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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY OF TRANSGENDERS IN RELATION TO PERCEIVED STRESS, LONELINESS, QUALITY OF LIFE AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY

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Abstract

Background : Transgenders are in a society that is unkind to them. Those who identify as transgender frequently encounter bias, prejudice, threats of physical damage, and violent acts. There is still a long way to go in ensuring that this population has access to adequate services and combating the prejudice and harassment.

Objective : The primary objective of this study was to study the relationship amongst perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life & emotional maturity of urban and rural transgenders (N=50).

Method :A sample of total 50 transgenders including 25 rural transgenders & 25 urban transgenders of the age range between 24-45 were taken. The tools used for collecting data were Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), UCLA Loneliness Scale, WHOQOL- BREF Scale and Emotional Maturity Scale.

Results : In results correlation is calculated and significant relationship can be found among rural and urban transgenders on Perceived stress, Loneliness, Quality of Life and Emotional maturity. No correlation was found between perceived stress and loneliness. Negatively strong correlation is found in perceived stress and quality of life ; loneliness and quality of life ; emotional maturity and quality of life. Positive strong correlation is found in perceived stress and emotional maturity ; loneliness and emotional maturity.

Conclusion :They have strong ability to handle emotions and right strategies of healing themselves. It also seems that to earn better livelihood they absorb their loneliness to reflect themselves more emotionally stable and independent to the society might be the reason behind their artificial strength and increasing growth which in total effect their social adjustment and personal integration adversely.

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Introduction:-

Trans people are more prone to experience mental health issues for a variety of reasons. Transgender patients have an increased prevalence for all psychiatric diagnoses queried, with major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder being the most common diagnoses (Wanta, 2019). Regrettably, most of transgenders have survive in a society that is unkind to transgender individuals. They frequently encounter bias, prejudice, discrimination, threats of physical damage, and violent acts rather than being accepted and valued for who they are. Not every

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transgender person has a network of allies they can rely on. In one study by Andersson (Anderssen, 2020), transgender students reported significantly more psychosocial burdens on life satisfaction, loneliness, mental health, and suicidal behavior. Transgender individuals experience a higher prevalence of mental health disorders than that of the general population or cisgender individuals, Federica (Pinna, 2022).

Compared to the general population, transgender people do have increased rates of sadness, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. Among LGBTQ transgender people experience the greatest prevalence of mental health issues. There is still a long way to go in ensuring that this population has access to adequate services and combating the prejudice, harassment, and social stigmatisation that they experience, (Gandy, 2021).

Statistics regarding the number of transgender people vary greatly, in particular because transgender has different definitions. Data on transgender people are gathered during censuses in some nations, including Canada. Less than 1% of people globally identify as transgender, with percentages ranging from 0.1% to 0.6%.

Review Of Literature:-

1. According to (Morton, 2008) research, 62% of respondents have encountered transphobic harassment from strangers in public settings who mistakenly thought they were trans: to a large part, the verbal harassment, while 40% had encountered transphobic threatening behaviour, 17% had suffered physical attack, and 4% had suffered sexual assault.
2. 120 transgender were interviewed by (Sivakami, et al. 2011) in Coimbatore ranging in age from 20 to 70 to learn about their socioeconomic situation and nutritional state. The study found that transgender people experienced mental stress as a result of social rejection and humiliation. Their eating habits were impacted by these mental health issues. In transgender people, diabetes, high blood pressure, and HIV/AIDS are the most prevalent illnesses.
3. According to (Sudha, M., 2015), 35% of participants reported experiencing severe transgender identification stigma, while 49% reported experiencing mild stigma. Just 44% of respondents stated having a high quality of life, while 35% reported having a very low quality of life. Participants' quality of life was influenced by whether or not their family members accepted them.
4. The socioeconomic status of hijras was examined by (Chettiar, 2015) in order to comprehend their problems, particularly those associated with their physical well-being and police harassment. About 40% of the hijras were from the upper lower class, and about half were from the middle class.

