



ATTITUDE OF GENERAL POPULATION TOWARDS TRANSGENDER IN URBAN TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Transgender people are those individuals who differ from their stereotypes of normal men and women and exhibits a deviated behavior. There is evidence of transgender existence in century old histories. ²Discrimination, family rejection, unemployment, lack of access to public and medical facilities, difficulty in property inheritance, homelessness are the major problems faced by Transgenders. Besides the most important problem is social non-acceptance. Non-acceptance and discrimination are due to ignorance and negative attitude of the society towards Transgenders and there is a paucity of literature focusing this issue. Hence the current study conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude of general population towards Transgenders. **Methodology:** The hospital based cross-sectional study was conducted in Chettinad hospital & Research Institute from September to October 2018. All patients attending dermatology OPD aged above 18 years were included in the study. After explaining the purpose of the study and obtaining consent, data was collected using a pre-tested and semi structured questionnaire. Information regarding socio demographic profile like age, sex, education, occupation of participants, knowledge and attitude towards transgender were obtained. Statistical analysis done using SPSS version 21. **Results:** Out of 119 participants majority of them belonged to the age group of 21-30 years and there were 69 Females. 83% of the population had poor knowledge. Only 2.5% of the population is aware of transgender legal recognition. The participants showed positive attitude towards transgender. Participants with good knowledge about transgender showed positive attitude towards transgender and the association was statistically significant with a p value of 0.03.

KEYWORDS : Attitude, Transgender, Urban.

INTRODUCTION:

Transgender people are those individuals who differ from their stereotypes of normal men and women and exhibits a deviated behavior. There is evidence of transgender existence in century old histories. There are many socio – cultural groups of transgender people in India like hijras/kinnars, shivshaktis, jogtas, jogappas, Aradhis, Sakhi, etc.

Modern society is encountering increase in Transgender. Worldwide an estimated population of transgender is six hundred crores. Indian census recognized transgender during Census 2011 and the estimated population of transgender was around 4.88 lakh. Tamil Nadu has a rough estimation of around sixty thousand transgender population.^{1,2}

Discrimination, family rejection, unemployment, lack of access to public and medical facilities, difficulty in property inheritance, homelessness are the major problems faced by transgenders. All these problems forced them to indulge in begging, prostitution to fulfil their basic needs. Besides the most important problem is social non-acceptance. In spite of effective measures taken there is no improvement in the quality of life of transgenders ³. Non-acceptance and discrimination are due to ignorance and negative attitude of the society towards transgenders and there is a paucity of literature focusing this issue. Hence the current study conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude of general population towards transgenders.

MATERIALS & METHODS:

The hospital based cross-sectional study was conducted in Chettinad hospital & Research Institute from September to October 2018. Taking the prevalence as 38% ⁴ and absolute precision of 10% the estimated sample size was 105 but finally 119 participants were interviewed in the study.

All patients attending dermatology OPD aged above 18 years

were included in the study. After explaining the purpose of the study and obtaining consent, data was collected using a pre-tested and semi structured questionnaire. Information regarding socio demographic profile like age, sex, education, occupation of participants, knowledge and attitude towards transgender were obtained. Statistical analysis done using SPSS version 21

RESULTS

Table 1: Age -Sex distribution

Age group in years	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
10-20	6	10	16
21-30	18	26	44
31-40	12	15	27
41-50	10	11	21
51-60	3	5	8
above 60	1	2	3
Total	50	69	119

Table 1 shows the age sex distribution of the study participants. Majority of the participants belonged to the age group of 21-30 years and there were 69 Females.

