

Mental Health and Quality of Life of Transgender in Relation to Discrimination in Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

Current study was performed to explore the relationship of discrimination with mental health and quality of life among transgender population. The sample consist 120 transgender from Rajasthan. A snowball sampling technique was used to collect the data. The results show that 'Guru' (Leaders) were perceived more discrimination in comparison to their 'Chellas' (Students). It was also found that 'Guru' (Leaders) have poor mental health and quality of life in comparison to their 'Chellas' (Students). Discrimination was negatively related to mental health and quality of life.

Keywords: *Discrimination, Mental Health, Quality of Life, Transgender*

A growing body of evidence suggests that experiences with discrimination have implications for mental health and that these associations may vary by social status (Lee & Turney, 2012). Discrimination is consistently, positively associated with impaired mental health across a vast array of cross-sectional and longitudinal data and has been linked to multiple mental health outcomes, including depressive symptoms, psychological distress, anxiety, and psychiatric disorders (Paradies, 2006; Williams & Mohammed, 2009).

Transgender people are facing discrimination, harassment and violence throughout society, from their family growing up, in school, at work, by homeless shelters, by doctors, in emergency rooms, before judges, by landlords, and even police officers (GLAAD, 2011). Every day, transgenders and gender non-conforming people bear the brunt of social and economic marginalization due to discrimination based on their gender identity or expression. However, little is known about variation in the association between perceived discrimination and mental health across social status groups such as Transgender people- a socially marginalized and deprived group.

The problems being faced by the Transgender community have been brought to the notice of the Government in the recent past. In this regard, a meeting was organized by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment on 23rd August, 2013 to discuss the issues relating to

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Transgender community such as social stigma, discrimination, lack of education, public health care, employment opportunities, issue of various government documents, etc. The social response towards transgenders in India is seen very discriminatory and prejudiced in general.

Today, the term transgenders or in Indian notion 'Hijras' have a recorded history of more than 4,000 years. In India, the total population of transgenders is around 4.88 Lakh as per 2011 census but the majority of them are invisible in mainstream society.

Transgenders is the state of one's gender identity or gender expression which does not match with ones assigned sex (Kalra, 2012) and globally considered physically and psychologically ambivalent and because of ambivalence characteristics. They can encompass multiple labels or titles of people who do not fit the binary definitions of male or female. Some titles include transvestite, transsexual, cross-dresser, gender queer, non-gendered, and drag king/queen. Transgenders are pretty frequently made to stay at the edge of the society and are referred with derogatory labels like 'hijras' (Nanda, 1986; Bradford et al., 2013). The societal outlook, in addition to popularity of transgenders has been pretty specific in India than the western cultures. Ancient myths bestow them with unique powers to carry success and fertility. Yet, no matter this supposedly sanctioned region in Indian culture, they're subjected to many social adversities. They frequently face discrimination in education, housing, health, employment and respectable bureaucratic dealings (Kosenko et al., 2013; Abdullah et al., 2012). They are frequently required to generally tend to jobs under their highbrow capacity. Many generate profits from petty extortion, acting at ceremonies, thru begging and intercourse work (Kosenko et al., 2013; Moran et al., 2004).

Violence in opposition to transgenders, particularly closer to intercourse workers, is not unusual and takes place in quite a few settings (Witten & Eyler, 1999; Friedman et al., 2011). Many transgenders have faced abuse at some point of childhood, and the prices of sexual abuse has been pronounced to be better in transgenders than people with different gender orientations (Beattie et al., 2012). These destructive existence occasions are probable to have destructive mental effect on transgenders.

Moreover, get entry to fitness care offerings are pronounced to be extra hostile closer to transgenders, which may also bring about their fitness issues now no longer being addressed fairly (Sen Gupta & Singh, 1983). The World Health Organization (2004) defines the idea of intellectual fitness reputation as, "a country of wellness wherein the man or woman realizes his or her very own abilities, can address the regular stresses of existence, can paintings productively and fruitfully, and is capable of contribute to his or her community." (Allport, 1979) Sen Gupta and gave six indices of mentally healthful man or woman particularly, adjustment, emotional stability, intelligence, autonomy, security-insecurity, activity-degree. Mental fitness consequently entails a non-stop manner of adjustment thru most reliable use of one's possibilities in preference to a static situation. Mental fitness of police personnel can be encouraged via way of means of some of environmental elements together with sexual harassment, management style, worrying situation explanation, peer organization support, own circle of relatives influence, and accessibility of coping mechanism. Discrimination in well-known is classically described as a phenomenon that entails 'deny(ing) to man or woman or corporations of humans equality of remedy which they'll wish' (Chakrapani & Ebenezer, 2004). Recognized as a global enjoy, discrimination in phrases of gender and sexuality isn't any exception (Borrell et al., 2006).

