



TO STUDY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS EFFECT ON QUALITY OF LIFE OF TRANSGENDER POPULATION. AN OBSERVATIONAL CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY STUDY.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Transgender individuals often experience significant societal stigma and discrimination, adversely affecting their emotional well-being and quality of life (QoL). Emotional intelligence (EI), defined as the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions, is crucial in coping with such psychosocial challenges. However, limited research has explored EI and its association with QoL in the transgender population. **Objectives:** The primary objective of this study was to assess emotional intelligence among transgender individuals. The secondary objective was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and quality of life in this population. **Methods:** A prospective, observational, cross-sectional survey study was conducted involving 165 transgender individuals residing in a sheltered home. Data were collected through a one-time assessment using the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) and a standardized Quality of Life (QoL) scale. EI components assessed included self-awareness, self-motivation, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills. **Results:** Among the EI components, self-motivation emerged as the most prominent strength (81.21%), while managing emotions was identified as the most affected domain (32.12%). Statistical analysis revealed significant positive correlations between QoL and all EI components: self-awareness ($r=0.2917$, $p=0.0001$), self-motivation ($r=0.2442$, $p=0.0014$), managing emotions ($r=0.2016$, $p=0.0095$), empathy ($r=0.1941$, $p=0.012$), and social skills ($r=0.1906$, $p=0.0103$). Overall EI also demonstrated a strong positive correlation with QoL ($r=0.3396$, $p=0.00001$). **Conclusion:** The findings highlight a significant association between emotional intelligence and quality of life among transgender individuals. Lower QoL and deficits in specific EI domains reflect the impact of social stigma. Enhancing EI through targeted interventions may improve psychological well-being and overall quality of life in this marginalized population.

KEYWORDS : Emotional Intelligence, Quality of Life, Transgender Population, Self-Awareness, Empathy, Emotional Regulation, Social Skills.

INTRODUCTION

What Does Transgender Mean?

The transgender is described as a clinically significant distress due to the incongruity between the experienced gender and assigned gender. A transgender person carries a gender identity that is different from their assigned sex at birth they may be binary: male to female (transgender women) or female to male (transgender men) or genderqueer (non-binary, fluid or variable gender expression).¹

Genderqueer is a term that some people use who identify their gender as falling outside the binary constructs of "male" and "female." They may define their gender as falling somewhere on a continuum between male and female, or they may define it as wholly different from these terms. They may also request that pronouns be used to refer to them that are neither masculine nor feminine, such as "zie" instead of "he" or "she," or "hir" instead of "his" or "her." Some genderqueer people do not identify as transgender.²

Other categories of transgender people include androgynous, multigendered, gender nonconforming, third gender, and two-spirit people. Exact definitions of these terms vary from person to person and may change over time, but often include a sense of blending or alternating genders. Some people who

use these terms to describe themselves see traditional, binary concepts of gender as restrictive. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or asexual, just as non-transgender people can be. Not everyone whose appearance or behaviour is gender-nonconforming will identify as a transgender person.²

Gender reassignment usually consists of a diagnostic phase (mostly supported by a mental health professional), followed by hormonal therapy (through an endocrinologist), a real-life experience, and at the end the gender reassignment surgery itself.³ Often, transsexual people alter or wish to alter their bodies through hormones, surgery, and other means to make their bodies as congruent as possible with their gender identities. This process of transition through medical intervention is often referred to as sex or gender reassignment, but more recently is also referred to as gender affirmation. People who were assigned female, but identify and live as male and alter or wish to alter their bodies through medical intervention to more closely resemble their gender identity are known as transsexual men or transmen (also known as female-to-male or FTM). Conversely, people who were assigned male, but identify and live as female and alter or wish to alter their bodies through medical intervention to more closely resemble their gender identity are known as

transsexual women or transwomen (also known as male-to-female or MTF). Some individuals who transition from one gender to another prefer to be referred to as a man or a woman, rather than as transgender.²

Although the exact etiology of transsexualism is still not fully understood, it is most probably a result of a combination of various biological and psychological factors.³ According to the DSM-5 classification, gender dysphoria is described when a transgender person develops clinically relevant biopsychosocial suffering. Several studies on transgender populations from different parts of the world have shown that lack of access to the required information, legal issues, lack of solutions to fertility problems, financial constraints, and psychological and emotional obstacles, together with risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV all make the life of a transgender person more complicated.¹

Quality of Life Among Transgender People

The World Health Organization (WHOQOL Group, 1995) defined Health- related quality of life as "an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations values and concerns."⁴

QOL is a broad and multidimensional concept that includes subjective assessments of the positive and negative aspects of life. Some studies have shown that the QOL of the transgender population is lower than that of cisgender individuals. The transition process is surrounded by physiological (development of sexual characteristics), social (lack of social support, discrimination, rejection, transphobia) and psychological (anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation) challenges that can negatively affect the QOL of these individuals.⁵

Emotional Intelligence and Related Constructs

Emotional Intelligence in Relation to Stress

Stress is influenced by an individual's ability to manage and control their emotions in the workplace.

