Transgender Persons and Emotion-Based Self Theory: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Social constructivists emphasize that self and emotions are the product of ongoing social interaction. Individuals create meanings and shape emotional experiences within a specific cultural context, shaped by norms, values, beliefs, and ideas acquired through socialization and social interaction (Barbalet, 2006). This qualitative systematic literature review examines the importance of the interpersonal-constructivist view of David Boyns' (2006) emotion-based self-theory and employs it in studying the emotions and self-experiences of transgender individuals in daily life. It synthesized data from 18 selected studies on transgender persons' lived experiences, obtained from the three databases: SPRINGER LINK, SCOPUS and JSTORE. It integrates the data with interpersonal-constructivists' approach to emotion-based self. The study findings revealed that transgender persons experience diverse emotions across different life stages that contribute to their emotion-based self-construction. This research highlights the dynamic interplay between social norms, individual experiences, and the construction of emotional identities, calling for more inclusive and contextually aware approaches to studying gender and emotion. This article concludes that there is a need for detailed studies to understand transgender persons' emotions and self within their sociocultural contexts. It also proposes viewing the emotion-based self as multifaceted, ever-emerging, performative, and reflexive in social life.

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1.0 Introduction

Theory-based systematic literature review has become an advanced field in social sciences. Qualitative reviews of theories are helpful when dealing with complex, less explored, and multi-disciplinary literature (Brown et al., 2019). Studies show that a thematic synthesis approach would be better for a theory-based qualitative review (Campbell et al., 2014; Thomas & Harden, 2008). Although thematic synthesis is a more time-consuming and exhausting process, it is the most rewarding experience that enables the researchers to gather rigorous data for theorizing and conceptualizing qualitative studies (Jones, 2004; Khan et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2016). In guiding the conduct of systematic literature reviews, Xiao and Watson (2017) note that thematic synthesis is much like meta-ethnography in which researchers use thematic analysis to extract themes from the literature. These themes are then grouped and combined into analytical themes. Researchers use a third-order construct for a theory-based systematic review to utilize these analytical themes to answer the research questions (Xiao & Watson, 2017, p. 101). It involves identifying key themes and translating and interpreting them into each other following the theoretical argument (Thompson, 2022; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007). Thus, extracting critical concepts for a theory-based systematic literature review is an exhaustive task for the researchers, yet promising to contribute to bridging the research gaps. For such an effort, we aim to explore the significance of interpersonal-constructivists' approach to emotion-based self theory by David Boyns (2006) through the sociology of emotions to understand transgender persons' everyday life experiences of self and emotions.

The sociology of emotions emerged as a sub-field of sociological inquiry in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Pioneer scholars such as Denzin (1985), Hochschild (1979, 1983) and Kemper (1978, 1981) brought a sociological focus on emotion, theorizing that emotions and cognition are inextricably entwined (Weed & Lovin, 2016). Over the past 50 years, researchers have shown the vital role of culture in shaping emotional experiences and expressions (Lutz & White, 1986; Thoits, 1989). The theoretical work in the sociology of emotions seeks to understand the role of emotions in people's everyday social lives at individual, group, and societal levels (Parkinson, 1996; Weed & Lovin, 2016). According to Denzin (1985), emotion is a deeply felt and lived experience that influences a person's consciousness and bodily sensations, creating a new and transformative reality. Meanwhile, the self, the feeling subject, constitutes the central reference upon which an emotion turns (Bericat, 2015, p. 3). Thus, the linkage of transgender people's emotions with the self has become a key focus of sociological theory.

In recent decades, gender identity and expression have been viewed as interconnected yet distinct aspects of an individual's gender. Gender identity refers to an internal sense of one's gender, which may or may not align with the gender assigned at birth (Coleman et al., 2022; Divan, 2013). On the other hand, gender expressions are outward displays of this identity through clothing, behavior, mannerisms, and pronouns (Holmes, 2019, p. 4). These expressions are socially constructed and culturally varied and often do not align with an individual's assigned sex at birth. Hence, gender identity is deeply personal and influences self-perception, self-feelings, values, beliefs, and overall self-identity. It intersects with sociocultural background, education, economic

status, race, ethnicity, and religion (Holmes, 2019). This suggests that the relationship between gender, emotions, and self is complex for transgender individuals who often defy societal expectations and norms based on their assigned gender roles.

We begin this article with the key questions and the study's significance. It then highlights the literature review that focuses on the importance of using an interpersonal-constructivist approach to emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) to understand transgender persons' self and emotions. This elaborates on the emotion-based self theory and its key theoretical principles proposed by David Boyns (2006). It leads to the theoretical conceptualization of the interpersonal-constructivist viewpoint with the help of key concepts: emotionally emergent self, emotions-performing self, and emotionally reflexive self. We further explain the rationale for employing the interpersonal-constructivist lens to study the emotion-based self of transgender people. We outline the methodology section with the systematic search process for literature, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and key characteristics of selected 18 studies to review based on transgender persons lived experiences. It also explains Thompson's (2022) thematic analysis and data interpretation steps for this systematic review.

