

Stress, Anxiety and Its Associated Factors Within the Transgender Population of Delhi: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract : Background: Transgenders are people who have a gender identity different from their sex assigned at birth. Their gender behaviour doesn't match their body anatomy. The community faces discrimination due to their gender identity all across the world. The term transgender is an umbrella term for many people non-conformal to their biological identity; note that the term transgender is different from gender dysphoria, which is a DSM-5 disorder defined as problems faced by an individual due to their non-conforming gender identity. Transgender people have been a part of Indian culture for ages yet have continued to face exclusion and discrimination in society. This has led to the low socio-economic status of the community. Various studies done across the world have established the role of discrimination, harassment and exclusion in the development of psychological disorders. The study is aimed to assess the frequency of stress and anxiety in the transgender population and understand the various factors affecting the same. Methodology: A cross-sectional survey of self consenting transgender individuals above the age of 18 residing in Delhi was done to assess their socioeconomic status and experiential ecology. Recruitment of participants was done with the help of NGOs. The survey was constructed GAD-7 and PSS-10, two well-known scales were used to assess the stress and anxiety levels. Medians, means and ranges are used for reporting continuous data wherever required, while frequencies and percentages are used for categorical data. For associations and comparison between groups in categorical data, the Chi-square test was used, while the Kruskal-Wallis H test was employed for associations involving multiple ordinal groups. SPSS v28.0 was used to perform the statistical analysis for this study. Results: The survey showed that the frequency of stress and anxiety is high in the transgender population. A demographic survey indicates a low socio-economic background. 44% of participants reported facing discrimination on a daily basis; the frequency of discrimination is higher in transwomen than in transmen. Stress and anxiety levels are similar among both transmen and transwomen. Only 34.5% of participants said they had receptive family or friends. The majority of participants (72.7%) reported a positive or neutral experience with healthcare workers. The prevalence of discrimination is significantly lower in the higher educated groups. Analysis of data shows a positive impact of acceptance and reception on mental health, while discrimination is correlated with higher levels of stress and anxiety. Conclusion: The prevalence of widespread transphobia and discrimination faced by the transgender community has culminated in high levels of stress and anxiety in the transgender population and shows variance according to multiple socio-demographic factors. Educating people about the LGBT community formation of support groups, policies and laws are required to establish trust and promote integration.

Keywords : transgender, gender, stress, anxiety, mental health, discrimination, exclusion

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