



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Clinical Psychology

MASCULINITY, STIGMA AND HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR AMONG INDIAN MEN

KEY WORDS: Masculinity, Indian men, Multicultural, Mental health stigma, Help-seeking, Adulthood

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to assess the relationship between Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma and Help-seeking Behaviour among Indian Men of different age groups. A sample of 211 Indian men aged between 26 -55 years participated in the study. Multicultural Masculinity Ideology Scale (MMIS), Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination (PDD), Self-stigma of Seeking help (SSOSH, General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHQ). Were used to measure the variables in the study. Pearson correlation was used to find the correlation between Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour. One-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine the significant difference between the ages with respect to help-seeking behaviour. The findings indicated that self-stigma was negatively correlated with Help-seeking behaviour. The aim of this study was to examine the correlation between masculinity, perceived stigma, self-stigma, and help-seeking behavior among men from various age groups in India. Upon analyzing the data, the study revealed no significant associations between masculinity, perceived stigma, and help-seeking behavior. The research offers valuable insights into the connection between self-stigma and help-seeking behavior among Indian men. Firstly, the study reveals a significant negative relationship between self-stigma and the willingness to seek help. This underscores the significance of tackling self-stigma as a potential obstacle to men seeking the necessary support for mental health concerns.

Chapter I INTRODUCTION

In India, men are less likely to seek help for mental health issues than women (Kumar & Jain, 2018). This is partly due to the societal expectation that men should be self-reliant and strong, which may discourage men from seeking help for mental health problems (Patel et al., 2019). It is believed that traditional masculinity is characterized by traits such as strength, dominance, and emotional control, can prevent men from seeking help for mental health problems caused due to the stigma attached to seeking help and the fear of being perceived as weak or unmanly.

Only 7.3% of India's 365 million youth report problems. The public stigma associated with mental health issues mainly affects help-seeking among young people (Gaiha et al., 2020). Religious beliefs also cultural factors that influence stigma. However, stronger religious beliefs were associated with lower perceived stigma (Zieger et al., 2016).

The stigma associated with mental illnesses is one of the primary causes of mentally ill people not receiving adequate mental health care and treatment. The prevalence of stigma towards the mentally ill was found to be 74.61%. A high prevalence of stigma was seen among females and people with higher incomes (Venkatesh et al., 2015).

Choudary, D.R (2022) studied the effect of hegemonic masculinity on psychological distress and help-seeking behaviour among men aged 20-30 years. The result found no significant correlation between hegemonic masculinity and psychological distress and a positive correlation between a) hegemonic masculinity and help-seeking behavior and b) psychological distress and help-seeking behaviour, inconsistent with many research studies.

Aavrita et al., (2021) evaluated the impact of self-stigma of seeking help and perceived social support on burnout among clinical psychologists in India. The main findings from the results indicated a significant negative correlation between self-stigma of seeking help. They perceived social support, a significant positive relationship between self-stigma of seeking help and burnout, and a significant negative correlation between perceived social support and burnout. Regression analysis was carried out to check the impact of perceived social support on burnout and self-stigma of seeking help.

Yu, B.C et al., (2022) examined the association between help-seeking public stigma and help-seeking self-stigma and the relative association of stigma with help-seeking attitude and intention using a full-information meta-analytic structural equation modeling approach. Results showed that public stigma of help-seeking was strongly and positively associated with self-stigma of help-seeking.

Masculinity, stigma, and help-seeking behaviour are all important factors affecting men's mental health and well-being. In India, traditional gender roles and societal expectations of masculinity can significantly shape how men view themselves and seek help for mental health issues. This comparative study will examine these factors among Indian men of different ages.

Chapter II METHOD Research Design

The current study follows a Non-Experimental Quantitative Research Design. This study follows a comparative approach to understand the objectives. This allows us to identify and differentiate the patterns and correlations between the variables and the age groups.

