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Transgender people satisfied with their lives: The role of gender-based victimization, bullying in school students suicide attempts

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Abstract:

Transgender and gender non-conforming people frequently experience discrimination, harassment, and marginalization across school, college and university campuses. That experiences of discrimination often negatively impact the psychologically, emotionally, physically well-being. The purpose of this study is to explore the gender-based victimizations, bullying on lesbian, gay and bisexual young people increased risk of self-harm, suicidal attempts and suicide compared with heterosexual youth is well established. 5 trans students were sample of this study. Semi-structure interview will be used for collection of data and thematic analysis used for data analysis. Our findings show that importance of supportive environments, interventions that strengthen interpersonal relationships and local environments, improving school policies and practices to create safer and more supportive school climates for all youth and reduce suicidality among transgender youth. Further, this community needs to be supported to strengthen their resiliency factors and draw culturally sensitive and transgender-inclusive suicide prevention strategies and increase protective factors to tackle this high rate of suicidality.

Keywords: *Transgender, bullying, suicide attempt, gender-based victimization, support*

Introduction:

Transgender is a broad term for people whose gender identity, expression, or behaviour is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender persons are the one who exhibit the gender variant behaviour and roles in the society. In the Indian context, they are rejected by their families and society, undergo extreme stressful experiences due to gender dysphoria, undergo childhood sexual abuse, bullying and teasing, early discontinuation of schooling, lack of livelihood opportunities, forced marriage, being compelled to do sex work and begging for livelihood, financial and sexual exploitation by the partners, exploitation by police and public they stay at slums with poor living, mental conditions and they are ill-treated at health-care centres. Transgender persons are the most visible and exploited sexual minorities in India and high risk for developing psychological distress and mental health issues such as depression, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies, and conduct disorders. Many literature has reported high rate of suicidal tendencies among transgender community which ranges from 32% to 50% and the suicide rate is about 30%. 26% of the transgender persons are at high risk for major depression, and 15% to 31% are at high risk for tobacco and alcohol abuse, respectively (Virupaksha, 2018).

According to Nuttbrock, Rosenblum, and Blumenstein (2002), transgender people are especially prone to mental health issues and psychological anguish. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) youth have a higher risk of self-harm, suicide attempts, and suicide than heterosexual youth, but little is known about the specific risk factors or protective factors that may raise this risk. The majority of studies have exclusively looked at homosexual and lesbian youth. According to the few studies on transgender people's experiences, they endure more suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and actual suicide than cisgender persons do. Suicide rate and propensity for suicide Compared to the general population, are significantly higher among transgender people. The main risk factors for suicidal behaviour in transgender people are gender-based victimisation, discrimination, bullying, violence, rejection by family, friends, and the community, harassment by an

intimate partner, family members, police, and the general public, and discrimination and poor treatment in the health-care system.

Students who identify as transgender have also reported being called names and hearing crude comments. However, bullying experienced by transgender kids was distinguished from that experienced by LGBTQ children by being more overtly directed at their gender identity and by more severe physical attack. Being called a deadname and being misgendered were frequently cited as examples of verbal bullying by transgender students. When I attempted to use the loo, a young child tried to hit me.

The main goal of higher education for students is academic accomplishment. According to the literature, campus culture has a big impact on how well students learn and develop as a whole. Favourable learning outcomes are typically observed for college students who perceive and experience favourable campus climates (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Student educational outcomes may be impacted by personal feelings of prejudice or a hostile campus environment for intergroup relations. A preliminary study by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (1990) found that on college and university campuses across the country, one-fifth of all documented incidences of harassment and violence against LGBTQ individuals took place. However, some studies have shown that despite facing numerous challenges in their daily lives, transgender people have been able to overcome them by developing certain positive coping mechanisms and character traits. These protective factors include family support, remaining in one's family of origin, optimism, higher education, a higher income, employment in the mainstream, and concerns for one's children. They experience bullying, homelessness, and poor school enrolment frequently. Schools should prepare professors and staff to work with sexually diverse adolescents by providing them with regular training. Schools ought to be seen as safe zones for LGBTQ youngsters rather than combat zones. According to Kosciw, Greytak, Zongrone, Clark, & Truong (2018), bullying of LGBTQ students—those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning—occurs regularly and is damaging. According to Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, and Lumpkin (2014), bullying entails unwelcome aggressive treatment from

peers that repeatedly occurs or is likely to occur over time and takes place in a setting of power.

Research Objective

Main objective of this study to explore day to day life experiences of transgender people and how gender- based victimization, bullying force to suicide attempt or suicide.

Methods

Data Collection

Qualitative research method and 5 trans student such as 4 trans girls, 1 trans boy are sample for this study and snowball sampling technique were used for sample choosing of Raipur district in Chhattisgarh. Semi-structured interview should be used for data collection purpose that covered a broad range of areas of experience related to education, family and mental hygiene. What has been your experience with primary as well as secondary school, How did that affect your study, What worked well in that school, What do you think other schools could learn from your experience? What kind of victimization you face in daily life? How many time you attempt suicide? Trans children were interviewed using a range of methods in order to accommodate specific access requirements and ensure interviewee comfort.