By developing emotional intelligence one can bridge the gap between stress and better performance. In addition, it prevents negative emotions from swamping the ability to think, feel motivated and confident and to accurately perceive emotions, to empathize and get along well with others.⁶

Emotional Intelligence and its Association with Conflict Handling

Yoko, Callan and Hartel (2008) suggested that teams with less well-defined emotional intelligence climates were associated with increased task and relationship conflict and increased conflict intensity. Godse and Thing jam (2010), Srinivasan and George (2005), Jordan and Troth (2004) suggested different problems expect different styles of handling and intelligent individuals are capable of applying the different and better style of conflict management styles as the situation demands.⁶

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

EI can impact leadership effectiveness of an individual role both in work environment and society and research suggest that an individual who can recognize and manage their moods, feelings and attitudes well are likely to perform better in their different stages of life.⁷

Who is Emotionally Intelligent and Does it Matter?

The emotional intelligent person is described in these terms: The high EI individual, most centrally, can better perceive emotions, use them in thought, understand their meaning and manage emotions than others.

Solving emotional problems likely requires less cognitive

effort for this individual. The person also tends to be somewhat higher in verbal, social, a and other intelligence, particularly if the individual scored higher in the understanding emotion portion of EI.

The high EI individual, relative to other, is less apt to engage in problem behaviors and avoids self-destruction, negative behaviors such as smoking or excessive drinking or taking drugs.⁸

Benefits

By developing their emotional intelligence individuals can become more productive and successful at what they do.⁹

The development of social-emotional skills is advocated, which may include socially responsible attitudes, emotional management, problem solving, and education for the improvement of coexistence, which may include the promotion of positive attitudes towards affective-sexual and gender diversity.¹⁰ The influence of resilience, self-efficacy, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, empathy, and daily stress on the predisposition of attitudes towards sexual orientation and gender identity rights is considered to constitute an important aspect of active and responsible citizenship. Its acquisition favors a better adaptation to the social and work context and a greater ability to cope with everyday stress.¹⁰

There is scarcity of research on the emotional intelligence and its effect on quality of life in transgenders. Hence this study will focus on finding emotional intelligence and its effect on quality of life in transgenders.

Aims

The aim of the research is to study Emotional Intelligence and its effect on Quality of life in Transgender population.

Objectives

Primary Objective: To study Emotional Intelligence in transgenders population.

Secondary Objective: To determine the effect of Emotional Intelligence on quality of life in transgender population.

METHODS

Define the Setting/Site

The present study was conducted in transgender sheltered home "Kinnar Asmita Garima Greh" located in Kalyan, Thane district. Good Clinical Practice (GCP) was followed while conducting research project. The Ethics Committee approval was received from the Institutional Ethics Committee for Biomedical and Health research (IECBH) of Dr D Y Patil Medical College & Hospital, Navi Mumbai on 6th January, 2024. (IEC Ref No: DYP/IECBH/2023/311). Written informed consent was sought from all study participating transgenders. [Appendix I and II]

Study Design

A prospective, observational, cross-sectional survey study.

Study Duration

This study was conducted for 4 months (December 2023-March 2024) It was a one-time evaluation/ assessment and survey study that was based on the objectives and planned assessment proforma. [Appendix III]

Study Participants/Subjects

Inclusive Criteria

1. Those transgenders who gave informed written consent to participate were included.
2. Transgenders from the age group of 18 to 50 were included.

Exclusive Criteria

Transgenders with neurological disorders and diagnosed with any psychiatric conditions were excluded.

Sample Size: n: sample size, Z_{α} : value of 'Z' of alpha error or 95% confidence interval, P: expected proportion in population or previous studies or prevalence, $Q = 1 - P$, e: error in sampling i.e. $5\% = 0.05$

Estimated proportion (P) = 70%

$1 - P = 30\% = 0.30$

$e = 0.05$ $e^2 = 0.0025$

$n = Z_{\alpha} P(1 - P) / e^2$

$= (1.96) (0.70) (0.30) / 0.0025$

$= 164.64 = 165$ $n = 165$

Sample size shall be 165.

