



Transprejudice Among Youth: An Attempt towards Exploring Gender-Bashing and Transphobia

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Abstract : *With binary gender role norms, transgender individuals are gender minorities and subject to social stigma in our Indian culture. Given by Mark King, Sam Winter and Baverley Webester in 2009, the term “transprejudice” refers to valuing, stereotyping, and discriminatory treatment of individuals whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the conventional expectations from their physical sex. The present study focuses on transprejudice among the youth and attempts to explore gender-bashing and transphobia. Data was collected from two colleges of Patna comprising 100 youth (50 males and 50 females). The aim was to measure the levels of transprejudice present among the*

young students and examine their attitude towards the transgender people. Genderism and Transphobia Scale (GTS) developed by Hill and Willoughby (2005) was used for the purpose. The observations suggested that 96% of the selected students held moderate or high levels of transprejudice attitude while 4% among them showed low level of the same. There was significant gender difference in transprejudice among the youth of this sample. Significant positive correlation was found between transphobia and gender-bashing.

Keywords: *Transprejudice, transgender, gender-bashing, transphobia.*

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Introduction :

'Transprejudice' is defined as negative valuing, stereotyping, and discriminatory treatment of individuals whose appearance and/or identity does not conform to the current social expectations or conventional conception of gender. Transprejudice is used with reference to transgender.

On the other hand, 'transgender' are the individuals whose gender identity is different from, or incongruent with, their sex. However, the term has more than one definition. The Oxford dictionary uses the term for persons whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with the sex they are born with. Apparently, transgender is an umbrella expression for people who transgress society's view of gender as necessarily fixed, unmoving, and following from one's biological sex. Coined by John. F. Oliver of Columbia

University (1965) the term 'transgender' broadly encompasses cross-dressers, genderqueers, androgynous people, two spirits, transgenderists, and others, who defy what society considers appropriate for their sex.

Transprejudice constitutes two elements, namely, 'gender-bashing' and 'transphobia'. Gender bashing or trans-bashing is the act of victimization of a person physically, sexually, or verbally because they are transgender or trans-sexual.

On the other hand, transphobia includes a range of antagonistic attitudes and feelings against trans-sexuality and transgender people. Researchers describe transphobia as emotional disgust, fear, anger or discomfort felt or expressed towards people who do not conform to society's gender expectations. Over the years, studies have been done on attitude towards transgender (Antoszewski, Kasielska, Jedrzejczak & Kruk-Jeromin, 2007). Antoszewski et al. (2007) measured public knowledge and attitude towards trans-sexualism on 300 students from three different Polish universities. They reported that out of 300 students, only 12 knew about trans-sexual persons and only 4 were able to correctly define trans-sexualism. However, 54% students were able to define trans-sexualism correctly, while a significant portion (20%) confused the term with transvestitism or homosexuality. According to a number of studies, men often reported more negative attitudes toward transgender individuals in comparison to women (Davidson & Czopp, 2014; Gerhardstein & Anderson, 2010).

Purpose :

The purpose of the present study was to measure the level of trans-prejudice percent among young college students of Patna, and examine the relationship between constituents of transprejudice, namely, transphobia, and gender-bashing. In general, the purpose was to examine the students' attitude towards people who fail to conform to the expected gender roles.

Hypotheses :

On the basis of the objective of the present study, the following hypotheses were formulated :

- Transprejudice will be found in youth.
- There will be significant gender difference in transprejudice among the young students.

- Males and females will differ significantly in gender bashing.
- Transphobia and gender-bashing will be positively correlated.

Method :

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 100 students (50 males and 50 females) comprising those of 20 to 24 years of age. The sample was selected by incidental-cum-purposive sampling method from Patna Women's College (P.W.C), Bailey Road, Patna and Anugrah Narayan College (A.N.C), Boring Road, Patna. The 50 female students belonged to Patna Women's College while the 50 males to A.N. College of Patna.

Instruments

Genderism and Transphobia Scale developed by Darryl B. Hill and L.B Willoughby (2005) was used for measuring transprejudice and its two constituent components namely, 'transphobia' and 'gender-bashing.' The scale was a 7- point scale with 32 items where the scale point "7" indicated 'Strongly disagree,' and "1" 'Strongly agree.' The reliability of the scale is .94 for transphobia and .79 for gender-bashing. The overall coefficient of correlation is .95.

Procedure

Data were collected from two colleges of Patna. The students from each college were approached during their college hours and were requested to fill up the questionnaire honestly. They were briefed on the meaning of the scale points and told about the rating procedure. The participants were assured of the secrecy of their responses and thanked for their co-operation. Data collection was completed in 20 days.

Results

Mean, Standard Deviation, t-ratio and co-efficient of correlation were calculated for the major variables of the study. Level of significance was tested against 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Interpretation of the finding was done on the basis of the framed hypothesis.

Hypothesis No. 1 was formulated on the basis that Indian society holds conservative beliefs which are often passed on to the younger generation. Hypothesis No. 1 aimed at finding out whether transprejudice was

present among the youth of the present sample and if yes, what was its level.

The manual used for assessing the level of transprejudice in the Genderism and Transphobia Scale (GTS) provided three levels of transprejudice. Accordingly, scores between 32-96 were categorized as 'low' level of transprejudice, 97-161 as 'moderate' level and 162-224 as the 'highest' level of transprejudice.