We have synthesized the study findings to highlight the emerging experiences of transgender self-discovery and transition through their lives. It further demonstrates the performative lives of transgender people and their self-expression, along with reflecting on reflexive self and identity construction for transgender individuals. We have analyzed the influence of sociocultural factors on transgender self and emotions. Finally, this article discusses the interpersonal-constructivist's approach to an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006), which is experientially emerging, performative and reflexive through socialization and social interaction within a sociocultural context. We conclude that transgender studies and the sociology of emotions can benefit from this theory to fully capture the transgender persons' everyday life experience of emotions and self-expression.

1.1 Research Questions and Study Significance

We aim to systematically review the sociological importance of the interpersonal-constructivist approach to emotion-based self theory (Boyns, 2006) in understanding transgender individuals' emotions and self-experiences in daily life. Our research questions focus on the interpersonal-constructivist perspective of an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) in the sociology of emotions and its application to transgender individuals' experiences. We assume that emotions are vital in shaping identity and that there is a gap in exploring the interpersonal-constructivist understanding of an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) in this context. This theory offers valuable insights into self and emotion construction, which are shaped by cultural and societal factors. Moreover, we rationalize that transgender persons' emotional experiences are unique as their life challenges vary from cisgender people. This requires a specific framework with an interpersonal-constructivist viewpoint to an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006), providing a practical lens. More research on this intersection needs to be done, which makes our study important.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 What is the Emotion-Based Self?

According to David Boyns (2006), the emotion-based self is an embodiment of a person's sense of self and emotions, which is shaped by a combination of internal (biological and psychological) and external (structural and sociocultural) factors. Boyns (2006), in his emotion-based self-theory, theorizes the term "emotion-based self" as an outcome of the biological, cognitive, and social structural process, as well as constructed through cultural and situational evidence. This review article benefits from the concept of an emotion-based self to conceptualize the construction of the self and emotions among transgender people within a sociocultural environment.

2.2 Introduction to Key Theoretical Principles

Existing scholarship, using the symbolic interactionism perspective, postulates that the processes of self and emotions are primarily sociocultural and structural constructions (Robinson et al., 2006) as well as recognizes the involvement of certain biological and cognitive factors, such as the amygdala's role in regulating emotions (Hammond, 2006). David Boyns' theory of Emotion-Based Self (2006) provides a valuable framework for exploring the dimensions of emotions and self-construction (Stets & Turner, 2006). This theory uses positivist and constructivist methods to study the intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships of emotions and the self. It has four tenets, as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Key Principles of Emotion-Based Self Theory (Boyns, 2006)

Tenets	Description
Intrapersonal-Positivist	It posits that fundamental emotional processes are evolutionarily innate (Turner, 2014b) and form the basis for cognitive processes, memory, and decision-making (Damasio, 1996). It postulates that emotions have a biological basis, and these innate processes motivate physical expression.
Interpersonal-Positivist	It proposes that human emotions emerge from the structure of social situations, such as status, power, and identity, along with sociological factors like social interaction and socialization (Kemper, 2006, 2014; Stets, 2006). Here, emotions are seen as social facts derived from social structural conditions.
Intrapersonal-Constructivist	It investigates emotions as lived experiences through phenomenological approaches while emphasizing cognitive appraisals in creating and managing emotional states (Denzin, 1985; Mead, 1934). Thus, emotions are organized concerning cognitive assessments and the individual's interpretive engagement with their environment and themselves.
Interpersonal-Constructivist	This dimension conceptualizes emotions as outcomes of social interaction within a culturally predefined framework (Peterson, 2006). Therefore, emotions and their expressions are subject to cultural variation (Illouz et al., 2014), and self-feelings are constructed through reflexive engagement with emotion cultures (Goffman, 1959; Hochschild, 1979).

Boyns' (2006) theory establishes the multi-dimensional nature of an emotion-based self, including the biological basis of self-identified feelings and emotional regulation through the limbic system. Boyns argues that self and emotion are emergent properties of social situations and interpersonal phenomena shaped by sociological factors, such as socialization and social interaction. He integrates social constructivist and phenomenological approaches to understand that emotions and self cannot be separated from an individual's interpretation of their environment and internal self-talk. Boyns' theory (2006) conceptualizes emotions and self as socially flexible, culturally fluid, and products of complex social interactions. The interpersonal-constructivist approach views the emotion-based self as culturally specific and a product of social interaction, which is ever-emerging, culturally performative, and engaged in self-reflexive processes.

2.3 Conceptualization of Interpersonal-Constructivist Approach to Emotion-Based Self

This lens captures humans as social and interpretive beings who continuously create meaning during interactions (Appelrouth & Edles, 2021, p. 1013). The interpersonal-constructivist perspective to emotion-based self theory (2006) draws on Mead's (1934) ideas to highlight that self and emotions are shaped through social processes in which language plays a central role. Further, Cooley's Looking-Glass Self theory (1902) emphasizes that our self-feelings develop through others' perceptions and judgments (Longo, 2022, p. 118). Boyns (2006) extends these ideas to suggest that self and emotions are socially malleable and evolve through interaction and self-reflection. Thus, the emotion-based self emerges from ongoing social engagement and societal judgments. The interpersonal-constructivist framework (Boys, 2006) is further conceptualized through the key concepts of the emotionally emergent self, emotions-performing self, and emotionally reflexive self to understand transgender individuals' emotions and self-experiences, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Conceptualization of the Emotionally Emergent, Emotions-Performing, and Emotionally Reflexive Self

