

A Correlated Study on Psychological Well-Being, Social Support and Stress among Transgender Adults

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Abstract— Understanding the association of psychological well-being and social support with stress is important for understanding the mental health of transgender adults. The present study attempts to investigate these dimensions and examine the relationship of psychological well-being and social support with stress among transgender adults. It intended to find the relationship between psychological well-being, social support and stress among 60 transgender adults aged between 20 and 30 years through psychological tools and statistical analyses such as Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The results showed a significant correlation between psychological well-being and stress ($r = -0.31, p < .05$). Furthermore, a significant correlation was also found between social support and stress ($r = -0.32, p < .05$). These findings indicate that lower levels of psychological well-being and social support were associated with higher levels of stress among transgender adults. The findings support the hypotheses that psychological well-being and social support have significant relationships with stress. The study highlights the importance of psychological well-being and social support in understanding and reducing stress among transgender adults. Further research may help in understanding the factors that influence these dimensions and contribute to the development of appropriate psychological and social interventions for transgender adults.



Keywords— Psychological well-being, Social support, Stress, Transgender adults

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a common experience in everyday life. People may experience stress because of work, financial problems, relationships, health concerns or other difficult situations. The effects of stress may be different for different people depending on their personal and social circumstances. For transgender adults, stress may come from both general life situations and experiences related to their gender identity. Transgender people may experience stigma, discrimination, rejection, harassment and lack of acceptance. These experiences can occur in families, workplaces, educational institutions, healthcare settings and other social environments. The minority stress perspective explains that people from stigmatized groups may experience additional stress because of prejudice and discrimination. Meyer (2003) proposed that social stigma, prejudice and

discrimination can create a stressful social environment that may negatively affect mental health. Although the original model focused on sexual minority populations, later researchers adapted the framework to understand the experiences of transgender and gender-nonconforming people.

Hendricks and Testa (2012) applied the minority stress model to transgender and gender-nonconforming populations. They explained that transgender individuals may experience stress through discrimination, violence, expectations of rejection, concealment of identity and internalized stigma. At the same time, they highlighted the importance of social and community support as a possible source of resilience. Research has consistently shown a relationship between minority stress and mental health among transgender people. Valentine and Shipherd (2018)

reviewed 77 studies on transgender and gender-nonconforming populations. They found that transgender individuals experienced a range of social stressors, including stigma, discrimination and bias. These stressors were associated with mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, distress and suicidal thoughts. The review also found that social support, community connectedness and effective coping may have a positive role in the mental health of transgender people.

More recent research has also supported the relationship between minority stress and psychological health. Puckett et al. (2023) studied daily experiences of minority stress among transgender and gender-diverse individuals. Their study included 167 participants who reported their experiences over a 56-day period. The researchers found that experiences of marginalization and gender non-affirmation were related to increased negative and anxious feelings and to higher symptoms of anxiety and depression. A systematic review by Mezza et al. (2024) also found a clear relationship between gender minority stress and mental health among transgender and gender-diverse people in Europe. The review included 30 studies and reported that discrimination was one of the most commonly studied stressors and was strongly related to poorer mental health.

Psychological well-being refers to a person's overall positive psychological functioning. It includes how people feel about themselves and their lives, their ability to deal with difficulties, their relationships with others and their sense of purpose and personal growth. Good psychological well-being does not mean that a person never experiences stress or negative emotions. Rather, it reflects the ability to maintain a reasonable level of positive functioning while dealing with life's difficulties. Stress can have a negative relationship with psychological well-being. When stress continues for a long period, people may find it more difficult to maintain positive emotions and cope with daily problems. For transgender adults, this may be particularly important because stress can be connected with social experiences such as discrimination and rejection. Studies with transgender populations have reported similar findings. Scandurra et al. (2017) studied 149 transgender people in Italy and examined minority stress, resilience, social support and mental health. Their findings showed that everyday discrimination and internalized transphobia were associated with more mental health problems. A recent study from South India also provides useful evidence about stress and psychological quality of life among transgender individuals. The study included 50 transgender adults and examined perceived stress, loneliness and quality of life. Higher perceived stress was significantly related to lower overall quality of life. Stress

also showed a strong negative relationship with the social relationships domain of quality of life.