Table2: Knowledge about transgender among Study population

Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Who is a transgender		
Male	19	16.0
Female	10	8.4
Third Gender	76	63.9
No Idea	14	11.8
What is the cause		
biological	38	31.9
Psychological	15	12.6
both	39	32.8
no idea	27	22.7

Stage of Transgender		
childhood	10	8.4
adolescent	45	37.8
adult	16	13.4
anytime	24	20.2
No idea	24	20.2
Type of Transgender		
look like men	9	7.6
look like women	39	32.7
men in women dressing	71	59.7
Are they fertile		
Yes	6	5.0
No	62	52.1
no idea	51	42.9

Welfare Schemes for Transgenders		
Yes	4	3.3
No	16	13.4
no idea	99	83.1
Legal recognition of Transgenders		
Yes	3	2.5
No	0	0
no idea	116	97.4

Table 2 shows that the participants had a poor knowledge about transgender. 83% of the population had poor knowledge. Among the study population 63.9% told transgender is a third gender and 59.7% told that they are men in women dressing. Only 2.5% of the population is aware of transgender legal recognition.

Table 3: Attitude towards transgender among Study population

Attitude	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Not sure	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Are they committing a sin	16(13.4)	67(56.3)	8(6.7)	10(8.4)	18(15.1)
Are they violating culture	21(17.6)	45(37.8)	19(16)	15(12.6)	0
Are they spiritually special person	28(23.5)	16(13.4)	25(21)	17(14.3)	33(27.7)
They should have right to marry	40(33.6)	3(2.5)	16(13.4)	14(11.8)	46(38.7)
They should have access to health facility	76(63.9)	15(12.6)	17(14.3)	0	11(9.2)
They should have access to common facility	66(55.5)	12(10.1)	15(12.6)	5(4.2)	21(17.6)
They Should be protected against discrimination	86(72.3)	8(6.7)	25(21)	0	0

Table 3 shows that the participants showed positive attitude towards transgender. 72.3% of them thought they should be protected against discrimination and 55.5% felt they should have access to all common facilities

Table 4: Education-Attitude association

Education	Attitude		P value
	Positive	Negative	
Higher	35	10	0.031
lower	44	30	
	79	40	

Table 4 shows the association between education of the participants and attitude. The attitude was positive among higher education group when compared to lower and it was statistically significant with a p value of 0.031

Table 5: Knowledge -Attitude Association

Knowledge	Attitude		pvalue
	Positive	Negative	
Good	19	17	0.033
Poor	60	23	
	79	40	

Table 5 shows the association between education of the participants and attitude. Participants with good knowledge about transgender showed positive attitude towards transgender and the association was statistically significant with a p value of 0.03.

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted among 119 participants who had poor knowledge on transgenders. There was a positive attitude towards the transgenders among the study participants. There is a significant difference between the higher educated and lower educated participants in the attitude towards the transgenders.

The present study showed 83% of the participants had a poor knowledge on transgender which is comparable to the study conducted by Goldenkisha et al ⁴ in south India where 62% had a poor knowledge on transgenders. This was contradictory to a study conducted among medical practitioners by Devadason et al ⁵ where only 21.6% had poor knowledge. This difference in knowledge can be attributed to

the difference in educational qualification of the study groups.

In spite of Tamilnadu being the pioneer⁶ in establishing a welfare board for transgenders most of the participants were not aware of the welfare schemes available for the transgenders. Participants were also not aware of Transgender legal recognition. This is because the programme directed towards transgenders welfare failed to create awareness about them among public.

66.4% of the participants showed positive attitude towards transgender which is comparable to IPSOS ⁷, an online survey across countries where majority of the participants showed positive attitude. Higher the education more positive was the attitude in the current study which was statistically significant and contradictory to a study conducted by Shukla V et al. ⁸

Though majority of the participants felt that the transgenders are violating culture and committing a sin they wished transgenders should be protected against all types of discrimination and given access to all common facilities. This shows the increasing tolerance towards transgenders by the society. There was a significant difference in attitude between good and poor knowledge participants which implies increase in awareness leads to increase in acceptance of transgenders among the society.

CONCLUSION:

The quality of life of transgenders is still poor in spite of effective legal measures taken for them. This is because of the poor knowledge and hence acceptance of the transgenders by public. Measures should be directed towards awareness programme about transgenders, sensitization and focused training of the public.

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