Table- sample and their experiences

Name	Gender assign at birth	Gender identity	Family acceptance	Grade	School experience	Suicide attempt
Ensiya	Male	Trans female	No	Class 10th	Negative	Yes
Popy	Female	Trans male	No	Class 8th	Negative	Yes
Dimple	Male	Trans female	No	Class 8th	Negative	Yes
Dhananjay	Male	Trans female	No	Class 9th	Negative	Yes
Kriti	Male	Trans female	No	Class 10th	Negative	Yes

Data Interpretation

Theme 1 Negative Campus Climate

Students experienced risks to their personal safety one trans student said-

“Our campus has recently been the place of multiple attacks against the LGBTQ community, so my safety is a serious concern for me And I was concerned about the swastikas and other hate crimes going on campus. I never have felt comfortable on campus or in the general community”.

The reason I stay is it only a two year master's program, and the program is one of the best in the country. Respondents also discussed physical attacks: I considered leaving my campus because during my first semester at [my campus] I was physically assaulted on campus on my way home. The university's response was less than adequate. Two more physical assaults happened on/near campus in the next three days. News of these assaults hit national news before the university even made a statement of any kind. I decided to stay mostly because I couldn't afford to leave. In addition, respondents related experiences of religiously-inspired calls to violence. Tried to get him removed from campus no one seemed to deem it necessary or possible. Thanks for the concern for my safety. Some respondents made the decision to leave a college or university campus over concerns for their physical and/or emotional safety and security I actually left my first college due to the abusive climate that involved death threats against me and the college administration not caring at all. Others remained on their campuses only because they foresaw no other options. Negative campus climates compelled some LGBT persons to remain in an identity closet.

Theme 2 Bullying

Another student started using my dead name and the wrong pronouns and telling everyone that was my name and that I was really a girl, according to one student who made the report. Unidentified race, straight transgender male said I have seen consistent misgendering (some malicious, some just ignorance) of non-passing trans folks or those who use neopronouns (gender-neutral pronouns). Students who were changing genders were more at risk for physical sexual assault. One kid said they had been sexually attacked and

that when I was younger, students will try to lift or tug your skirt up. Every week, I get grabbed. There was physical bullying in the restrooms. One pupil claimed that they were kicked out of both bathrooms. Being called a deadname and being misgendered were frequently cited as examples of verbal bullying by transgender students. However, bullying experienced by transgender kids was distinguished from that experienced by LGBTQ children by being more overtly directed at their gender identity and by more severe physical attack.

Institutional Support

In this thematic category, students, faculty, and staff provided a positive overall and general assessment of their campus' climate. And, in somewhat more detail my school goes out of its way to be open to all genders and sexualities, and from the campus community to the classroom, that openness is felt. The issues of institutional support centered also on issues of relationship status in which same-sex partners of faculty and staff were welcomed and treated with respect: I am completely out in my office, and my coworkers are very comfortable and supportive. I can honestly say that I am never treated differently than my straight coworkers, my partner is always acknowledged and invited to functions and events as a hetero partner would be, and I feel no pressure to conceal my identity under any circumstances. Some respondents referred to supportive heterosexual allies seems very LGBT friendly. We have great straight talks. One student linked the former experiences of the students who attended his university, with empathy on issues of diversity of students at school are Nerds who dealt with bullying in school. Because of this, there is very little of any type of hate on campus.

Resiliency and protective factors among transgender persons

The research studies have tried to explore the resiliency factors which are helping the transgender community to bounce back and continue living even with a number of hardships and adverse conditions in their day-to-day living. The transgender persons have overcome from the above-mentioned situations using at least one of the coping mechanisms or having certain personal qualities such as assertive communication, self-advocacy, spiritual coping, honesty, integrity,

avoidance, physical or verbal aggression, help seeking, being future-oriented with having personal goals, being outspoken, strong, friendly, outgoing, independent, determination, etc. The transgender persons who employed in the mainstream jobs other than sex work and begging, optimistic, having perceived social support from family, emotional stability, and child-related concerns have shown better self-esteem and resiliency level. Social support from family is found to be general protective factor which is associated with reduced risk for lifetime suicide attempts among transgender persons. A high proportion of the sample reported self-harm (65.3%), suicidal ideation (73.8%) and suicide attempts (25.7%). Demographic risk factors included identifying as female, non-binary or trans and being from a low-income background. Bullying and online bullying were associated with an increased risk for each outcome, and positive school experience was associated with a reduced risk for each outcome.

