum.com.org](http://www.genderspectrum.com.org)
- [4] Adam, C. (2017). *The difference between sexual orientation and gender identity*. Retrieved from: [www.cbsnews.com](http://www.cbsnews.com)
- [5] Live Science. (2019). *What is Transgender?* Retrieved from: <https://www.livescience.com>
- [6] Nicole, J. & Polly, R. (2010). *Understanding the transsexual patient: Culturally sensitive care in emergency nursing practice*. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net>
- [7] Almendral, A. (2018). *A Transgender Paradox, and Platform, in the Philippines*. New York Times. Retrieved from: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)
- [8] Boskey, E. (2018). *Understanding the stigma faced by Transgender Women*. Retrieved from: [www.verywellmind.com](http://www.verywellmind.com)
- [9] Chulipa, M., Rivera, M., Silan, M. (2016). *Trans on Trains: Lived Experiences of Filipina Transgender Women on the MRT*. Retrieved from: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)
- [10] Mitra, T. (2018). *Legal Gender RECOGNITION in the Philippines: A Legal and Policy Review*. Retrieved from: [www.asiapacific.undp.org](http://www.asiapacific.undp.org)
- [11] David, E. (2014). *Purple-Collar Labor: Transgender Workers and Queer Value at* *Dissertations & Theses A&I*. (1809116546). Retrieved from: [ezproxy.usc.edu.ph](http://ezproxy.usc.edu.ph)
- [12] Singson, Y. (2016). *Trans Pinays On the Laws They Wish We Had in The Philippines*. Retrieved from: [www.cosmo.ph](http://www.cosmo.ph)
- [13] King, M., Sasot, S., & Winter, S. (2007). *Transgendered Women of the Philippines*. Retrieved from: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)
- [14] Claravall, C. (2019). *Transgender Health and HIV in the Philippine*. Retrieved from: [origin.wpro.who.int](http://origin.wpro.who.int)
- [15] Muhr, S., Rich, C., & Sullivan, K., (2015). *Situated Transgressiveness: Exploring One Transwoman's Lived Experiences across Three Situated Context*. Retrieved from: [doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12093](https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12093).
- [16] Bloor, M. & Wood, F. (2006). *Phenomenological Methods*. Retrieved from: [Methods.sagepub.com](http://Methods.sagepub.com)
- [17] PhilAtlas (2019). *Luz: Cebu City*. Retrieved from: <https://www.philatlas.com/visayas/r07/cebucity/luz.html>
- [18] Foley, B. (2018). *Purposive Sampling 101*. Retrieved from: [www.surveygizmo.com](http://www.surveygizmo.com)
- [19] Guy, K. (2014). *It's A Gendered World: The Experience of Parents and Their Transgender Youth*. Retrieved from: [csus-dspace.calstate.edu](http://csus-dspace.calstate.edu)
- [20] Mishra, L. (2016). *Focus Group Discussion in Qualitative Research*. Retrieved from: <http://ndpublisher.in/admin/issues/tlV6N1a.pdf>.
- [21] Sorono-Gagani, F. & Abadiano, M., (2017). *Muslims' Adaptive Coping Strategy Theory in Surviving a Catholic University*. Retrieved from: <http://journal-ijah.org/more.php?id=21>
- [22] Bertelsen, P. (2005). *Free Will, Consciousness, and Self: Anthropological Perspectives on Psychology* / P. Bertelsen. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net/>
- [23] Fusch, P and Ness, L. (2015). *Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research*. Retrieved from: [cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.nova.edu](http://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.nova.edu).
- [24] Courtney, K. (2013). *Sexually or Gender Non-Conforming Adults' Description of the Meaning of Difference Within a Rural High School Context: A Grounded Theory Study*. Retrieved from: [search.proquest.com](http://search.proquest.com)
- [25] Jose, J, & Vinod, C. (2014). *Sexual Identity and Psychosocial Disabilities of Transgender Women in India: A Social Exclusion Perspective*. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com>
- [26] Gilb, E. (2016). *Transgender Experience of Romantic Relationship: The Transcendent Function and Buddhism's Middle Way*. Retrieved from: <https://search.proquest.com/openview>.
- [27] Shilo, G., Yossef, I., & Savaya, R. (2016). Religious coping strategies and mental health among religious jewish gay and bisexual men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 45(6), 1551-1561. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10508-015-0567-4>.
- [28] TransGriot. (2012). *Why The Butterfly to Represent Trans People?* Retrieved from: [transgriot.blogspot.com](http://transgriot.blogspot.com)