Rationale of the study

Since the beginning of time, transgender persons have been documented. Transgenders face high rates of psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and suicide risk. Further transgenders living outside of urban areas experience additional disparities compared to their urban counterparts, (Ralston, 2022). Since transgenders are regarded as the most disgraceful creature in this world, they are denied due to their status. The contribution of the study is important for understanding the pain and psychology of transgenders and aware others to include them in the mainstream society, (Pandey, 2018). Trans community face a long history of being stigmatised as mentally ill, social outcasts, and sexual predators. It is indicated that rural transgenders are more prone to experience mental health issues and encounter bias, prejudice, discrimination, threats of physical damage, and violent acts. One study done on urban transgenders show they have high quality of life, (Naskar, 2018).

The key aim of this study is to see the pattern of association regarding perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life and emotional maturity in rural and urban transgenders.

Objective:-

To study the relationship among perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life and emotional maturity among rural and urban transgenders.

Hypothesis

There will be significant relationship between perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life & emotional maturity of transgenders (N=50)

Methodology:-

Sample

Sample of 50 transgenders including 25 rural transgenders (living outside the towns and cities or on the outskirts) & 25 urban transgenders (human settlement with a high population density and infrastructure of built environment) are taken of the age group 24-45 years. A consent form was filled from participants before the administration of the questionnaire. Purposive random sampling method has been used for data collection.

Tools

Perceived Stress Scale

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein in 1983. It consists of 14 items scored on a 5-point rating scale. Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 13 are the positively stated items while items 1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12 and 14 are negatively stated items. PSS-14 scores are obtained by reversing the scores on the seven positive items, e.g., 0=4, 1=3, 2=2, etc., and then summing across all 14 items. Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 13 are the positively stated items.

Ucla Loneliness Scale

UCLA loneliness scale was developed by psychologist Daniel Russell in 1996. The UCLA Loneliness Scale is a 20-item scale having a 4-point rating scale. This is a 20-item scale intended to assess one's subjective emotions of social isolation and loneliness.

Whoqol-Bref Scale

The WHOQOL-BREF is a shorter version of the WHOQOL-100 developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and published in 1995. It comprises of 26 questions on a 1-5 likert scale covering four domains. It measures an individual's quality of life across four domains: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment. Each item is scored on a five-point scale, with higher scores indicating a better quality of life.

Emotional Maturity Scale

It has been developed in 1990 by Yashvir Singh and Mahesh Bhargava. It contains 48 items and it is under five categories which are- i) emotional stability, ii) emotional progression, iii) social adjustment, iv) personality integration and v) independence. Total items are 48 and were scored on a 5 point Likert scale. Higher the score, indicates higher emotional maturity level.

Results and Discussion:-

In order to better understand the affects of various issues on transgender people's lives altogether, this study looked at a number of them. In another way, transgenders have been adversely affected by what they perceive to be perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life & emotional maturity.

Hypothesis 1: : There is no significant difference between perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life & emotional maturity of transgenders.

To verify the above hypothesis on the variables of Perceived stress, Loneliness, Quality of Life and Emotional maturity, coefficient of correlation have been calculated among rural and urban transgenders.

Results obtained have been shown in Table 1 that indicates that there is significant difference between rural and urban transgenders on Perceived stress, Loneliness, Quality of Life and Emotional maturity.

Table 1:- Coefficient of correlation between rural and urban transgenders on Perceived stress, Loneliness, Quality of Life and Emotional maturity (N=50)

Variable	Perceived Stress	Loneliness	Quality of Life	Emotional Maturity
Perceived Stress	1	.271	-.397**	.516**
Loneliness		1	-.408**	.586**
Quality of Life			1	-.859**
Emotional Maturity				1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

- Result from table 1, reflects that there is no significant inter-correlation ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$) between perceived stress and loneliness. This shows that perceived stress and loneliness did not play any specific role in predicting perceived stress in urban and rural transgenders.