Discussion

In this study LGBTQ students reported a range of often significant bullying experiences that were associated with their sexual orientation and gender identity as well as their race, ethnicity verbal bullying, including name calling and verbal harassment, was the most commonly reported by students and adults at school. LGBTQ students of color reported verbal bullying based on their race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity including racial slurs, in addition to bullying related to their sexual orientation and gender identity. Bullying typically occurs in classrooms, hallways, and bathrooms whereas may spend much of their time in offices. They may fear reporting because they have not yet disclosed their sexual orientation and/or gender identity to their parents, and therefore do not want the school to call home about LGBTQ bullying. This study reveals how the absence of an effective trans-inclusive school policy, along with a lack of knowledge about broader legal safeguards, can encourage transphobic behaviour and foster division and discrimination. This research highlights the need for educators, policy makers and school leaders need to take transformative action to protect trans children in our schools. Such action can start with recognition of the educational injustices experienced by trans children, acknowledgement of school and sector-wide responsibility to address institutional cisnormativity and commitment to genuine equality for trans

pupils. point out in the literature how instructors are left to manage trans inclusion on their own, with the potential for reactions based in fear and schools going into crisis-mode. When schools only have extremely basic anti-transphobic bullying policies, these regulations can be seen as the highest limit of inclusion that the school supports and in cases where discriminatory policy is absent, a lack of awareness and a presumption of transphobia can obstruct equality and action. Schools have a responsibility to make sure that a clear commitment to trans inclusion and equality cuts across educational policy in a way that is explicit and puts a priority on the well-being of trans students. Cis-normative policies run the risk of excluding, disenfranchising, and harming trans students. Findings from this study on cis-normative curricula are consistent with literature on the pervasiveness of cisnormativity and how it can be woven into the curriculum in ways that teachers and school administrators might not even be aware of take into account how inaction to confront cisnormativity in school curricula is caused by a lack of teacher training, expertise, or confidence. This study also discusses the ways in which schools support identity erasure cultivating ignorance and delegitimization in communities where stigma and prejudice can be removed and students in schools that restrict dialogue about gender diversity are left to teach their friends. Throughout theme two, testimonies emphasise how institutional cisnormativity affects students' experiences of abuse and isolation. These findings support prior research on institutional cisnormativity's contribution to the upkeep of dangerous learning environments in schools. Additionally, these results are consistent with literature that critiques the drawbacks of a bullying-specific approach. Individualized responses to bullying that is transphobic leave broader cis-supremacist hierarchies uncontested. Researcher also discuss how a focus on bullying alone overlooks the need to address school climates that support and reinforce cis-identities. Trans children were harmed and de-legitimized by trans-exclusionary curricula, growing up in environments of invisibility and hypervisibility, where a desire for equality and inclusion left peer education on the shoulders of young trans children. A number of trans children in this sample had experienced extensive and extended harassment, bullying and abuse, alongside rejection and isolation, with parents expressing concern that school leadership did not recognize the strain placed on trans children. For a number

of trans children, a lack of emotional or physical safety had profound impacts on their well-being, self-confidence and willingness to attend school. Within this sample, a sizeable proportion of trans children had left at least one school, had missed a year or more of education or had dropped out of mainstream education entirely, due to school failure to create a trans-inclusive environment.

CONCLUSION

General bullying victimization among LGBTQ youth is consistently associated with internalizing problems such as depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts. National estimates suggest that lesbian, gay, and queer youth who experience peer harassment or bullying have 5–6 times the odds of suicide attempts compared to LGBTQ youth who do not report victimization. Additionally, general bullying victimization is associated with poor academic outcomes such as truancy, unexcused absences, academic disengagement, educational aspirations, and lower grades and test scores. LGBTQ youth who are the targets of general bullying report feeling less safe at school, and it is likely this perceived lack of safety that compromises young people's ability to fully engage in their educational experiences. Further, bullying is related to high-risk health behaviours, such as alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use for LGBTQ youth.

This study emphasises the significance of transformative action by educators, policymakers, and school administrators to safeguard trans students in our classrooms. The first step in taking such action can be to recognise the educational injustices experienced by trans children, the sector's and the school's duty to address institutional cisnormativity, and the dedication to true equality for trans students. Additional investigation, such as that conducted by the author can continue to look at what steps can be taken to lessen systemic heteronormativity. Building institutional normativity and educational injustice requires a concerted effort. Furthermore, in conceiving of a much-needed paradigm shift in envisioning a more trans-affirming policy and its enactment in schools, we want to continue to draw attention to the limits of a queerly informed commitment to dismantling a heteronormative gender binary system. Such a framework for gender justice reform fails to understand the specific lived and embodied experiences of children and youth in schools with non-assigned gender

identities and tends to rely on reinstating binary oppositional frames of reference. For example, a revisioning of both trans-inclusive policies and education in schools and educational research is needed that avoids imposing an oppositional binary and nonbinary trans nomenclature. This interpretive frame fails to account for how trans youth themselves choose to self-identify in ways that confound such a binary categorization. Such a critical trans focus raises vital questions about the need for a commitment to trans in both the development and ongoing enactment of trans-affirming policies and gender expansive education in schools, as well as in educational research that is committed to creating conditions that support the liability of trans youth and gender democratization in the education system.

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