Table. 1 shows the percentage of respondents who were placed under the 'low,' 'medium' and 'high' levels of transprejudice attitude on the basis of their scores on the measuring scale. In other words, out of 100 students, 96 reported having 'low' level of transprejudice attitude while, 62 and 34 respondents reported 'moderate' and 'high' degrees of this attitude respectively. The mean score of 142.01 lay between the score range of 97-161 on the transprejudice scale, and suggested that on an average, a moderate level of transprejudice attitude was present in this sample of students. The observation is also in favor of the hypothesis, "Transprejudice will be found in youth". It may be said that the observed moderate level of transprejudice among the youth could be a result of their being influenced by the beliefs of their parents and elderly people around them, who might not be holding a positive attitude towards the transgenders socially and religiously.

The argument behind Hypothesis No. 2 was that the Indian society was patriarchal and, therefore, it was likely to show prejudice and hold negative attitude towards the female class in general. It was argued, since females went through discrimination and negative attitude towards themselves in their society, they were likely to be more understanding about another discriminated group (i.e., the transgender) and have a less negative attitude towards them. In the backdrop of the above argument, it was hypothesized "There will be significant gender difference in transprejudice in the youth of the present sample."

Table. 2 shows that the Mean scores and Standard Deviation scores of transprejudice attitudes of males and females are 142.12 (SD = 31.3) and 135.76 (SD = 30.7) respectively. The observed *t*-ratio in this regard is 2.18, which is greater than the given table value of 1.98 at *df* 98 for the 0.05 level of significance. The observation suggested that the obtained Mean value for

the male students was significantly greater than the Mean score for the female students on the measure of attitude towards transprejudice. In other words, the presence of the transprejudice attitude was significantly more in the male students in comparison to the females and thus there was gender difference on this attitude. Hypothesis 2 of the study was substantiated with this finding.

Ground for formulating Hypothesis 3 was the popular belief of our society that transgender are extraneous from binary gender notion. It is due to such beliefs that the transgender often suffer gender-bashing along with physical, sexual and verbal violence. Moreover, there are certain superstitions attached to their group in our society. One of them goes: the blessing and curse of transgender can affect a person's life. It is also assumed that females are relatively more superstitious than the males and, therefore, they were likely to hold a different attitude towards gender-bashing than the latter.

Table 3 includes the Mean and standard deviation scores of male and female respondents for 'gender-bashing.' The Mean score of 32.46 (S.D =5.13) for the male students in this regard is higher than the females' Mean score of 30 (S.D = 3.87). The *t* ratio in this context appeared to be 2.76 which was larger than the value needed for the difference to be significant at the .01 level. The result suggested that the male respondents of the present sample reported significantly stronger gender bashing attitude than the females.

Hypothesis No.4 was formulated on the argument that if a person holds a strong negative attitude towards transphobia (i.e., fear and disgust felt or expressed towards transgender), he or she will also hold a strong negative attitude towards gender-bashing or victimization of a person just because the person concerned is a transgender or vice versa. Therefore, the two variables were envisioned to be positively associated. In this context, it was hypothesized, "There will be positive correlation between transphobia and gender-bashing." For this purpose the coefficient of correlation was calculated by using Product Moment Method between the scores of transphobia and gender bashing. As hypothesized, the result showed significant positive co-efficient of correlation between the scores of transphobia and gender-bashing.

Table 4, contains the value of coefficient of correlation ($r = .28$) between the scores of transphobia and gender bashing which is greater than the table value required for the coefficient to be significant at the level of 0.01. The observed significant positive correlation between transphobia and gender bashing indicated that the youth of the present sample who reported high transphobic attitudes, were also likely to have a high level of gender bashing attitudes. The obtained result was in favour of the framed hypothesis No.4 which states that “Transphobia and Gender bashing will be positively correlated”.

Conclusions :

On the basis of the results of the present study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Transprejudice was present among the youth of the present sample which substantiated the first hypothesis of the study.
- The result showed significant gender difference between male and female college students on transprejudice and supported the second Hypothesis of the study too.
- Male and female students differed significantly on the variable of ‘gender bashing.’ The finding was in favour of Hypothesis 3.
- Significant positive correlation was found between the attitudes of transphobia and gender-bashing. This proved the Hypothesis 4 of the study.
- There is some support in the findings of some other studies for Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 of the present study.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Level and Range of Scores for Transprejudice and the Percentage of Respondents’ Falling under these Respective Categories

Level of transprejudice attitude categories	Range of scores for transprejudice	Percentage of respondents in the respective
Low	32-96	4%
Moderate	97-161	62%
High	162-224	34%

N = 100, Mean = 142.01

Table 2. Mean, SD, t-ratio and Level of Significance for the Transprejudice Attitude among Male and Female Student

	Mean	Standard Deviation	t score	Level of Significance
Male	142.12	31.2	2.18	p<0.05
Female	135.76	30.7		

N=100

Table 3. Mean, S.D., t-ratio for Male and Female students on Gender Bashing

	Mean	Standard Deviation	t score	Level of Significance
Male	32.46	5.13	2.76	p<0.01
Female	30	3.87		

N=100

Table 4. Co-efficient of Correlation between Transphobia and Gender Bashing

Variables	r	Level of Significance
Transphobia	0.28	p<0.01
Gender bashing		

N = 100, r-value at df, 98 on 0.01 level is 0.25

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