

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL REJECTION AND DEPRESSION AMONG TRANSGENDERS

Dr. Darsana BG*

ABSTRACT

Transgender is the biological state of one's gender identity that does not match one's biological gender. The transgender community in India is in a state of danger to mental and physical illness. Majority life situations involving social rejection are strongly connected with onset of depression. Social rejection arises when an individual is purposefully excluded from a social relationship or social interaction. Social exclusion or rejection exists to certain groups of people including transgenders that often leads them to social isolation and depression which is a serious mental illness that creates a person with depression and leave them feeling sad or hopeless. The aim of the present study was to find the relationship between Social rejection and Depression in transgenders. Sample of the study includes 40 transgenders registered in Kollam district of Kerala and the samples were selected using purposive random sampling technique. The results indicate that the sample of the study had moderate level of depression as per the standard interpretations of the scoring scales used for the study. The findings showed that there is a strong positive relationship between social rejection and depression among the sample population.

Keywords: *Transgender, Social Rejection, Depression, Social Issues, Social Isolation.*

Introduction

The transgender is the most well known and popular third type of sex in the modern world. Transgender face several social issues in the Indian cultural context, and leads to problems of the society. The presence of bad life circumstances predisposes this category of people to psychological morbidity. The transgender community in India is in a state of danger to mental and physical illness, in large part due to limited economic opportunities. Many transgender women are excluded from their families in India due to cultural beliefs. Even if they have an education, they struggle to find employment and often end up as sex workers and beggars (Olga Aaron, 2016). Transgender people may seek arrange of gender affirming surgeries, including procedures that are also performed in non-transgender populations. The community leaders will have to see that their ego does not come in the way of community empowerment. However they are not seen in the sense that society looks them and does not want to acknowledge their existence. Studies shows that they face problems in all spheres of life. But, the problems they face in healthcare services at times, leads them to an irreparable physical and mental damage and may even be life threaten.

Need and Significance of the Study

Transgender populations often experience high levels of both perceived and internalized social stigma, social isolation, discrimination and victimization. Extreme social exclusion and issues in rejection of transgender populations in different situation diminishes their self-esteem and participation in social events. These situations often lead to symptomatic psychological distress, depression, anxiety and other mental health difficulties among this population. In India poverty leads to livelihood difficulties among transgender persons, and prevent their access to sex-reassignment surgery for gender transition and other healthcare services. As a result 20% of the transgenders in India has rejected transgender-specific healthcare needs. Also economic marginalization has meant 20 to 30% of transgender populations in India engage in begging or sex work as their primary occupation.

* Principal, Badhiriya B.Ed. Training College, University of Kerala, Kerala, India.

Transgender people in India face a variety of issues. The members of this community have been excluded from effectively participating in social, cultural, economic, political life and decision-making processes. Reports of harassment, violence, and unfair treatment against transgender persons in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodation have been discussed in local media, from time to time. Civil laws in India are also abandoning the rights of Transgender community in several ways. The present study investigates the relationship between Social distance or rejection and Depression among transgenders of Kerala state. This study also focused the level of depression in transgenders. The finding of the study will reveal the extent of social distance and rejection suffered by the transgenders in Kerala. Transgender community can use this study to point out the impact of social distance and rejection by the society on their physical and emotional well-being. People can understand different forms of social distance practices, its effects on transgender community and make serious changes in its approach to transgender community.

Objectives

The present research is to investigate the relation between Social rejection and Depression in transgender. The specific objectives of the study can be narrated as under:

- To study the level of depression in transgender.
- To study the relationship between social rejection and depression in transgenders

Hypothesis

The hypothesis formulated for the current study based on the objectives is:

- There exists a high level of depression among transgenders.
- There exists no significant relationship between social rejection and depression among transgenders”

Sample

Thus the total sample size will be 40 (i.e. N=40)

Tests/ Tools for Data Collection

Social Distance Scale (Jacob, Thomas & Prathap, 2018): The Beck Depression Inventory-II (Beck, A.T., Steer, R.A., & Brown, G., 1996)

Procedure for Data Collection

At first, the project coordinator of Love and Arts Society (LAS) for transgenders at Vellayittambalam was contacted and obtained permission to conduct data collection. The data collection was conducted from 1st May 2019 to 31st May 2019 at the office of LAS Vellayittambalam in Kollam. The sample of transgenders were taken by purposive random sampling technique. Data from transgender people were assessed with the help of Social Distance Scale (Jacob, Thomas & Prathap, 2018) and Beck's Depression Inventory - II Scale. In the present study, the researcher decided to use Correlation analysis for establishing the relationship between Social rejection and Depression among transgenders.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Level of Depression among Transgenders using BDI

The level of depression among in is assessed with the help of the Beck Depression Inventory-II developed by Aaron T. Beck (1996). The scoring is done on the response sheet of each transgender and then tabulated. The data is then arranged based on the degree of severity of depression as found among the participants. The range-wise categorization of depression scores of the transgenders as reflected on the BDI-II is given in the Table 1

Table 1: The Range of Depression Scores and Numbers of Participants

Depression Category	Depression Range	No. of Participants	Percentage of Participants (%)
Minimal (0-9)	0 – 9	22	55
Mild (10-16)	10 - 16	11	28
Moderate (17-29)	17 - 29	5	13
Severe (30-63)	30 - 63	2	5

From the Table 1, the total of 40 samples, 55% have minimal level of depression, 28% have mild, 13% have moderate and 5% have severe level of depression. From the above results the presence of depression range can be shown in Table 2

Table 2: Presence of Depression among the Participants

Depression Category	Depression Range	No. of Participants	Percentage of Participants (%)
Total Participants (without depression)	0 - 9	22	55
Total Participants (with depression)	10 - 63	18	45

From Table 2, we can see that the total participants without depression or having minimal level of depression are 55% whereas the total participants with depression are 45%.