Concept (s)	Description
Emotionally Emergent Self	Mead's theory of emergence (1934) explains that the self and emotions develop through social interaction and adapt to changing sociocultural conditions. This concept views emotions and selves as socially interdependent and continuously evolving (McCarthy, 1989). It can be used to understand how transgender individuals adjust their emotions and self-experiences in daily life, often filtering emotions to navigate social interactions and construct their performative emotion-based self.
Emotions Performing Self	Goffman's dramaturgy (1959) describes individuals as actors performing social roles in everyday interactions. Emotions are managed according to cultural norms and scripts to create public impressions and avoid embarrassment (Goffman, 1963). Hochschild's concept of emotion work (1983) suggests to manage emotions through surface acting or deep acting to align with cultural expectations. It helps to explore how transgender individuals cope up

	with emotions and pass-through societal judgments while expressing their emotions and selves.
Emotionally Reflexive Self	Social Constructivists (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) highlight the role of reflexive thoughts that shape the emotional self upon interacting with significant others. They assumed that emotions and cognition are intertwined, and self-talk is core to maintain self-conception and self-feelings in everyday life (Denzin, 1985). This concept proposes that transgender individuals engage in self-talk as a coping mechanism to manage societal judgments and interruptions in their self-conceptions and feelings. It can capture how transgender individuals reflect on their experiences and develop their reflexive emotional selves.

2.4 Rationale of Using Interpersonal-Constructivist Approach to Emotion-Based Self

We employ the interpersonal-constructivist standpoint to explore how cultural variation affects the emotions and self-experiences of transgender individuals. This lens permits us to capture the in-depth narratives of self and emotions of transgender people through this systematic literature review, as they face more complexities than cisgender people.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Literature Search

The systematic qualitative review was prepared thoroughly with the help of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (PRISMA) framework by Moher et al. (2009). This systematic literature search was completed with three peer-reviewed databases: SPRINGER LINK, SCOPUS, and JSTORE. Reference lists and Google Scholar were used to include grey literature that was inaccessible through databases (Tariq et al., 2021). The initial search resulted in 2084 sample studies (SPRINGER LINK = I79, SCOPUS= 974, JSTORE = 930, grey literature=1). The following specific keywords applying the Boolean characters 'AND' or 'OR' were used to enhance the search sensitivity: emotion culture OR emotion self, transgender persons AND everyday experience.

3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Searches were limited to the English language only. Studies were included in this systematic literature review if they fulfilled the following criteria: (i) focusing on transgender persons' self and emotional expressions; (ii) examining the transgender persons' everyday life experiences through the sociological lens; (iii) research focusing on cognitive and biological aspects of understanding emotion and self were explicitly not included; (iv) studies that do not include the transgender persons' everyday life experiences were also excluded; (v) conference papers and news articles were discarded. The PRISMA diagram in Figure 1 shows the systematic literature search and selection process results for the present thematic synthesis.

3.3. Data Extraction for Analytical Procedures

The primary reviewers used a predetermined checklist to extract data from the included studies. The following information was extracted: study design, sub-themes, participant profiles,

sample size, gender, and the origin of the survey. Figure 2 summarizes study characteristics extracted from the 18 included studies. Next, the analytical procedures were completed through open coding and thematic coding, which allowed the researchers to combine the extracted data to generate a thematic synthesis by following the steps of Thompson (2022).

3.4 Data Analysis

We used Thompson's (2022) guide for thematic analysis to analyze the data, which outlined two key steps: open coding to identify themes and thematic or axial coding to connect those themes, as illustrated in Figure 3. This detailed process required extensive attention to uncovering covert meanings contained in 18 selected studies based on the lived experiences of transgender individuals.

The open coding stage is a repeated process that usually involves two to three rounds of coding after attentively reviewing selected studies to categorize and develop ideas and concepts. In the second stage, themes are different from codes. Codes are specific and brief, while themes are more complex because they bring multiple initial codes to explain a phenomenon (Thompson, 2022). To develop themes, we looked at how different codes relate. Then, we sorted them based on how well they collectively explained the life experiences of transgender people in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). If a group of codes represents a phenomenon, it can be labeled as a theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The label should be an eye-catching phrase that is easy for readers to understand and remember while capturing the theme's essence (Campbell et al., 2021). Following Thompson's (2022) steps, we first generated several codes from selected studies. Then, we created themes based on theoretical ideas to apply the initial codes.

