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The Politics of Sexuality amongst Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) Community in Delhi, India

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The disease of Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is changing social reality, social consciousness and also has raised questions on social norm and practices. Men who have sex with men (MSM) emerged as a community which has been termed as high risk group in transmitting HIV/AIDS because of their sexual practices. In India, social factors (community, family, marriage, and stigma) play an important role in the life of the individuals. Along with that there is also a huge diversity within the MSM community as this community comprises of different groups with unique lifestyle, sexual preferences and understanding of sexuality. This paper attempts to study the politics of sexuality amongst the MSM community. The MSM community consists of different groups which forms mainly based on their sexual practice. First, the paper aims to understand the politics of sexuality within the community based on the perception of each group on sexual identity, sexual behaviour, sexual partners, and reasons for having sexual partners and roles in specific sexual practices. As a result, how hierarchy evolved and is maintained within the MSM community is looked at in this study. Secondly, the paper also traces out the influence of different social factors (family, marriage and stigma) on the lives of the individuals belonging to MSM community and the outcome of the influences.

Supriti Chakraborty is a Ph.D student with the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, India. For her Ph.D, she is trying to understand the social context of risk and HIV/AIDS in the MSM community in India.