Statement of The Problem

The present study focuses on the relationship between masculinity and help-seeking behaviour, and the impact of age on help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. The study also examine and compare the difference between men of different ages with regard to Help-seeking behaviour, as these two concepts may affect an individual's willingness to seek help differently.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the relationship between Masculinity, Stigma, and Help-seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.
2. To study the differences between men of different age groups with regard to Masculinity, Stigma and Help-seeking behaviour.

Hypothesis

- H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between Masculinity and help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.
- H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between Perceived

stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.

- H_{05} : There is no significant relationship between Self-stigma and help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.
- H_{06} : There is no significant difference between men of different age groups with regard to Masculinity.
- H_{07} : There is no significant difference between men of different age groups with regard to Perceived stigma.
- H_{08} : There is no significant difference between men of different age groups with regard to Self-stigma.
- H_{09} : There is no significant difference between men of different age groups with regard to Help-seeking behaviour.

Sampling Distribution

The sample for the current study included 211 Indian men grouped into three age groups. The age groups include 26 – 35, 36 – 45, and 46 – 55.

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Men of age 26 to 55 years.
2. Men who come from a diverse range of socio-economic background

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Indian men who are Non-Residents of India (NRIs).
2. Men who have a history of mental illness.
3. Men who are currently undergoing treatment for mental illness.

Tools used

Multicultural Masculinity Ideology Scale

The Multicultural Masculinity Ideology Scale (MMIS) was first introduced in a study by Doss and Hopkins (1998). It is a 35-item questionnaire. Gender-specific masculinity ideology items were chosen based on theoretical grounds and constructed into a scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.75.

Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination

Perceived Devaluation/Discrimination was developed by Morris, Michaels, Rafacz, and Rusch in 2012—a 12-item questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was found to be 0.86. The PDD scale got an adequate global internal consistency ($\alpha = .78$).

Self-stigma of Seeking help

Self-Stigma of Seeking Help was developed by Vogel et al., in 2006. It is a 10-item measure of self-stigma of seeking psychological help. The participants are asked to rate the items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The internal consistency of the scale was adequate (Cronbach's alpha=0.80-0.89). Items 2,4,5,7 and 6 are reverse-scored.

General Help-Seeking Questionnaire

General Help-Seeking Questionnaire was developed by Wilson et al., in 2005. The questionnaire consists of 10 items that measure the intention to seek help. It helps in listing potential help sources and asking whether or not help has been sought from each source within a specified period for a specified problem. The Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was between 0.84-0.89.

Procedure

At first google forms were made as the data will be collected in online mode. The participants were asked whether they wanted to participate in the study or not, and their consent was taken. After that, a briefing about nature and purpose of the study was given in the google forms to the participant to develop the rapport. The participants were assured that all information taken from them will be kept confidential. The MMIS, PDD, SSOSH, and GHQ were individually

administered to all the participants to determine the Masculinity, Stigma and Help-seeking behaviour. After the completion of the questionnaire, the scoring of all 211 responses were done and finally the results were interpreted and discussed.

Statistical Analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics was used to perform statistical analysis on the data. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and the Oneway ANOVA test are used for analysis. Correlational test: Correlation analysis investigates the link between two or more variables. This can be achieved by combining two or more independent variables with a single dependent variable. One-way ANOVA test: One-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is a statistical test used to determine if there are significant differences between the means of three or more groups.

Chapter III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between Masculinity and Help-Seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different ages.

Table 1: Showing the Pearson correlation between Masculinity and Help-Seeking Behaviour

Variables	M	SD	r	p
Masculinity	110.04	11.467	-.004	.953
Help-seeking Behaviour	38.80	9.628		

H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between Perceived Stigma and Help-Seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different ages.

Table 2: Showing the Pearson correlation between Perceived Stigma and Help-Seeking Behaviour

Variables	M	SD	r	p
Perceived stigma	30.31	3.339	-.065	.344
Help-seeking Behaviour	38.80	9.628		

H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between Self- Stigma and Help-Seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different ages.