Figure 1. Systematic Search and Selection Process

Figure 2. Characteristics of the Studies Included in the Thematic-Synthesis
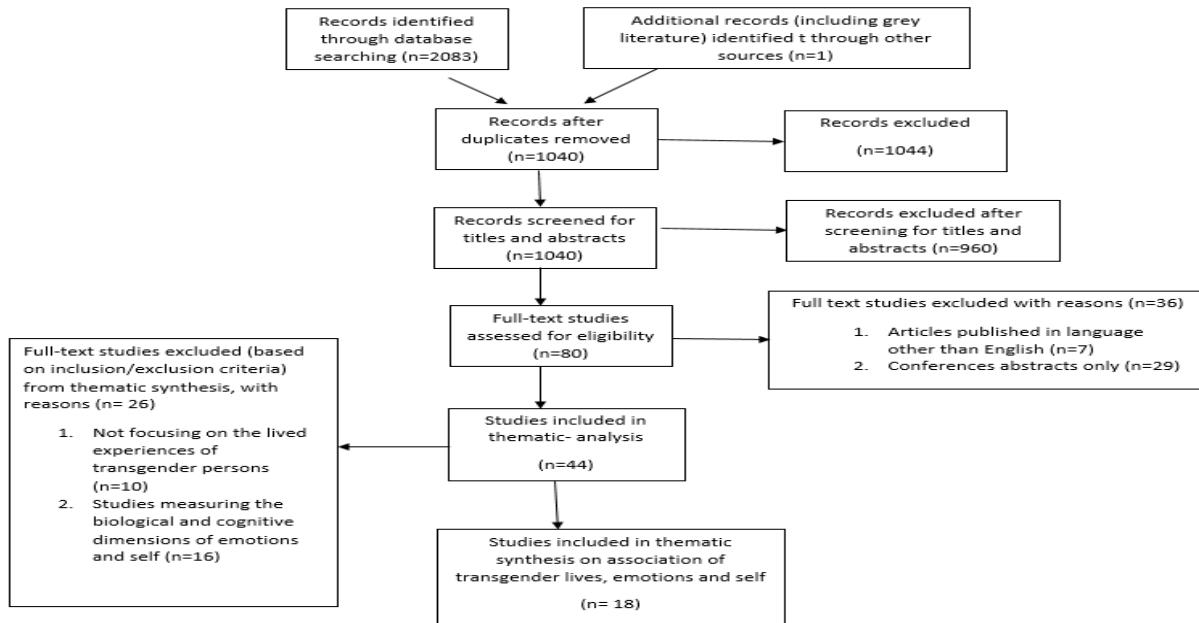
Study	Qualitative study design	Sub-themes	Participants	Sample size	Gender M/F/M to F/F to M/other	Country
Abreu et al. (2019)	A literature review	Parental reactions toward transgender children	NS	32 studies	NS	USA
Awan (2019)	Empirical	Transgender community culture, human rights,	Dancers, sex workers	30	0/0/**30**/0/0	Pakistan
Beemyan & Rankin (2011)	Empirical	Lived experiences	General	6456	0/0/**2527**/3025/904	USA
Brown et al. (2021)	Empirical	Transgender perspective on parental messages	Youth	8	0/0/**3**/3/2	USA
Coleman et al. (2022)	Empirical	Transgender healthcare guidelines	Healthcare professionals, academicians	120	NS	Globally
Cronn-Mills (2015)	Empirical	Understanding transgender self	General	8	0/0/**4**/3/1	USA
Hinchy (2019)	Theoretical	Colonial laws in India, transgender people	Archival analysis	NS	NS	India
Hines (2007)	Empirical	Transgender identities and experiences	Middle-class professionals	30	0/0/**4**/0/26	UK
Kugle (2014)	Empirical	Family, socio-cultural and religious challenges	Muslim transgender community activists	15	0/0/**1**/1/13	South Africa, USA, UK, Netherlands, Canada
Moen & Aune (2018)	Empirical	Self-understanding, belonging, coming out	General	6	0/0/**6**/0/0	Norway
Nanda (1999)	Empirical	Transgender community culture	Ethnography	NS	NS	India
Perkins (1983)	Empirical	Poverty, bullying	Drag queens	146	0/0/**146**/0/o	Australia
Saeed et al. (2017)	Empirical	Disclosure decision and socio-cultural factors	Employed	16	0/0/**16**/0/0	Pakistan
Schilt (2018)	Theoretical	Transgender studies, situating lives	NS	NS	NS	USA
Simpson (2018)	Secondary data	Family role in transition for transgender	General	20	0/0/**20**/0/0	USA
Strubel & Goswami (2022)	Empirical	Gender identity, clothing and self-concepts	General	406	55/150/100/**101**/0/0/0	USA
Stryker (2008)	Theoretical	Transgender identities and lives	Archival analysis	NS	NS	USA
Vadevelu & Arunberkfa (2022)	Empirical	Emotions, coping mechanisms, social support, transgender adolescents and adults	Senior and tertiary-level students	30	0/0/**30**/0/0	Thailand

NS stands for not specific.

Figure 3. Process of Open Coding and Thematic Coding

Study	Open Coding	Narratives
Moen and Aune (2018)	Self understanding	Study participants knew about their feminine gender identity since childhood.
Kugle (2018)	Societal pressures	Study participants knew about their feminine gender identity but carry the pressure to marry.

Study	Axial Coding	Narratives
Moen and Aune (2018)	Self-understanding and shame delays ~ transgender self-discovery and transition	They felt shame and hide their transgender identity that delays the transition.
Kugle (2018)	Societal pressures and secrecy delays ~ transgender self-discovery and transition	They felt trapped in social pressure and hide their transgender identity.

4.0 Findings and Results

This review provides an in-depth analysis of 18 studies. It is organized into the following themes: (i) emerging experiences of self-discovery and transition, (ii) performative lives of transgender identity and self-expression, (iii) reflexive self and identity construction for transgender people, and (iv) influence of sociocultural factors on transgender emotions and self.

4.1 Emerging Experiences of Transgender Self-Discovery and Transition

It presents the relationship between the emerging experiences of transgender persons' self-discovery and transition processes throughout their lives. This aims to show the importance of studying the self and emotions of transgender people. Further, the thematic synthesis will help engage the theoretical concept of the emotionally emergent self-extracted from the interpersonal-constructivist view of the emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006; McCarthy, 1989) to understand the everyday life experiences of transgender self-discovery and transition.