Sampling Procedure

A total of 165 transgenders from a transgender Sheltered home were selected. It was a one-time evaluation/assessment survey study based on the objectives and planned evaluation Performa. Survey assessment forms in their preferred language were given to the participants to fill. The results of the assessment were documented in an Excel sheet as data to be analyzed.

Measurement/Parameters

Is reliable and valid as planned in assessment proforma attached herewith. Participant shall be evaluated as one-time assessment tool, using Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire given by Daniel Goleman and Quality of life Scale given by Flanagan.

Ethical Issues

Ethical approval was sought by IECBH on 6th January 2024. Written permission was taken from the head of the transgender community residing in a shelter home in Thane district through mail and was approved on 16th October 2023. The study was concluded as per their availability and after receiving written informed consent from the participant. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study and data analysis was done of the coded data (blinding at analysis phase) recorded in Excel Sheet.

Statistical Analysis

The data was collected and master chart was prepared in Microsoft excel. Data was analyzed by using the software SPSS 21.0 version/SAS 9.0 version. The data is represented by using mean and standard deviation for quantitative data. Reliability testing for validation of the data by using Cochran's Alpha and Pearson correlation. Chi square and Fisher's exact test was applied to test the association and significance. Results were graphically represented where deemed necessary. Level of significance at the outset of the study was set at $P < 0.05$ and 95% confidential interval was computed.

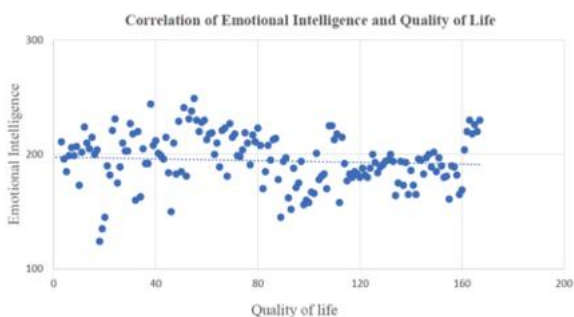


Fig 4F: Correlation of Emotional Intelligence and Quality of Life

Limitations

- Only one Guru-Chella community of Transgender was taken into consideration.
- Vocational aspects were not taken into consideration during the study.

Future Recommendations

In the study the transgenders who had scored low for the Emotional Intelligence scale can be given intervention to increase their Emotional Intelligence by a therapeutic approach and thus a new occupational therapy intervention can be formulated to enhance their quality of life.

An experimental controlled research study may be conducted for higher level evidence on relationship between EIQ and QoL of transgenders and the effects of intervention strategies.

Clinical Implications and Level of Evidence

As from our study we come to know that emotional intelligence plays an important role in maintaining the quality of life of an individual and transgender population are a much-neglected part of our Indian society especially when it comes to their health care management. As an Occupational Therapist the main focus stays on holistic approach for individuals' better quality of life and make individuals independent in their ADL and IADL. From this study Occupational Therapist can apply their knowledge and expertise to change their approach in the treatment of transgender population and also transgender people came to know the importance of Occupational Therapy and how they can be benefited from our treatment in different ways.

In terms of the level of evidence, this study can be classified as Level III evidence according to the Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine Levels of Evidence. As a prospective observational study, it provides evidence from non-randomized controlled cohort/follow-up studies, which is considered moderate-quality evidence. The research study as per the Critical Appraisal Checklist of Cross-Sectional Studies is reported to be of 95% adherence to quality and completeness of conduct and reporting.

CONCLUSION

The research investigated Emotional Intelligence (EI) within the transgender population and its impact on their quality of life. The EI was assessed using Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, and QOL was measured with Flanagan's Quality of Life Scale.

In conclusion, this study underscores the critical role of Emotional Intelligence in enhancing the quality of life for transgender individuals. Self-awareness, motivating oneself, managing emotions, empathy and social skills components of emotional intelligence questionnaire strongly correlate with the QoL as well as overall emotional intelligence strongly correlates with QoL. Emotional intelligence plays a major role in enhancing the QoL in transgender population.

Interventions aimed at improving EI could potentially lead to better psychosocial outcomes and overall well-being in this population. The study also highlights the need for targeted support in developing specific emotional competencies to foster a more supportive and healthier living environment for transgender individuals.

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