**Name: Vidisha Gummadi**
**Id: 1588713**

# Reflection Paper on Navigating the Heteronormitivity of the Engineering Workplace

The Lecture series, the reading and the experiences shared during the class gave me worldview on how workplace norms are imposed over the LGBTQ+ identifying individuals. It is a known fact that engineering differences of women and racial/ethical minorities re main unstudied in detail. From the reading, I understood how additional work burdens are imposed accompanied by academic and social isolation, making engineering school a hostile place for the LGBTQ individuals.

Many LGBTQ+ do not report their discomfort, discrimination and negative comments because they feel that their issues will not be addressed and they also fear that in turn they might have to face humiliation for pointing out such sensitive matters. Cultural expectations and surface level innocuous question by the co-workers at a workplace may put these individuals under pressure and may push them more into the closet. The idea of coming out and identifying oneself as an individual from the LGBTQ community is dependent on various norms set by the society: where do you belong, the protocol that works there, the societal differences prevalent there. All the LGBTQ community including bisexual and gay individuals are stereotyped and there are cultural norms imposed by the 'Straight' society that dictate their lives.

The polarization of technical/social dualism is something new that I have learnt from the reading. It is the ideological separation of the experiences of the LGBTQ community at a workplace based on the type of concern they have raised. Lack of support and engagement of the LGBTQ community in the field of engineering leaves them under academic and social stress. I also learnt that the mapping of technical/social dualism to gender binary is consequential for the construction for heteronormativity. Racial stereotypes also play a vital role in understanding this dualism.

Engineering Workplaces should foster more and more practises to employ diverse workplace irrespective of their differences. Companies should create a LGBTQ friendly workplace in order to lend hands to help out the LGBTQ individuals to have job satisfaction and also to maintain positive relationships between co-workers and to be treated equal with every other person in the workplace. This discrimination should also be avoided in schools so as to stop the bullying of the sexually identifying individuals and create a safe place for them academically following the engineering norms. Educators must make sure to create a safe environment for the LGBTQ+ individuals.

After going through the experiences of the LGBTQ individuals stated in the reading, understanding the various norms imposed on these individuals as explained in the workshop by Ray Plaza, listening to the experiences from the students in the class I feel that more research is needed to understand heteronormativity and sexual prejudice operation over these individuals. I, personally feel that the LGBTQ individuals should be treated 'RESPECTABLE' in all walks of the society and human nature should be ready to accept any individual irrespective of the orientation. If I ever get a chance I would definitely try to create a safe and friendly environment to work with the LGBTQ community.