In the mid-20th century, Western literature predominantly pathologized, objectified, and fetishized transgender individuals by employing reductionist perspectives that did not fully capture

their everyday life experiences and issues (Beemyan & Rankin, 2011). However, recent scholarship in sociology draws our attention to Kristen Schilt (2018), who emphasizes the importance of situating transgender lives within sociology by employing Raewyn Connell's (1987) concept of social embodiment that highlighted the need to view transgender individuals as historically and culturally situated subjects, which necessitates a sociological inquiry to comprehend their everyday experiences. Further, Schilt (2018) notes a scarcity of research focused on transgender individuals' lives and experiences. She highlights the pioneering work of Australian sociologist Roberta Perkins (1983), who has examined how transgender people identifying as feminine struggle with poverty and public bullying in their daily lives. Perkins (1983), being transgender herself, explores the complex experiences of individuals in the transgender community, who are often stigmatized and perceived as mentally ill, disgusting, deviant, weird, and immoral in Australia. Hence, Schilt (2018) proposes a roadmap for empirical sociology in transgender studies and emphasizes the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of transgender identities and lives, considering historical, social, and individual factors in the framework of sociocultural and legal constraints worldwide.

By the early 21st century, global efforts recognized the validity of transgender identities. In May 2010, the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) stated that gender expressions not aligned with one's birth-assigned sex are common and should not be viewed as a pathology (Coleman et al., 2022, p. 5). On May 25, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) reclassified gender identity disorder (GID) as 'gender incongruence' in its diagnostic guidelines (Human Rights Watch, 2019). These changes have slightly improved the lives of transgender individuals worldwide. This encourages the global community to destigmatize transgender identities through accepting human diversity (Coleman et al., 2022). It further prompts scholarly discussions about the psychological and emotional experiences of transgender people in various cultural contexts

The global recognition inspires researchers to explore the daily struggles of transgender individuals in their self-exploration and transitioning processes. Moen and Aune's (2018) analyze the narratives of Norwegian transgender persons, which reveals an early awareness of feminine self-feelings that are expressed through feminine clothing and pronouns. However, many experience shame due to sociocultural and religious values, which delay the acceptance of their true identity (Moen & Aune, 2018). Kugle's (2014) study on Muslim gender non-conforming activists shows that societal pressures, such as the expectation to marry to preserve family honor, cause confusion and hinder self-discovery. Both studies emphasize the importance of sociological and emotional aspects in self-transitioning, such as social pressures and shame, which impact transgender individuals' everyday emerging life experiences of self and emotions (McCarthy, 1989).

Simpson's study (2018) demonstrates how the familial expectations of gender-based roles influence the self-transitioning process of transgender individuals. This includes the roles of son, husband, and father, particularly for transgender women. Abreu's (2019) review analysis shows that many transgender people face stigmatization and non-supportive messages from their families due to performing gender non-conforming roles. Brown et al. (2021) illustrates that transgender people have more complicated relationships with their parents as compared to cisgender people, which impacts their self-discovery and transitioning decisions. It shows that many transgender individuals remain silent and delay their self-transitioning process due to the fear of family rejection and homelessness (Simpson, 2018; Brwon et al., 2021). Thus, the family expectations of cisnormativity impact the evolving nature of the emotional self of transgender people.

Studies have shown that multiple factors influence transgender identity, including age, sociocultural background, class, race, religion, geography, and the timing of self-transitioning. Hines (2007) has found that in the United Kingdom, transgender individuals transition at different life stages, with family and friend support being essential for satisfaction during this process. On the other hand, lack of support often leads to fractured family relationships. Similarly, Vadevelu and Arunberkfa (2022) have examined transgender adolescents in Thailand. They argue that family acceptance alone is insufficient for well-being. It requires adequate support, including healthcare, financial help, spiritual guidance, education, and community networks. They conclude that those study participants facing rejection and social exclusion experience severe depression and anxiety (Vadevelu & Arunberkfa, 2022). The review highlights the need for detailed investigations into the emerging emotions and self-expressions of transgender individuals during self-transitioning and identity construction.

This thematic synthesis indicates the importance of using an interpersonal-constructivist viewpoint on the emotionally emergent self (Boyns, 2006; McCarthy, 1989) to examine the everyday experiences of transgender individuals. It advocates for sociologists to explore the daily life experiences of emotions and the self, as Adler et al. (1987) suggest that everyday sociology can study social phenomena and provide a theoretical and methodological framework. They describe everyday life sociology as an "emporium of experiences" where emotions are embedded in natural social interactions, helping to understand social actions, self-feelings, emotional expressions, perceptions, and associated meanings (Adler et al., 1987; Jacobsen, 2019, p. 1). Furthermore, Denzin (1985) proposes that the phenomenological study of emotionality is central to lived experiences, emerging through disrupted and interpreted social actions, during which individuals engage in self-talk to make sense of their everyday life experiences. According to Boyns (2006), an emerging emotion body exists within social interactions and emotional inter-subjectivity (McCarthy, 1989) as a reference point for experiencing and negotiating both social and cognitive dimensions of emotion and self. The following section will discuss how transgender individuals perform and express emotions in specific sociocultural contexts.