The first hypothesis stated that, "There exists a high level of depression among transgenders". The Beck Depression Inventory II (Aaron T. Beck, et al., 1996) was performed to find out the level of depression among the transgenders. In BDI-II, scores from 0 to 9 represent minimal depressive symptoms, scores of 10 to 16 indicate mild depression, scores of 17 to 29 indicate moderate depression, and scores of 30 to 63 indicate severe depression. From Table 5 we can understand that 22 out of 40 participants have minimal level of depression, 11 out of 40 have mild, 5 out of 40 have moderate and 2 out of 40 have severe level of depression. Altogether 18 out of 40 participants falls under the category of depressed people. The range of depression scores and numbers of participants in percentage has given in the Table 6. From a total 40 samples, 55% have minimal level of depression, 28% have mild, 13% have moderate and 5% have severe level of depression which is also clear from the Fig. 2 which includes graphical representation of category-wise classification of participants using depression scores. From Table 6, we can see that the total participants without depression or having minimal level of depression are 55% whereas the total participants with depression are 45%. It is clear that there is only a moderate level of depression exists among transgender (45%). Therefore we cannot say that there is a high level of depression among transgender. Hence the first hypothesis, "There exists a high level of depression among transgender has been rejected".

Relationship between Social Rejection and Depression among Transgenders

A comparison of the percentage of Social distance score and Depression score of the transgenders is given in the below table (Table. 8). Due to unavailability of a standardized tool to directly measure social rejection, the researcher has indirectly measured the level of rejection by using social distance scale. If higher the intimacy in social distance scale, it is considered as higher the level of social rejection. To make a better understanding of the variation of the score, three categories with the highest score is taken for comparison.

Table 3: Association between Depression Level and Rate of Rejection

Depression (%)	Social Rejection (%)	Correlation value(r)
28	95	0.992
13	65	
5	40	

The Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated from the obtained data sheet. The value obtained is 0.992. This indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between social rejection score and depression score. That means, as the social rejection score increases, the depression score also increases. A score of 0.992 indicates a strong correlation between the variables under study. Hence we can make out that there exists a strong positive correlation between social rejection and depression among the transgenders.

The second hypothesis stated that, "There exists no significant relationship between social rejection and depression among transgender". The Pearson correlation coefficient was performed to find out the relationship between social rejection and depression among transgenders. The depression score of participants who got high rejection scores were chosen for comparison. To examine the relationship between Social rejection and Depression among transgenders, the Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated from the obtained data sheet. The steps involved in the calculation are narrated in methodology part of this study. A score of 0.992 indicates a strong correlation between the variables under study. Hence we can make out that there exists a strong positive correlation between social rejection and depression among the transgenders. Hence, the hypothesis, "there exists no significant relationship between social 3rejection and depression among transgenders" has been rejected.

Conclusion

Transgender people are individuals of any age or sex whose appearance, personal characteristics, or behaviors differ from stereotypes about how men and women are 'supposed' to be. In this present study the investigator tries to find out the relationship between social rejection and depression in transgender and to find out the level of depression in transgender. From the results it is clear that transgenders belongs to a moderate level of depression and there exists strong positive correlation between social reject and depression in transgender. Thus it is the duty of every person to give a support to this group. Various theories of transgender have been proposed as explanations of the experience of transgender persons. In addition to the concepts of sex and gender, those of gender identity and gender expression are particularly important for such theories.

References

1. Antony, P., & Johny, J. C. (2017). Social Work Intervention for the Empowerment of Transgender Community in Kerala. (A. Paul, Ed.) *Journal of Social Work Education and Practice*, 01-09.
2. Arvind Narrain, Vinay Chandran, et al. 2016. Nothing to Fix – Medicalisation of Sexual And Gender Identity, pp. 231 – 332.
3. Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological bulletin*, 117(3), 497.
4. Baumeister, R. F., & Tice, D. M. (1990). Point-counterpoints: Anxiety and social exclusion. *Journal of social and clinical Psychology*, 9(2), 165-195.
5. Beck, A. T. (1967). *Depression: Clinical, experimental, and theoretical aspects*. New York: Harper & Row.
6. Myers, J.E., Sweeney, T.J., & Witmer, J.M. (2000). The wheel of wellness counseling for wellness: A holistic model for treatment planning. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 78, 251–266.
7. Nagarajan, R. (2014). First count of third gender in census: 4.9 lakh. *The Times of India*, 30.
8. Nanjundaswamy, S., and Gangadhar M.R., 2016. *Transgender Challenges in India*.

