

A STUDY ON GENERAL WELLBEING OF MALE TO FEMALE TRANSGENDERS LIVING IN CHENNAI

KARTHIK LAKSHMANAN R M*, JOSEPH VICTOR**

ABSTRACT

Background: In Tamil Nadu, male-to-female (MTF) Transgender, generally known as “Aravaani” face multiple difficulties, such as barriers in accessing health care, insufficient social support, gender discrimination. Moreover they are also highly vulnerable to a wide array of mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, risk of suicide as well as HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. Studies in the West revealed that research on Transgender are not much when compared to Lesbians and Gays. In India, it is much lesser.

Objective: The objective was to study the level of General Wellbeing of MTF Transgender.

Method: The current study combined the two arms of research, vis-à-vis qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The study consisted of transgender ($n=33$), and that had been selected for the study by using Purposive sampling technique since the population was challenging to collect data. On the one arm of the research process, the standardized Tamil-version of the Wellbeing Questionnaire - 12 (Gold Berg 1972) was used. Content Validity is established. The test-retest reliability is .07, shows a good correlation between the test scores. On the other arm, an in-depth Interview guide was prepared, and carried out in order to understand the practical difficulties faced by transgender community. Descriptive Statistics and Qualitative coding analysis were used to analyze the data.

Results: The results of quantitative data are viz., 75.76% of the samples fall under Average Wellbeing Category, 24.24% of samples fall under Better Wellbeing Category and 0% fall under Poor Wellbeing Category. From the In-Depth Interviews it is inferred that the socio-economic status of Transgender is very poor, and they feel inferior to others, and being humiliated and ill-treated but support within the community is strong.

Conclusion: The study involving both Qualitative and Quantitative approaches clearly reveals that there is strong need for both Psychologists and Physicians firstly to understand and accept them and then improve their wellbeing from average to Better.

Keywords: Transgender in Tamil Nadu, General Wellbeing.

*Karthik Lakshmanan R M – Post Graduate Student of Counselling Psychology, Madras School of Social Work., Chennai.

**Joseph Victor - Faculty, Post Graduate Dept. of Counselling Psychology, Madras School of Social Work., Chennai.