4.2 Performative Lives of Transgender People and Self-Expression

This section explores the performative life experiences of transgender people and their self-expression in daily life. Gender identity substantially shapes self-concepts and emotional expressions (Schrock & Knop, 2014), which is often taken for granted by cisgender individuals who may not recognize the challenges faced by transgender people. It begins in the early socialization stages. Families and schools use gender policing as an instrument to monitor and enforce gender roles, where transgender children may face mocking, teasing, and bullying for non-conforming gendered behaviors (Cronn-Mills, 2015; Hines, 2007). Studies show that prescribed gender roles may create a conflict among transgender children between their internal self-concepts and socially expected emotional performances. This tension can continue into adulthood and puberty as they explore their identities and emotional expressions through various means, such as performing arts, hairstyles, pronouns, and behaviors (Cronn-Mills, 2015; Kugle, 2014). During this stage, they mediate between their internal experiences of self and emotions and the societal expectations of gender roles.

Researchers reveal that the struggle with gender identity often begins between ages four and five among many transgender individuals, who face disapproval for gender non-conforming behaviors like cross-dressing (Cronn-Mills, 2015; Hines, 2007; Stryker, 2008). In Beemyan and Rankin's (2011) study, 97 percent of transgender participants fully recognize their gender differences by the end of their teenage years in the United States (US). Many transgender

individuals, especially those with a feminine identity, perform rigid masculine roles, such as joining the military, to conform to societal expectations and avoid expressing their genuine emotions and identities. Those in their late forties and fifties, born in the 1940s, often married and had children due to the lack of transgender recognition until the 1980s (Beemyan & Rankin, 2011). They began disclosing their feminine identities to their partners later in life, challenging gender norms through feminine clothing, makeup, female pronouns, and interactions with other transgender people. The review argues that most transgender people suppress their genuine emotions and self-identities to conform to societal gender norms.

Studies show that gender identity and self-feelings are closely linked to dressing behaviors. For instance, Strubel and Goswami (2022) have found that wearing feminine clothing affirms the gender identity of transgender individuals who identify as women, as it expresses their feminine self-concepts. However, societal pressures, fear of stigmatization, and fixed gender roles often prevent them from dressing authentically. As a result, transgender individuals may use gender-neutral clothing, different hairstyles, pronouns, performing arts, and mannerisms to express their true selves (Strubel & Goswami, 2022). Further, Awan's study (2019) reveals that transgender individuals secretly wore their sisters' clothes for happiness during childhood but had to perform masculine roles to avoid stigmatization and protect family honor in Pakistan. These findings suggest that transgender individuals have to navigate through socially coded gender roles and dress behaviors, which requires extensive emotional performance and management. The thematic synthesis advocates a comprehensive analysis of the emotions and self-expressions of transgender individuals to understand their self-concepts and gender identity within their sociocultural contexts.

This review emphasizes the importance of using the interpersonal-constructivist concept of emotion-performing self (Boyns, 2006) to understand how transgender individuals manage daily life experiences of socially performed emotions and self-expression. It encourages sociologists to analyze the cultural expectations that compel transgender people to conceal authentic emotions and conform to cultural norms of self-presentation. According to dramaturgical analysis, any deviation in performance may lead to social stigma or embarrassment in daily life (Goffman, 1959). Such societal scrutiny compels individuals to manage their emotions on the front stage according to established feeling rules (Hochschild, 1983), aiming to leave a favorable impression (Goffman, 1959). Ultimately, the emotions-performing self (Boyns, 2006) is shaped by normative constructs of emotional culture and feeling rules, which dictate culturally appropriate displays of self and emotions (Hochschild, 1983). The following section will highlight the self-reflexivity and identity construction processes for transgender individuals.

4.3 Reflexive Self and Identity Construction of Transgender Persons

Emotions are central to everyday social interactions. They influence individuals' behavior and maintain social order. Literature shows that emotions contribute to social inequality and stratification through social interactions (Fields et al., 2006; Turner, 2014a). Therefore, individuals struggle to go through self-reflexivity while engaging in emotional work to conform to the culturally defined feeling rules for their self-management (Hochschild, 1983). Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical analysis also highlights that people constantly negotiate with the meaning and interpretation of their experienced emotions following the cultural norms to create desired impressions during social interaction. This is especially true for the people who experience sheer social stratification and inequality, such as transgender persons, who make conscious efforts to avoid any slips in their emotions and self-performances that may bring embarrassment, guilt, shame or stigma due to their androgynous persona. Hence, self-reflexivity is inevitable for

emotional self-construction during social interaction.

Studies show that self-introspection and constant negotiation may contribute to transgender identity formation in various sociocultural contexts (Illouz et al., 2014; Peterson, 2006). For instance, Beemyan and Rankin (2011) observed that their transgender study participants in their late fifties who were born in the 1940s were confused and lived in self-denial initially about their gender identity. This was due to the lack of social interaction with other transgender people, the absence of transgender support groups, and appropriate language to describe transgender identities in the US. Therefore, two-thirds of the study participants were bewildered until they interacted with other transgender persons through social media interaction after 1980. However, Saeed et al. (2017) note that transgender individuals in Pakistan have delayed their process of self-disclosure and social interaction with other transgender persons due to the fear of family rejection and social stigmatization. This analysis shows that self-reflexivity and the process of identity construction based on situational and cultural context go hand in hand with social interaction.