Social support refers to the help, care, understanding and encouragement that a person feels is available from other people. Having people who understand and accept an individual can make it easier to deal with difficult experiences. Social support is especially important for transgender adults because acceptance from others may help them deal with experiences of discrimination and rejection. On the other hand, lack of support from family or other people may increase feelings of isolation and stress. Research has found a connection between social support and mental health in transgender populations. Pflum et al. (2015), for example, examined social support and psychological well-being among transgender and gender-nonconforming adults. Their findings supported the importance of social relationships in transgender people's psychological well-being. Similarly, Scandurra et al. (2017) found that family social support was associated with better mental health outcomes and could reduce the negative relationship between discrimination and mental health.

Budge et al. (2013) also examined social support and psychological functioning among transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals. Their work suggests that supportive relationships can be an important resource when transgender individuals deal with stressful life experiences. Valentine and Shipherd (2018) concluded that social support and community connectedness can act as important protective factors for transgender and gender-nonconforming people. A larger and more recent study by Tebbe et al. (2025) examined different types of social support among 2,411 transgender and nonbinary adults. Participants with low levels of social support reported poorer mental health outcomes, including more depression and post-traumatic stress symptoms. The researchers also found that support was not the same for everyone, particularly when family support was considered.

Objectives of the study

- I. To examine the relationship between psychological well-being and stress among transgender adults.
- II. To examine the relationship between social support and stress among transgender adults.
- III. To study the multiple effect of predictor variables i.e. psychological well-being and social support on stress among transgender adults.

Hypotheses

1. There would be significant relationship between psychological well-being and stress among transgender adults.
2. There would be significant relationship between social support and stress among transgender adults.
3. There would be significant multiple effect of psychological well-being and social support on stress among transgender adults.

Variables

- a. Predictor Variables: Psychological Well-being and Social Support
- b. Criterion Variable: Stress

Psychological Tools

- a. Demographic Information Sheet

A brief demographic information sheet was used to collect basic information about the participants. It included details such as age, gender identity, educational qualification, occupation and other relevant background information. The demographic information was used only to describe the participants and was not included in the correlation or regression analysis.

- b. The World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5)

The WHO-5 was used to assess psychological well-being. It contains five items. Each item is scored from 0 to 5. The raw total ranges from 0 to 25, with higher scores indicating better well-being.

- c. Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) Social Support Survey

The MOS Social Support Survey was used to assess the availability of social support. The 19-item comprise four subscales and one overall summary index. It measure with item scores from 1 to 5.

- d. Stress Scale (MAPC) by Dr. M. Singh

The Stress Scale was used to assess the level of stress among the participants. The supplied dataset identifies this scale as having 40 items, with item scores from 1 to 3 and a total score recorded for each participant.

Procedure

The study followed a purposive sampling strategy for selecting transgender adults aged between 20–30 years. This sampling method was adopted to ensure that the participants were directly relevant to the objectives of the study and had characteristics appropriate for examining psychological well-being, social support and stress. The

study was conducted through government and private NGOs in Rajasthan. A total sample of 60 transgender adults was selected for the study. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their responses were collected using standardized psychological tools measuring psychological well-being, social support and stress. Participation was voluntary and confidentiality of the information provided by the participants was maintained throughout the study.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected in the present study were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the direction and strength of the relationships among psychological well-being, social support and stress. Regression analysis was also conducted to examine whether psychological well-being and social support significantly predicted stress. These statistical techniques were considered appropriate for determining the significance and strength of the relationships among the variables and for interpreting the predictive contribution of the independent variables to stress.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Correlation Analysis

Variables		Pearson r	DF	Result
			value	
Well Being- Stress		-0.310	58	Significant negative
Social Support- Stress		-0.316	58	Significant negative

The table presented the correlational values between the major variables of the study, including Psychological Well-being, Social Support and Stress. The correlational analysis indicated significant relationships between Psychological Well-being, Social Support and Stress.

The correlational value between Psychological Well-being and Stress was $r = -0.310$, $p = 0.0158$, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$) where $DF = 58$. This indicates a significant negative relationship between psychological well-being and stress suggesting that higher levels of psychological well-being were associated with lower levels of stress among transgender adults. Furthermore, the correlational value between Social Support and Stress was $r = -0.316$, which was also statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$) where $DF = 58$. This indicates a significant negative relationship between social support and stress suggesting that higher

levels of social support were associated with lower levels of stress among transgender adults.

Overall, the findings indicate that both psychological well-being and social support were significantly and negatively related to stress. The results support the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between psychological well-being, social support and stress among transgender adults.

Regression Analysis

Regression	SE	B	t	p	R ²
Well Being-Stress	-0.055	0.022	-2.487	0.016	0.096
Social Support-Stress	-0.136	0.054	-2.536	0.014	0.100

In the given table separate regression analyses were conducted using SPSS to examine whether psychological well-being and social support significantly predicted stress among transgender adults.

