RESILIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG TRANSGENDERS

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#### ABSTRACT OBJECTIVE



To quantify the relationship between resilience and mentalhealthof young transgenders (Hijm).

# STUDY DESIGN

Cross-sectionalresearch design.

# PLACE AND DURATION OF STUDY

The research was conducted on young transgenders of three cities of South Punjab (Bahawalpur; Multan& Rahim Yar Khan) between the monthsofFebruary to May,2018.

# SUBJECTS AND METHODS

The study comprised of 107 young transgenders (18-25 years) selected utilizing purposive sampling technique. Resilience was measured through Child and Youth Resilience Measure and mental health was measured through Mental Health Inventory.

# RESULTS

The result of this research exhibits that resilience was significantly positively correlated with mental health of transgenders. Whereas, the results of independent sample I-Test exhibit that mean scores of resilience, mental health and psychological well-being were significantly higher among educated transgenders than uneduca1ed cohorts. The mean score of psychological distress was significantly higher among uneducated transgenders as compared witheducatedtransgender group.

# CONCLUSION

It is concluded that resilience remains positively associated with mental health of young transgenders. Educated young transgenders have more resilience and mental health as compared to uneducatedyoungtransgenders.

# KEYWORDS

Psychological well-being, Psychological disrress, Hijra,Eunuch.

# INTRODUCTION

Eunuchs or 'Hijras' known to be male to female transgender are dwelling in Pakistani communities from the centuries.' Transgenders are more vulnerable in developing mental health problems as compared with other marginalized populations.'·' The individuals identified as transgenders perform in the ways that are align with their resilience asbeingfemale,maleor containing unknownsexual orientation.'

Socialconstruction and social expectations arecontrary for such people; biological sex and gender identity are inconsistent in action.' Culture did not accept middle-sexes.• Resultantly, young transgenders develop their membership with disadvantaged and impoverished groups that make them vulnerable to develop mental health Issues.' However, some transgender youth have psychological resilience that enables them to adapt positively whentheyencounter adverseexperiences.

Psychological perspective depicts resilience as the capacity to bounce back adversity whilefacingdifficultsituations.uThe centralprocess to develop resilience is dependent on coping skills and responses that lead towards positive mental health among marginalized populations."·" A body of researchers is convinced to assess resilience among transgenders by identifying stressinducing factors."'

The rationale of this research encompasses to address the penurious population like transgenders to dig out their current plight regarding resilience and mental health. Further, demographic variation (education) is also cordoned off. This study hypothesized that therewouldbea positiverelationship betweenresilience and mental health of transgender youthand resilience and mental health would be higher among educatedtransgender youthascomparedwith uneducated transgender youth.

**SUBJECTSANDMETHODS**

# Participants

Thestudy wascomprised of 107young transgenders (educated= 41and uneducated= 66) by using purposive sampling technique from three big cities (Bahawalpur = 40, Multan= 31andRahimYarKhan =36)ofSouth Punjab.

# Instruments

### *Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-28)"*

Resilience was measured through Urdutranslated Child and Youth Resilience Measure-

28.14 It is 5-point Likert rating scale (1 = Not at all and 5 = A lot). This scale is highly reliablefor Pakistanimarginalized youth( *a* =.92)."

### *Mental Health Inventory (MHI)"*

UrduTranslated MHl-38 and original scale by Veit and Ware (1983)." MHI consisted of two subscales:22 itemsPsychologicalDistress and 16 itemsPsychological Wellbeing.



This scale isratedon 6-point Liker ranging from1 = all of thetime to 6

=noneof the time.Negative scoring wasperformed for the subscale

To measure the normality of data, Skewness test was used that indicated the acceptedrange of normality for allvariables(Resilience

of Psychological Distress, so greater scores on total MHI exhibits

= .37, Mental Health = .81, Psychological Distress =

-.49 &

bettermental health.This scaleshowedgoodreliability rangingfrom



.83to.96.11

**Procedure**

Permission was taken fromthe authors to usethe instruments in this research. Further, formal permission was also taken from ethical review committee. Consent was sought from the participant after explaining the natureandpurposeof the study.Beforeadministering the questionnaire. rapport was developed with the participants. They were assured that all the information would be kept confidential.First ofall,demographic informationsheet wasgiven to the participants in order to get information regarding their age, education, and residence. They were acknowledged for their participation andcooperationin the study.

## RESULTS

The study comprised of 107 young transgenders {Mage = 21.14+2.39), in education, 41(38.3%) were educated and 66(61.7%) were uneducated. Whereas, 40(37.3%) were from Bahawalpur, 31(29,0%) were from Multan and 36(33.7%) were from Rahim Yar Khan. The results showed significant positive(but weak) correlation (r= .39,p <. 01)betweenresilienceand mental health.Further,results revealed that significant positive (but moderate) correlation was found (r = .61, p <.01) between resilience and psychological well­ being. Moreover, results indicate significant negative (moderate) correlation (r = •.52, p <.01) between resilience and psychological distress. Similarly, significant positive (strong) correlation (r = .77, p

<.01) was revealed between mental health and psychological well­ being of transgenders. In the same vein, significant negative (but weak) correlation(r = -.36,p <.01I found between mentalhealth and psychological distress. Finally, significant negative (moderate) correlation (r=-.62, p<.01) wasseen between psychologicaldistress and psychological well-being.