Theoretical underpinnings explain that self-reflexivity is essential for developing an emotional self-identity which arises through social interactions (Burkitt, 2012). Charles Horton Cooley (1902) presents the three stages of self-development to explain how individuals negotiate between self and emotions in social interactions. He elucidates in his theory of Looking Glass Self that we process through "the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance, and [develop] some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification" (Cooley, 1902, p. 211). Moreover, George Herbert Mead (1934) emphasizes the role of significant others and self-talk in enabling individuals to adopt reflexive role-taking emotions. Fields et al. (2006) also highlight that these reflexive role-taking emotions enhance self-control and social control. Transgender persons construct their emotion-based selves with societal perception, cultural norms and self-interpretation. Therefore, self and emotions are socially malleable and emerge through time and situations. Thus, the emotion-based self is a product of social interaction, continuously engaged in meaning-making and reflecting upon societal judgements (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Peterson, 2006). The following analysis will explore sociocultural factors determining transgender persons' self and emotions.

4.4 Influence of Sociocultural Factors on Transgender Emotions and Self

Scholarly discussion is needed to evaluate the sociocultural, structural, and legal changes that can shape emotions. One such attempt is by Sara Ahmed (2014), who offers a framework of queer emotions in the *Cultural Politics of Emotions.* She argues that emotions are political and can be used to challenge and transform cultural norms and expectations. She further asserts that hegemonic powers, including colonization, affect and shape the emotional experiences of marginalized groups (Ahmed, 2014). Her insights are instrumental in analyzing how emotions were used during the British colonization of the Indian subcontinent and continue to shape the post-colonial gender dynamics of South Asia. In her seminal study, *Governing Gender and Sexuality in Colonial India,* Jessica Hinchy (2019) notes the British emotional outrage through morality laws, such as the Criminal Tribes Act 1871 and the Dramatic Performance Act 1876 that caused a *hijra*[1] panic and hate campaign towards gender diverse people and labeled them sexually deviant and immoral in South Asia. Thus, it shows that emotions are political and could be utilized in sociocultural and structural transformation.

This thematic review observes that the institutional and cultural aspects (Illouz et al., 2014) have affected the social interaction and everyday life experiences of self and the emotions of

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[1] Nomenclature for a transgender persons in Indian sub-continent which is often considered as derogatory (Awan, 2019; Hinchy, 2019; Saeed et al., 2017).

transgender individuals. Beemyan and Rankin (2011) conducted a comparative analysis of the lived experiences of transgender people in the US. It reveals that the older generation often remains hidden, isolated, and in constant emotional distress due to the lack of interactive transgender community networks that could support their self-expressions and emotional experiences. The younger generation of transgender people who were born in the 1980s and after have benefited from social media interaction, the emergence of relevant linguistic terms, and transgender rights movements in the US. These movements have brought a cultural shift and enabled them to connect globally with other transgender individuals to share their authentic gender identities and emotional experiences (Beemyan & Rankin, 2011). On the other hand, the anthropological and historical studies provide evidence of the vital role of the centuries-old *guru-chela*[2] culture in South Asia. This culture offers a supportive community network for the transgender individuals known as "neither man nor a woman", who have lived on the margins of society since antiquity (Hinchy, 2019; Nanda, 1999, p. 13).

The interpersonal-constructivist view of the emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) posits that the emotional self is continuously evolving, performative and reflexive in daily interactions. It is constructed by the sociocultural environment and influenced by structural and cultural transformations. We can better understand how emotions and selves can be incessantly shaped and reshaped within specific sociocultural contexts by integrating the theoretical concept of the emotion-based self with the lived experiences of transgender individuals. The following discussion highlights the ongoing process of the fundamental concepts of the interpersonal-constructivist perspective of an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

This article offers an in-depth understanding of the interpersonal-constructivist viewpoint of an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006). It proposes that an emotional self is experientially emerging, performative and reflexive through socialization and social interaction within a sociocultural context
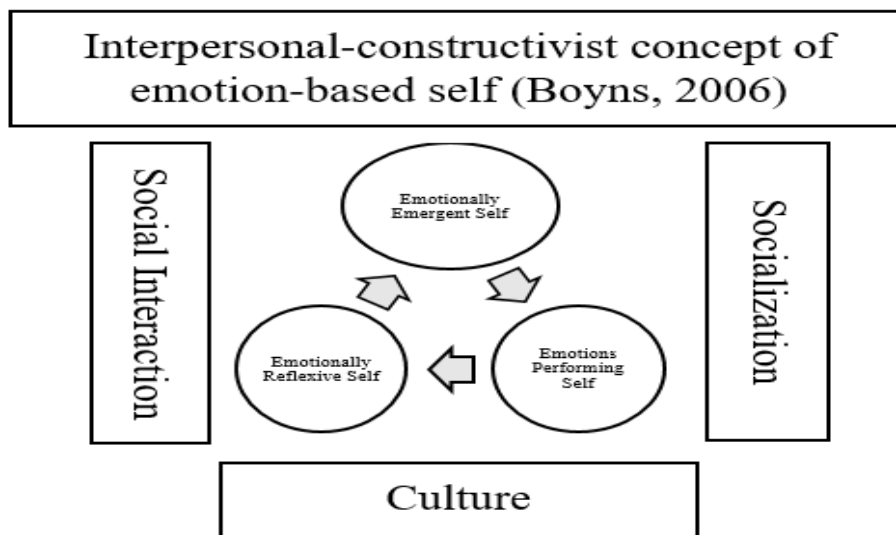
Figure 4.

