

## Abstract

This work is an examination of the issue of *gender identity* and *psychosexual identity*, their relationship, and the influence of these two components of identification on each other.

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between the development of *gender identity* and *psychosexual identity* in the situation of crossing the gender binary and to describe the development of *gender identity* of *non-binary* people growing up in the Polish cultural and linguistic context. The study involved people representing two groups: people whose *gender identity* remains outside binary gender categories (*non-binary*) and binary cisgender people having experience of relationship with people (non-binary or binary transgender) who decided to start the transition process during the relationship.

When designing the study, I was guided by three general research questions: How are the perception of gender (your own and your partner's) and changes in this perception related to the perception of your own psychosexual identity? How does the development of *non-binary gender identities* and *psychosexual identity* occur in people growing up in the Polish cultural and linguistic context?

I use individual in-depth interviews in this study, extended by a life history section.

One of the goals of the analysis was to examine the biographies of *non-binary* people in terms of common experiences at various stages of life. I wanted to look at the development of *non-binary identities*, common points and convergent key types of experiences. While analyzing the interviews, I observed several types of experiences related to the feeling and development of *gender identity* that appear at subsequent stages of life in most narratives of *non-binary* people, such as: time without social expectations related to gender, discovery of mismatch, early negative experiences related to the body and expression, not conforming to gender stereotypes in terms of appearance, conforming to gender stereotypes in terms of appearance, a breakthrough moment, discovering the terms of identity, freeing expression and conscious performativity.

People participating in the study represent different perspectives on understanding *non-binary identity*, relate this identification to their life experiences differently, and decide to adopt this identity for various reasons. The collected data allowed me to distinguish four groups into which I can divide people in terms of their understanding and experience of *non-binarity*. These are: gender nonconforming, philosophical understanding of gender, possible binary transgender, and non-binary non-binaries.

The vast majority of people participating in the study use terms to define their identity that are known and commonly used by people from the LGBTQ+ community. Although there are many possible terms used to describe *non-binary gender identity*, in my opinion, they can be divided into five main categories, ways of relating to sexuality. These are: 1) concepts relating to remaining outside gender categories, not feeling any gender (e.g. agender), 2) concepts emphasizing partial binary affiliation, remaining on the spectrum, but closer to one of the binary gender categories (e.g. demigirl, demiboy), 3) concepts drawing attention to the variability and dynamics of feeling gender (e.g. gender fluid), 4) concepts emphasizing remaining outside binary gender categories, but at the same time feeling gender (e.g. non-binary) and 5) various, individual concepts emphasizing the desire to move away from categories and labels.

The analysis of the biographies allowed me to distinguish several significant differences in the experiences related to the development of *psychosexual identity* or the approach to this aspect of their identification by *non-binary* people. These are: the time of recognition *psychosexual identity* (*psychosexual identity* that has always been known or discovered throughout life) and the importance

of psychosexuality as a component of identity (*psychosexual identity* as a less important aspect of identification or more important than gender identification).

According to *psychosexual identity* of *non-binary* participants four groups of experiences emerged among the identities declared by people on the day of the survey. These are: 1) people defining their *psychosexual identity* in umbrella, non-monosexual categories, allowing for a broad understanding of this aspect of their identification, without forcing them to indicate the specific gender of the people with whom the participants enter into relationships or in whom they are interested in romantic and erotic terms, 2 ) people who do not define their *psychosexual identity* at all, not finding the right concepts or believing that categories force them to fit into a given term, assign predetermined assumptions, entail stereotypes and expectations that they do not want to have to face foreheads, 3) asexual people and 4) people who, for various reasons, identify their *psychosexual identity* in binary categories.

This study also explores more broadly the issue of the meaning and understanding of *gender* and *orientation* categories, and the role of identity labels used by the studied groups. The importance of *psychosexual identity* and its transformation in the case of cisgender people who experienced the transition of their partner was widely discussed. The final chapter addresses the issue of in-depth, nuanced aspects of identity, the relationship between *gender* and *psychosexual identity*, and their mutual influences and transformations discussed in individual examples.