- It seems that there is a negatively strong inter-correlation ($r = -.397^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) between perceived stress and quality of life. This describes that with the increment in quality of life there is a decrement in perceived stress. One of the study done by (Engel, 2023) states that transgenders have lower quality of life and compared to the general population. This is due to society's ingrained fest of sexual and gender inconsistency which displays denial in their basic rights.
- As may be seen in the above table, there is a positively strong inter-correlation ($r = .516^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) between perceived stress and emotional maturity. This describes that emotional maturity is increasing with increment in perceived stress.
- Table above appears to indicate that there is a negatively strong inter-correlation ($r = -.408^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) between loneliness and quality of life. This describes that with the increment in quality of life there is a decrement in loneliness levels. Having better living conditions in their surroundings increases their quality of life and makes them feel less lonely.
- It appears in Table 1 that there is a positively strong inter-correlation ($r = .586^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) between loneliness and emotional maturity. This describes that emotional maturity is increasing with increment in loneliness levels. It seems that to earn better livelihood they absorb their loneliness to reflect themselves more emotionally stable and independent to the society might be the reason behind their artificial strength and increasing growth which in total effect their social adjustment and personal integration adversely.
- Results show that there is a negatively strong inter-correlation ($r = -.859^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) between quality of life and emotional maturity which describes when emotional maturity is increasing there is a decline in quality of life. By showing that they are emotionally mature makes them physically, psychologically, social relationship wise and environmentally weaker, as transgenders have been sigmatized for years by our society which needs time to come out from it.

Conclusion:-

Present research shows that there is relationship among perceived stress, loneliness, quality of life and emotional maturity among rural and urban transgenders. So concluding our result we can say that:

- ❖ No correlation was found between perceived stress and loneliness it seems that they don't play any specific role in predicting stress and feeling of loneliness.
- ❖ There is a negatively strong correlation between perceived stress and quality of life because higher quality of life promotes lower perceived stress. Low stress levels is a result of their improved living conditions and strong physical and psychological health.
- ❖ Perceived stress and emotional maturity have positively strong correlation means emotional maturity is increasing with the increment of perceived stress. This shows that they have experienced social stigma, they are becoming more emotionally stable and have high social adjustment along with adaption of social changes.
- ❖ In loneliness and quality of life negatively strong correlation is found as when quality of life is increasing then loneliness is decreasing. Their level of insecurity decreases when they stay in better surroundings and living conditions with improved quality of life.
- ❖ Positively strong correlation is found in loneliness and emotional maturity when emotional maturity is increasing there is decline in loneliness because of their strength and growing steadiness that come from being emotionally stable and being independent. They have strong ability to handle emotions and right strategies of healing themselves. It also seems that to earn better livelihood they absorb their loneliness to reflect themselves more emotionally stable and independent to the society might be the reason behind their artificial strength and increasing growth which in total effect their social adjustment and personal integration adversely.
- ❖ Quality of life and emotional maturity have negatively strong correlation when emotional maturity is increasing quality of life is decreasing. Although having emotional maturity facilitates problem solving, transgender people need time to overcome the stigma and masked isolation they have endured from our society.

Implications

Since ages transgenders are hated, treated unfairly, or harassed because of their identity. At very young age they are left out from their families and become helpless. Being physically and mentally stronger they are a blessing for us. They are compelled to even remove clothes and dance in public. Transgenders can contribute to our society and nation better than us. Educational institutions, healthcare hospitals, awareness programs, equality among all genders should be looked upon to reduce their long discrimination and harassment history. Creating transgender-specific social welfare programmes would help in changing the public's negative perception and spreading factual information about transgender groups. The mindset of the government, the general public, and healthcare professionals must change, as must the structures and practises used in the delivery of healthcare.

Even though the government have made some provisions on paper, they still need to be put into practise on a daily basis because they can contribute to our community or even our country better than us.

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