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[2] Mentor-disciple (Nanda, 2019).

Interpersonal-Constructivist Approach to Emotion-Based Self

The interpersonal-constructivist concept of emotionally emergent self (Boyns, 2006; McCarthy, 1989) allows us to investigate the complexities attached to the everyday emerging experiences of emotions and self-experiences of transgender persons. We discussed that transgender individuals undergo the self-discovery and transitioning process and often experience shifts in how they perceive themselves emotionally. The concept of emotionally emergent self permits exploring these emotional changes, which can provide valuable insights into the evolving nature of transgender identity. This systematic thematic review shows that social and cultural aspects could shape the emotionally emergent self, including societal norms, familial expectations, and community support (Boyns, 2006). So, transgender individuals may experience a range of emotions, including fear, shame, joy, and sadness, as they go through external influences of sociocultural expectations to explore their self-identity in transitioning time. Therefore, the interpersonal-constructivist approach to an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) has examined the interplay between these emotions and cultural expectations, providing rich insights into the broader social context of transgender self-discovery and transition. It proposes that adopting one's emotionally emergent self can be important for healing and personal growth during the transition process that many transgender persons may experience.

The emotionally emergent self develops with cultural norms and values through socialization and interaction (Boyns, 2006; Hochschild, 1983). The review analysis shows that transgender individuals navigate through dramatic lives to express their emotions and to construct a self-identity within a sociocultural context, such as in West and South Asia. They have to conform to the rigid gender roles to perform and negotiate with the sociocultural norms that contradict their authentic self and emotions. The interpersonal-constructivist concept of emotions-performing self (Boyns, 2006) enables individuals to manipulate gender roles through the dramaturgical lens of self-management (Goffman, 1959) and emotion management through emotion work (Hochschild, 1983). This discussion shows that transgender individuals undergo emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983) to hide their authentic selves and emotions due to the pervasive social pressures and fear of the stigmatization that may take an emotional toll, which requires a comprehensive understanding of transgender persons' emotions and self-experiences.

This discussion shows that self-reflexivity contributes to the processes of transgender identity formation in various sociocultural contexts and life stages. For instance, transgender individuals remain confused and bewildered due to the lack of support groups and language to associate with their experiences before the 1980's in the US (Beemyan & Rankin, 2011). The interpersonal-constructivist understanding of the emotionally reflexive self (Boyns, 2006) emphasizes the role of reflexive thoughts in shaping an emerging emotional self during social interaction, as maintaining self-conception and self-feelings requires language and self-talk (Mead, 1934). This concept explores how transgender individuals reflect on their everyday evolving experiences to develop their reflexive emotional selves. It can further learn how transgender individuals engage in self-talk as a coping mechanism to manage societal judgments and

interpretations to shape their self-conceptions and feelings (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934).

5.1 Conclusion

This theory-based qualitative thematic review contends that everyday life sociology provides a useful theoretical lens through which to study the emotional experiences of transgender persons' lives. It further argues that the sociology of emotions can benefit from studying transgender persons lived experiences of emotions and processes of self-construction. We aimed to highlight the importance of the interpersonal-constructivist approach to the emotion-based self theory proposed by David Boyns (2006) and its implications for studying transgender persons' everyday life experiences. We employed open and axial coding methods to prepare a thematic synthesis for our 18 selected studies (see Figure 2). We identified four key themes for the review analysis to highlight the daily emerging experiences of self-discovery and transition, performative lives of transgender identity and self-expressions, reflexive self and identity construction of transgender people, and the influence of sociocultural factors on transgender emotions and self. It offered a great deal of employing the interpersonal-constructivist lens of an emotion-based self (Boyns, 2006) (see Figure 4) to analyze the shifts in the emotional self of transgender individuals who may experience a range of emotions, including fear, shame, joy, and sadness, as they navigate and explore their self-identity and transitioning stages through the process of socialization and social interaction. This process involves how transgender individuals learn and internalize societal norms and values and interact with others in their social environment, which can significantly impact their emotional experiences.

The interpersonal-constructivist approach to the emotion-based self theory (Boyns, 2006) is a valuable framework that offers insights into the interplay between emotions, self-concepts, and social interactions, thereby enhancing our understanding of human behavior. Researchers can better cognize how transgender and non-binary individuals globally negotiate their selves in various sociocultural contexts by recognizing emotions as central to lived experiences and socially constructed realities. They can develop an emotionally aware understanding of human behavior and adopt empathy and inclusivity in research practices. This awareness creates a more empathetic society with emotionally informed policies where individuals feel validated in their emotional experiences. We propose more sociological, gender and queer studies to incorporate this theory to address social issues, promote mental well-being, and support marginalized communities. The interpersonal-constructivist perspective of the emotion-based self theory (Boyns, 2006) emphasizes the importance of cultural variations and social interaction in shaping transgender individuals' emotions and self-experiences. It guides the development of interventions and policies to prioritize emotional health of marginalized groups that can offer hope for a more compassionate and humane society.

Sadia Jamil: Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

Imran Sabir: Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest in this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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