A Comparative Study of Transgender Gurru & Chella: Exploring the Interplay of Anxiety, Social Support, and Anger from Lahore

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Abstract

The Current study was conducted in aimed to explore intricate association among the anger, social support and anxiety in transgender (Guru & Chellas). To conduct this study (*N*=150) transgender sampled including 75 Guru and 75 Chellas with the age range of 19 to 70 years (*M* age =42.13; *SD*=13.27). The data was collected by using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The data was collected through Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Dahlem & Farley, 1988) Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995) and Anger Expression Scale (Ijaz & Ghafoor, 2016) along with demographic information sheet. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, V25). The results of the study indicated that there is intricate negative association(r=-.30**) between anxiety and social support and significant positive association (r=.19*) between anger and anxiety, as well as the social support and anger was significant predictor of anxiety. The t-test analysis showed the results that Guru has high level of social support but have more mental health problems than Chellas. The implication of the study and recommendations for future studies are given below.

Keywords: Transgenders, Guru, Chellas, Social Support, Anxiety, Anger

Introduction

Transgender and trans sexual individuals got little acknowledgement in our society, these communities are considered as taboo and they are humiliating and remained in social distance (Abdullah et al., 2012). The word transgender is mostly used for those entities whose gender appearance is different from the sex assigned to them at birth (APA, 2011). Despite the fact that most people are classified as either male or female, there is another gender that may be referred to as transgender. However, based on their biological, social, and physical characteristics, they can be further classified into other groups. (APA, 2011). The term "Hijra," which encompasses several kinds of bisexual, transsexual, bi-gender, transgender, transversal, transvestite, gender queer,

androgyny, and eunuch, is used in the local language (Jami, 2010). Hijrā kinship functions through the discipleship-lineage system and is a non heteronormative familial structure. A guru adopting a Hijrā (also known as a Chela) through ceremonial rites is the first step towards a Hijrā Gharana giving the oppressed nonbinary gendered people seeking help an optimistic guarantee of a desired way of life (Gowda, 2023).

Pakistan is now regarded as one of the few countries in the world that is incredibly progressive in defending the rights of transgender people, owing to the passage of the Transgender Person's Act of 2018 (Khan, 2020). Besides this this marginalized population is facing lot of issues especially in developing countries (Sherazi et al., 2023) and has lack of social support cause negative mental health (Durwood et al.,2021). A study was conducted to examine the mediating effect of facilitative and avoidant coping in between distress and transition, social support and loss. 351 transgender people were analyzed, including 226 transgender women and 125 transgender men. According to the study's findings, avoidant coping acted as a mediator between transition status and both distress variables, suggesting that the depressive and anxiety processes of transgender women and transgender males are largely identical. Distress factors and social support have a direct and indirect relationship through avoidant coping (Budge et al., 2013). A study was conducted to investigate the relationship among the social support, community connectedness and depressive and anxiety symptoms in transgender individuals. Data was collected from 865 transgenders including both trans male spectrum and trans female spectrum. The result of study indicated that there is negative association between social support with depression and anxiety symptoms (Pflum et al., 2015). Furthermore, transgender also reported the high level of anger, sadness and hopelessness feelings (Hawkins, 2023). The transgender has more elevated symptoms of depression, moderate level of anxiety, and low level of body satisfaction (Liles et al., 2024; Oliveira et al., 2024). An indigenous study was conducted to investigate the social inclusion and mental health faced by the transgender individuals. The data was collected from 300 transgender participants by using nominal scale. The result of the study indicates that transgender has poor physical and mental health on macro and micro level (Sherazi et al., 2023).

Methodology

Participants

A data of 150 transgender was collected aged 19 to 70 years, consisting of (N=75) Gurru and (N=75) Chellas (M_{age} =42.13; SD=13.27). The data was collected from the Fountain House and Gender Guardian Lahore and other Lahore based NGO that are working for the transgender by using purposive and snowball sampling technique. The data was collected from only transgender individuals and normal population was excluded from the study.

Instruments

Demographic Information Sheet: The demographic information sheet was designed to collect the personal information from the participants such as age, siblings, birth order, education, profession and monthly income.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Dahlem & Farley, 1988): Scale consisting of 12-items, 7-point Likert type response scale (Very strongly Disagree to Very Strongly Agree) with three subscale including Family, Friends and Significant others. Urdu translated version (Kauser, 2013) was used for the current study. Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale has high internal consistency at .85. The MPSS has high construct validity.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995): The 42-item DASS self-report questionnaire has three subscales with a four-point scoring system: stress, anxiety, and depression.