Table 3: Showing the Pearson correlation between Self-Stigma and Help-Seeking Behaviour

Variables	M	SD	r	p
Self-stigma	24.17	5.780	-.146	.034
Help-seeking Behaviour	38.80	9.628		

H_{04} : There is no significant difference between the age groups with respect to Masculinity.

Table 4: Showing the difference between the age groups with respect to Masculinity.

Age Groups	M	SD	F	p
26-35	109.35	10.631	.307	.736
36-45	110.84	9.890		
46-55	109.98	13.824		

H_{05} : There is no significant difference between the age groups with respect to Perceived stigma.

Table 5: Showing the difference between the age groups with respect to perceived stigma.

Age Groups	M	SD	F	p
26-35	30.07	3.108	.635	.531
36-45	30.21	2.828		
46-55	30.31	4.039		

H_{06} : There is no significant difference between the age groups with respect to Self-stigma.

Table 6: Showing the difference between the age groups with respect to Self-stigma.

Age Groups	M	SD	F	p
26-35	24.00	5.302	.069	.934
36-45	24.36	6.246		
46-55	24.17	5.868		

H_{07} : There is no significant difference between the age groups with respect to help-seeking behaviour.

Table 7: Showing the difference between the age groups with respect to help-Seeking Behaviour.

Age Groups	M	SD	F	p
26-35	39.72	10.406	.576	.563
36-45	38.54	9.602		
46-55	38.80	8.756		

DISCUSSION

The current research is a study aimed at understanding the relationship between Masculinity, Perceived Stigma, Self-stigma, and Help-seeking behaviour among the Indian men of different age groups. The hypotheses formulated assert that there is no significant relationship between Masculinity and Help-seeking behaviour, Perceived stigma and Help-seeking behaviour, Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among the Indian men of different age groups. There is no significant difference between the age groups with regard to Help-seeking behaviour.

The outcome of this study indicates that there is no significant relationship between Masculinity and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. The current study is in accordance with the study conducted by Wimer. et. al. (2011) studied the relation of Masculinity and help-seeking style with Academic Help-seeking Behaviour among the US population. The results revealed that Masculinity is associated with reluctance to seek academic help as well as help-seeking in other areas. The current study contradicts with the results of the study conducted by Choudhury (2022), which revealed that men who exhibit higher masculine traits will readily seek help.

Again there is no significant relationship between Perceived stigma and help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. The current study is in accordance with the study conducted by Golberstein. et. al. (2010), studied the association between perceived public stigma of mental illness and use of mental health services. The results revealed that there was no relation between perceived stigma and help-seeking behaviour in the students from a university. Eisenberg. et. al. (2009) studied the association of help-seeking behaviour with both personal stigma and perceived public stigma. The results revealed that perceived stigma had no association with help-seeking behaviour. The current study contradicts with the results of the study conducted by Vogel. et. al (2007), which revealed that men had higher levels of perceived stigma compared to men and if affected the willingness to seek help.

Further the results shows that there is a significant relationship between Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. The current study is in accordance with the study conducted by Topkaya (2014), the results revealed that self-stigma and help-seeking behaviour are correlated to each other. Vogel. et. al (2011) studied the role of conformity to masculine norms on help-seeking attitudes for non-college age men or for men from diverse backgrounds. The results revealed important differences in the strengths and presence of the relationship between conformity to dominant masculine norms and the other variables in the model were present across different racial/ethnic groups and sexual orientation.

It was found that there was no significant difference between the ages with regard to masculinity among Indian men of different age groups. Thompson. H. et.al (2020) investigated individuals of different aging groups responding to a scale

measuring the gender expectation for aging men. The results showed that there was equivalences in the responses of people of three different age groups. Emslie.C. et.al (2005) conducted semi-structured interviews with men to re-evaluate the taken for granted attitudes to gender roles. The results suggest that more attention should be paid to the variety of ways in which older men 'do' gender.