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India isn't acknowledged for being a LGBTIQ- pleasant location at a macro degree, this is, in social arenas. There is little safety beneath the latest provision made via way of means of the Supreme Court of India discrimination on the idea of sexual orientation and gender identity. Though the 'Hijras' are tolerated via way of means of the Indian society. They aren't common and are discriminated in opposition to in diverse settings, first due to their transgenders reputation—their cross-dressing or female appearance— that's regularly ridiculed and second, due to their presumed occupation, intercourse paintings. Previous research continually pronounced the hyperlink among perceived discrimination and intellectual fitness, particularly extra man or woman stories of discrimination are related to negative intellectual fitness and intellectual diseases.

Discrimination turned into additionally pronounced to be related to many bodily fitness measures, along with excessive blood pressure, breathing problems (Stuber et al., 2003), self-rated fitness and continual fitness conditions. Mental fitness can be stricken by perceived discrimination extra than bodily fitness (Mustanski et al., 2010). Grant and others launched a complete examine on discrimination with 6,450 transgenders and gender non-conforming examine contributors for the National Centre for Transgenders Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Discrimination turned into determined to be pervasive in the course of the complete pattern. Respondents lived in severe poverty. A spectacular 41% of respondents pronounced trying suicide as compared to 1.6% of the overall populace, with prices growing for people who misplaced a activity because of bias (55%), have been harassed /bullied in school (51%), had low family income, or have been the sufferers of bodily assault (61%) or sexual assault (64%). Ninety percentage of transgenders have encountered a few shape of harassment or mistreatment at the activity. Respondents pronounced diverse types of direct housing discrimination. Almost 1/2 of the respondents (46%) pronounced being uncomfortable looking for police assistance. Nineteen percentage of the pattern pronounced being refused hospital therapy because of their transgenders or gender non-conforming reputation. It turned into determined that almost 10% of examine contributors met standards for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and approximately 15% met standards for fundamental despair. 30% of transgender also try to attempt suicide as well. Transgenders people are especially liable to intellectual fitness issues and mental misery. Regarding unique mental misery, studies has proven that transgenders people document better degrees of each tension and despair than the populace as a whole. Depression has been pronounced to have an effect on 16.6% of the entire populace, and blended tension issues have an effect on 28.8% of the US populace. Although the prices of despair, tension, and basic misery suggest above-common prices for the transgenders populace, there are most effective numerous research that take a look at capacity factors for those findings. Nuttbrock and others document that there's a big advantageous courting among gender-associated abuse and despair in transgenders women. The authors notice that social stressors and/or ostracism from friends can give an explanation for a massive quantity of the despair this is pronounced via way of means of the people of their examine (Pandey, 2018). Budge and others of their qualitative examine suggest that misery varies on the idea of numerous elements, along with the man or woman's transition manner, coping mechanisms used, and degree of social support. Although each of those research offer perception into feasible factors for contributing elements to transgenders people' misery, there is still a loss of generalizable statistics concerning the real manner through which people address and enjoy despair and tension.

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis

- 1) 'Guru' (Leaders) will have more discrimination in comparison to their 'Chellas' (Students).
- 2) 'Guru' (Leaders) will have poor mental health and quality of life in comparison to their 'Chellas' (Students).
- 3) Discrimination will negatively affect the mental health & quality of life of transgenders.

Sample

- The sample consists 120 transgenders (60 'Gurus' or leaders and 60 are the 'Chellas' or Student) belongs to Rajasthan. A snowball technique was used to collect the data. The age range of the respondents are 18 to 52 years with a mean scores of 36.4 years.

Tools Used

- **Discrimination:** The scale consists of 11 items indicating their experience of discrimination on five point rating scale (where '0' indicates no discrimination and '4' indicates maximum level of perceived discrimination). Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced each of 11 types of discrimination on a day-to-day basis. For each, respondents chose between 0 to 4 descriptors ("never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often" and "always"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of this self-developed scale is 0.798 on 11 items.
- **Mental Health:** The index consists of 25 items was the combinations of four measures which was adopted by researcher for this study. Hindi adaptation of PANAS scale (Pandey, Manoj Kumar), and self-developed items for anxiety, depression and stress were used for assessing mental health status of transgenders. Items were rated on a five point rating scale where respondents had to choose between 0 to 4 descriptors ("never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often" and "always"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of this index is 0.733 on 25 items.
- **Quality of Life (QoL):** Hindi adaptation of life satisfaction scale (Diener, E. et.al. 1985) and self-developed items were used for assessing perceived socio-economic-status and social acceptance by transgenders. Items were rated on a five point rating scale where respondents has chosen between 1 to 5 descriptors ("very less", "less", "neutral", "much" and "very much"). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of this scale is 0.814 on 22 items.