(0 = did not apply to me at all; 1 = applied to me somewhat, or occasionally; 2 = applied to me significantly, or frequently; 3 = applied to me heavily, or frequently). The current study was conducted using the translated Urdu version of the anxiety subscale (Zafar & Kausar, 2016).

Anger Expression Scale (Ijaz & Ghafoor, 2016): The anger Expression scale is indigenous Urdu Version scale consisting of 23 items with five-point rating scale (0= never, 1= sometimes, 2= up to some point, 3= often, 4= always). Anger Expression Scale consisting of 3 subscales named Anger Outward, Anger Inward and Anger Control. The scale has good internal consistency α= .69.

Procedure

Following the institutional authorities' acceptance and the authors' authorization of the instruments, we got permission from the Fountain House and Gender Guardians heads to collect data. Some of the participants were approached from the traffic signals of Lahore. The instruction was given to the participants. The confidentiality of the data providing by the participants was assured. The study was voluntary and participants were asked to discontinue the study at any stage whenever they want, they will not be forced for the data. It took 25 to 30 minutes for each participant to complete the questionnaires. Regression analysis, reliability analysis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and t-test statistics were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, v-25) to examine the data.

Results

Table 1 Reliability Coefficient of the Instruments (*N*=150)

Scales	α
Depression Anxiety Stress Scale	.88
Significant others	.73
Family	.90
Friends	.72
Multidimensional Social Support Scale	.86
Anger Inward	.72
Anger Outward	.45
Anger Control	.67
Anger Expression Scale	.72

The data given in Table 1 showed the high internal consistency of the instruments and their subscale in the sample of the current study.

Table 2 Inter-correlation, Means and Standard Deviation of the Anxiety, Social Support and Anger of the Transgender (N=150).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1-Anx	…	-.30**	-.22**	-.22**	-.26**	.07	.11	.33**	.19*
2-SS		…	.87***	.71***	.82***	.06	-.11	.05	.01
3- SO			…	.38**	.75**	.16	-.12	.11	.10
4- Fam				…	.27**	-.01	-.03	-.04	-.01
5- Friend					…	.00	-.12	-.03	-.06
6-Ang-O						…	.09	.29**	.83***
7- Ang-I							…	.35**	.56***
8- Ang-C								…	.64***
9- Anger-T									…
M	29.81	35.57	12.63	10.24	12.71	20.29	11.49	5.13	36.91
SD	8.68	14.12	5.45	6.52	5.75	8.22	4.58	3.35	11.56

P<.001; p<.01; p<.05

Note: Anx= Anxiety; SS= Social Support; Ang I= Anger Inward, Ang O= Anger Outward; Ang C = Anger Control; Ang = Anger Total Score

The results of table 2 indicates that there is significant negative relationship (r= -.30**) among the anxiety and social support with it subscales, significant others supports (r=-.22**), Family support(r=-.26**) and friends support (r=-.26**) respectively. The results also indicates that there is intricate relationship (r=.19*) with anxiety and anger but not significant relationship with the subscales of the anger except anger control (r= .33**).

Table 3 The linear Regression Analysis indicating the Anger as predictor of Anxiety (*N*=150)

Predictors	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*t*	*p*
R^2 =.03, ΔR^2= .03					
Constant	24.58	2.33		10.57	.001
Anger	.14	.06	.19	2.36	.02

p<.05

The table 3 results indicated that the Anger is the significant predictor of Anxiety, depicting that with the increase of Anger the Anxiety is also likely to increase in transgenders.

Table 4 The linear Regression Analysis indicating the Social Support as predictor of Anxiety (*N*=150)

Predictors	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*t*	*p*
$R^2 =.08$, $\Delta R^2 = .08$					
Constant	36.11	1.84		19.67	.001
Social Support	-.18	.05	-.29	-3.69	.001

p<.001

The table 4 results indicated that the social support is the significant predictor of Anxiety, depicting that with the increase of social support the Anxiety is also likely to decrease in transgenders.

Table 5 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values of Gurru and Chellas Transgender on Anxiety, Social Support and Anger Questionnaire (*N* = 150).