Table I

Inter-Correlation between Resilience ru1d Mental Health (N=107/

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Variabt..** | *111* | ***SD*** | ***a*** | **2** | **J** | **4** |
| I. | **Resiliem:c** | 103.21 | 24.55 | .89 | **.39°** | ***..52\*\**** | **.6l0** |
| 2. | **M ntal Health** | 138.97 | 21.47 | .84 | - | **...36--** | **.77°** |
| 3. | **P:s:ychological Distn."Ss** | 78.26 | 16.55 | ,73 |  |  | .,62.. |
| **4.** | Psychological Well-being | 63.64 | l?.16 | ,88 |  |  |  |

#### Table 2

Differences between Transgender Youth in Resnience and Menial Health as

per education

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Vadable** | **Educated**  **(n-41)** | | **Uneducated**  **(n-66)** | |  | ***95%CI*** | |
|  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ,If | ***SD*** | , | ***LL*** | ***lJL*** |
| **Rcsilienc.e** | 111.88 | 19.30 | 97.83 | 26.02 | 2.98\*\* | 4.71 | 2..1.38 |
| **Mental Health** | 148.34 | 21.42 | 133.15 | 19.48 | 3.77\*\* | 7.21 | 23.17 |
| **P ychological Distress** | 71.88 | 17.99 | S2.23 | 14.35 | **-3.29°** | 16.59 | -4.I I |
| **Psychological Well-being** | 71.12 | 18.08 | 58.98 | 14.89 | 3.77.. | 5.76 | 18.52 |

***0p <.Of. Cf*** *for* ***co,ifit!enct' i,uervul, Llfor /Qwer liniira,,d UL/Or uppe.r /imir,Nc:1c07***

Psychological Well-being = 1.09). Some statisticians (George & Mallery, 2010; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2010) narrated that if values of skewness are between +2 / -2, it can be accepted as normal distribution''"- The results of independent sample t-test showed significant (p <.01) differences between educated and uneducated youngtransgendersin resilience and mental health.While,the mean

score of resilience was significantly higher (t = 2.98, p < .01) among

educatedyoung transgenders (M = 111.88,SD= 19.30) ascompared with uneducated young transgenders (M = 97.83, SD = 26.02).

Further,the mean score of mental health wassignificantly higher (t= 3.77,p < .01) amongeducated youngtransgenders (M = 148.34,SD= 21.42) ascompared to uneducated youngtransgenders (M = 133.15, SD= 19.48). Furthermore, the mean score of psychological distress wassignificantly higher (t =-3.29,p < .01)among uneducatedyoung transgenders **(M** = 82.23, SD = 14.35) as compared with educated young transgenders **(M** = 71.88, SD = 17.99). The mean score of psychological well-being was significantly higher (t = 3.77, **p** < .01) among educated young transgenders (M = 71.12, SD= 18.08) than uneducctedyoung transgenders(M= 58.98,SD=14.89).

## DISCUSSION

Transgenders face a number of stressors as compared with other sexual minorities." It is not surprising that nature of these stressors is internalized rather external ones,soin thelight of these findings, the current study gets more importance to deliberate the psychopathological issues in Eunuchs." It conceptualizes health (includingmentalhealth) asa llfelongdynamicprocess, situating risk and protective factors within larger socio cultural structures and particular historical eras,continually interacting withsocial positions, including gender and sexual identity, to produce long-term, cumulative effects on mental health outcomes.'' Theresults of this research showed that resilience was significantly positively correlated withmentalhealth and psychological well-being.Further, resilience was significantly negatively correlated with psychological distressof youngtransgenders.Theresults of thisresearch are similar with past studies that found significant relationship between resilience and mental health young of transgenders.,.,,Furthermore, a recent study also found negative correlation between resilience and anxiety among transgender population." A past studies examined resilience among transgenderpeople wasassociated with fewer depressive symptoms.' "The resultsof above cited researches supportthe findingsof thisresearch.

A plethora of research indicates that mental health differences among Eunuchs have been understood under the umbrella of stress theory, that creates negative impacts of internal and external indicators of prejudice, stigma, and discrimination." A study of transgender veterans (identified by ICD-9-CM codes) accessing health care services from the Veterans Administration (VA) found they had significantly higher rates of depression than their non­ transgender counterparts." The results of this study found that education played a significant role in differences In resilience and mentalhealth.While,the meanscoreof resilience,mentalhealth and psychological well-being were higher among educated

·transgenders than uneducated tran5genders. Whereas, the mean score of psychological distress washigher uneducatedtransgenders





ascompared witheducated transgenders.Theresultsof thisresearch is in line with previous study.'Educated transgender population are more aware about their rights, so they have more resilience and psychologicalwell-being.

## CONCLUSION

Conclusively, resilience among young transgenders is directly contacted with mental health and inversely linked with psychological distress. While, educated young cransgenders have more resilience, mental health and psychological well-being than uneducated young transgenders. Whereas, uneducated young transgenders have greater psychological distress than educated youngtransgenders.

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