Statistical Analysis

The data obtained from this study was analyzed for testing the hypotheses and understand the patterns of relationships among the variables understudy. For which ANOVA, inter-correlations among variables and stepwise regression analysis were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was an attempt to understand the problems faced by transgenders in terms of psychological consequences of discrimination in their personal and professional domain of life. In other word, how these perceived discriminations are affecting their mental health and quality of life.

Differences in Perception of Discrimination

It was hypothesized that ‘Guru’ (Leaders) will have more perceived discrimination in comparison to their ‘Chellas’ (Students) and ‘Guru’ (Leaders) will have poor mental health and quality of life in comparison to their ‘Chellas’ (Students).

Table 1: One-way ANOVA for finding the significance of the mean difference between ‘Guru’ and ‘Chellas’ on perception of discrimination, mental health and quality of life

	Discrimination		Mental Health Status		Quality of life	
	G	C	G	C	G	C
N	60	60	60	60	60	60
M	3.95	2.65	19.77	15.75	12.09	13.82
SD	0.674	0.497	2.65	2.99	1.642	1.78
F	4.43**		5.32**		8.23**	

** $p < .01$ level

Higher scores on discrimination indicates higher level discrimination. Higher scores on Mental Health Status indicates higher level of negative affects, anxiety, depression, and stress. Higher scores on quality of life index indicates high level of quality of life.

The one-way ANOVA was computed for examining the significance of the differences of the mean scores

- a) ‘Guru’ (Leaders) on discrimination with mental health and quality of life in comparison to their ‘Chellas’ (Students). Results revealed that (a) ‘Guru’ (Leaders) were perceived more discrimination in comparison to their ‘Chellas’ (Students). Further, it was also found that (b) ‘Guru’ (Leaders) have perceived poor mental health (more negative affect, anxiety, depression and stress) and quality of life in comparison to their ‘Chellas’ (Students). Thus, the results support the hypothesis 1.
- b) ‘Guru’ (Leaders) were reported poor mental health related issues and quality of life because of they are now dependent on their ‘Chellas’ in terms of economic support, care, love and affection. Although, they are living in a group of same people but sometimes they are ignored by their ‘Chellas’ like an old tiger. They are just spending their time to seek a peaceful end of life.

Relationships between Discrimination with Mental Health Status and Quality of Life among Transgenders

It was hypothesized that discrimination will negatively affect the mental health & quality of life of transgender people.

Table 2: Coefficient of correlation between discrimination with mental health status and quality of life among transgenders.

	Mental Health Status Index	Quality of Life Index (QoL)
Discrimination	- 0.621**	-0.305**

** $p < 0.01$ level

On the basis of the results presented in Table-2 research can say that (a) discrimination is significantly negatively correlated with mental health and quality of life. The obtained results supports the true hypothesis 2.

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Further on the basis of this result, it can be said that discriminations in social and professional life are found responsible for creating more negative affect or feelings, anxiety, depression and stress among transgenders. It can also be said that discriminations in social and professional life are accountable for poor quality of life among transgenders.

Previous studies consistently reported the link between discrimination and mental health, namely more individual experiences of discrimination are associated with poor mental health and mental diseases. Discrimination was also reported to be associated with many physical health measures, including high blood pressure, respiratory problems, self-rated health and chronic health conditions. Mental health may be affected by perceived discrimination more than physical health.

Transgender people may find themselves living in constant fear of verbal harassment or physical violence. Grossman and D'Augelli studied the risk factor of suicide among transgenders youth. Factors significantly related to having made a suicide attempt included suicidal ideation related to transgenders identity; experiences of past parental verbal and physical abuse; and lower body esteem, especially weight satisfaction and thoughts of how others evaluate the youths' bodies.

CONCLUSION

It is suggested that society still need to address their problems on a large scale. Although, government and law have made some provisions on paper, but still it need to be implemented on ground level. People need to understand that they are the part of our society not a person to be hate, discriminate, harass and treat them in a different way. They can contribute our society or even our nation like us.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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