Factors	Gurru	Chellas	t(148)	95 % CI		Cohen's d
	n=75	n=75		LL	UL	
	M(SD)	M(SD)				
Anx	26.76(5.53)	32.95(9.99)	-4.62***	-8.70	-3.49	.77
SS	41.55(15.10)	29.60(10.05)	5.71***	7.81	16.09	.93
Ang	35.09(12.59)	38.73(10.19)	-1.95*	-7.33	.05	.32

Note. Ang= Anger; SS= Social Support; Ang= Anger; LL= Lower Limit; UL= Upper Limit. *p<.05, ***p<.001.

Data given in Table 5 revealed significant mean differences between Gurru and Chellas transgenders on the Anxiety, Social Support and Anger. Chellas got higher score on the Anxiety and anger as compared to Gurru transgender. However, Gurru had higher score on Social Support as compared to Chellas transgender.

Discussion

Transgender individuals are discriminated by their gender and they often experience psychological distress, and social support is very important for the psychological distress (Trujillo et al., 2017). The transgender individual experience stress, violence and victimization that is caused by the discrimination due to their gender (Lombardi et al., 2002). Liles et al (2024) indicates that the transgender adolescents has high risk for mental health problems such as depression, generalized anxiety, separation anxiety and social anxiety. Therefore, it was planned to conduct the study to identify the relationship among the anxiety, social support and anger in transgenders especially two categories of the transgender Guru and Chellas. The study was also planned to investigate the difference of anger, social support and anxiety among the Guru and Challas transgender from the Lahore city. The current study yielded very important findings that are discussed below. Since, the

first objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between social support, anger and anxiety among the transgender, thus it was hypothesized that there would be the significant negative association between anxiety and social support among the transgender sample. The results of the study revealed that there is significant negative association between anxiety and social support (Family support, Friends support, Significant others), The same pattern was evident in the regression analysis where the social support was found to be the negative predictor of anxiety in the transgender sample. These findings are in line with existing literature. Transgender experience high level of mental health challenges including, self-harm, suicidal ideation but the school and family connected/support reduce these mental health challenges (Nadeau et al., 2023). Moreover, the existing literature also highlighted that forstering the social connectedness among the transgender may be beneficial in coping the mental health problems such as depression, stress, anxiety and loneliness (Jacmin et al., 2022). Another objective of the study was to investigate the difference between Guru and Chellas in anxiety, social support and anger. So, it was hypothesized that there would be the significant difference among the Guru and Chellas in anger, social support and anxiety. The study's result supported the hypothesis and indicated that there is significant difference between Guru and Chellas. The Guru receives high level of social support than the Chellas and have low level of anxiety and anger than anger than the chellas. Whereas, the chellas has low level of social support and high level of anxiety and depression symptoms. The existing literature also supports the results. Guru (Leaders) transgender perceives more discrimination than Chellas (Students) and Guru (Leaders) have more mental health problems and low quality of life than Chellas (Mehar & Verma, 2024). Pandey (2018) indicates that Guru experience more discrimination and less fear of harassment than Chellas, as well as Guru have poor mental health such as negative affect, anxiety, depression and stress and have low quality of life including less life satisfaction, but more social acceptance) in comparison to their Chellas.

Conclusion

Based on the current findings, it can be concluded that Guru transgenders are more prone to mental health problems as compared Chellas, but the chellas has more social support than the Chellas. It is also concluded that even the high social support in the Guru transgender they have poor mental health that is because of their gender. This gender discrimination effects the mental health of transgender as whole.

Implications of the Study

The current study has significant implications for the concerned stakeholders, policymakers, government, and psychologists to take requisite, effective, and timely measures for better psychological development along with physical development of the transgender. This study will also help the NGOs that are working for the welfare and betterment of the transgender. On the other hand, based on the current findings, mental health professionals can develop tailor-made interventions to provide effective psychological services to the transgender that are facing the mental health problems. By considering this study's result government can take initiate to develop the counseling centers for transgender for the betterment of their psychological as well as physical health. This study will also help to the practioners, to make intervention plan for the transgender for the betterment of their mental health.

Limitations and Suggestions

Apart from the important findings revealed through this study and its vital implications, the study had room for improvement in terms of limitations as follows:

The data was collected from only the Lahore city. In future, more cities can be target for the generalization of the results.

The sample of the current study was comprised of the Guru and Chellas. In the future other categories of the transgenders can be sampled for the complete picture of the transgender individuals.

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