It was found that there was no significant difference between the ages with regard to perceived stigma among Indian men of different age groups. The current study contradicts with the results of the study conducted by Mackenzie. C. et. al(2019) examined age and sex differences in public stigma of men's depression. Results suggested that men were more likely to witness most aspects of the public stigma of men's depression and suicide. Public stigma was highest in younger adults. Bradbury.A et.al (2020) studied the impact of age and gender on Attitudes. The results indicated that both age and gender influence attitudes towards generalised anxiety disorder but not towards schizophrenia.

It was found that there was no significant difference between the ages with regard to self- stigma among Indian men of different age groups. In contradiction to the above results, Ali. A et.al(2012) examined self-stigma studies and courtesy or affiliate stigma studies and the results indicated that individuals experience stigma and it may have a negative impact on psychological wellbeing.

It was also found that there was no significant difference between the ages with regard to help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. Mackenzie.C.S. et.al (2006) explored the age and gender differences in attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help, and examined whether attitudes negatively influence intentions to seek help among older adults and men, whose mental health needs are underserved. The findings indicated that men's underutilization of mental health services could be attributed to negative attitudes towards psychological openness. Howerton. et. al (2007) explored the factors that influence help-seeking for mental distress by offenders. The results reported that most respondents reported that they would not seek help from a general practitioner or other healthcare professionals if experiencing mental distress. When followed up after release, no one had sought medical help despite many having considerable emotional problems.

ChapterV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION Summary

The aim of the study is to understand the relationship between masculinity, stigma and help-seeking behaviour among the Indian men of different age groups. The results obtained through data analysis using Pearson's Correlation concludes that there is no relationship between Masculinity and Help-seeking Behaviour among the India men of different age groups. There is no relationship between Perceived stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. But that there is a negative significant relationship between Self-stigma and Help-seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. As a result, null hypothesis H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{04} , H_{05} , H_{06} , H_{07} are accepted and null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected at 0.05 level of confidence. Again using One-way ANOVA test it is found that there is no significant difference between the ages with regard to Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.

Samples for the current study included 211 Indian men of different age groups. For the data collection online medium was used. The data was collected using Google form.

Pearson's Correlation analysis was used to test the first three hypothesis (H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03}). To check whether there are any

differences among the age groups with regard to Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour (H_{04} , H_{05} , H_{06} , H_{07}) was used.

Conclusion

The current study was designed to determine the relationship between Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma, and Help-seeking Behaviour among Indian men of different age groups. The results from the analysis that is done in the study showed no relationship between Masculinity, Perceived stigma, and Help-seeking behaviour. Self-stigma showed a weak Negative correlation with Help-seeking behaviour, suggesting that increased self-stigma results in decreased help-seeking behaviour. However, there was no significant difference between the age groups with regard to Masculinity, Perceived stigma, Self-stigma and Help-seeking behaviour among Indian men of different age groups.

Implications

The study implies that it provides important insights into the relationship between self-stigma and help-seeking behaviour among Indian men. First, the finding of a negative correlation between self-stigma and help-seeking behaviour highlights the importance of addressing self-stigma as a potential barrier to seeking mental health care among men. Self-stigma refers to the negative beliefs and attitudes that individuals hold about themselves in relation to mental health issues. It can prevent individuals from seeking help when they need it, leading to negative outcomes such as increased symptom severity, decreased quality of life, and poorer treatment outcomes.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of understanding the unique cultural and social factors that may influence help-seeking behaviour among Indian men. This includes addressing self-stigma and developing targeted interventions that are sensitive to Indian cultural norms and values. By doing so, mental health professionals and policymakers can work to improve access to care and reduce the burden of mental illness among Indian men.

Limitations

There were a few limitations to note while conducting this study. One potential limitation is that the sample size, may not represent the entire population of Indian men aged 26-55 years, which could limit the generalizability of the findings. Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data collected through a Google form. While online surveys can be a cost-effective and efficient means of collecting data, they are also subject to response bias. Participants may have needed to be more honest in their responses or may have misunderstood the questions, which could have affected the accuracy of the results. Future studies should consider using a combination of self-report measures and other methods, such as clinical interviews or behavioural observations, to capture the complexity of help-seeking behaviour better.

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