The regression analysis between Psychological Well-being and Stress showed that psychological well-being significantly predicted stress, with $B = 0.022$, $SE = -0.055$, $t = -2.487$, $p = 0.016$, and $R^2 = 0.096$. The result was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that psychological well-being accounted for 9.6% of the variance in stress. Similarly, the regression analysis between Social Support and Stress showed a statistically significant predictive relationship, with $B = 0.054$, $SE = -0.136$, $t = -2.536$, $p = 0.014$ and $R^2 = 0.100$. The result was significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that social support accounted for 10.0% of the variance in stress.

Overall, the regression findings indicate that both psychological well-being and social support significantly predicted stress among transgender adults.

III. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The present study sought to establish the level of association between psychological well-being, social support and stress among transgender adults. The study also aimed to examine whether psychological well-being and social support were significantly related to stress among transgender adults.

The first hypothesis stated that there would be a significant relationship between psychological well-being and stress among transgender. The obtained results, as highlighted by the correlational analysis, were in agreement with this hypothesis. A significant negative relationship was found between psychological well-being and stress ($r = -0.310$, $p = 0.0158$). This finding indicates that higher levels of

psychological well-being were associated with lower levels of stress among transgender adults. The regression analysis further showed that psychological well-being significantly predicted stress, with $R^2 = 0.096$ and $p = 0.016$. This indicates that psychological well-being accounted for approximately 9.6% of the variance in stress. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported.

The second hypothesis was to examine the relationship between social support and stress among transgender. The results were also in agreement with this hypothesis. A significant negative relationship was found between social support and stress ($r = -0.316$, $p = 0.0139$). This suggests that transgender who reported higher levels of social support tended to experience lower levels of stress. The regression analysis also indicated that social support significantly predicted stress, with $R^2 = 0.100$ and $p = 0.014$. Thus, social support accounted for approximately 10% of the variance in stress. These findings support the second hypothesis and highlight the importance of social support in understanding stress among transgender.

The findings of the present study are supported by previous research which has emphasized the importance of psychological well-being and social support in the mental health of transgender individuals. Minority stress theory suggests that transgender individuals may experience additional stress due to stigma, discrimination, rejection and other social difficulties. In such circumstances, psychological resources and supportive social relationships may play an important role in helping individuals manage stressful experiences. Social support may provide emotional and interpersonal resources that help individuals cope with difficult situations, while psychological well-being may contribute to better emotional adjustment and resilience.

The regression findings further suggest that both psychological well-being and social support had a significant contribution in predicting stress. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening psychological well-being and social support when addressing stress among transgender. Overall, the findings suggest that stress among transgender adults should not be understood only as an individual psychological issue. Social relationships, emotional well-being and the availability of supportive environments may also influence how individuals experience and manage stress. Further research with larger samples and participants from different regions may help in understanding these relationships more clearly and may contribute to the development of appropriate psychological and social interventions for transgender.

Implications

The findings have practical implications for psychological support with transgender. Stress assessment may be useful when providing counselling or other psychological services. Attention can also be given to supportive relationships. Family, friends, community groups and other trusted people may be important sources of support. The results also suggest that interventions should not focus only on symptoms of stress. They can also consider positive well-being and the person's support system. Simple screening and supportive counselling may help identify areas that need attention.

IV. CONCLUSION

The current study aimed at obtaining further evidence regarding the relationship between psychological well-being, social support and stress among transgender. Through correlation and regression analyses, the study provided important findings regarding the association of these variables. The results showed a significant negative relationship between psychological well-being and stress, as well as between social support and stress. The regression analysis further indicated that psychological well-being and social support significantly predicted stress among transgender. These findings highlight the importance of psychological well-being and supportive social relationships in understanding stress among transgender.

Several limitations are recognised and taken into consideration in the present study. Although the study included participants relevant to the research objectives, the sample size was limited to 60 transgender adults aged between 20 and 30 years and was collected through government and private NGOs in Rajasthan. Therefore, the findings may have limited generalisability to transgender adults from other age groups, geographical areas and social backgrounds. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships between psychological well-being, social support and stress. Future studies using longitudinal designs may provide a better understanding of how these variables influence one another over time.

Further research using additional variables may provide more significant insight into the psychological experiences of transgender adults. Variables such as family acceptance, discrimination, stigma, coping mechanisms, self-esteem, resilience, community connectedness, economic conditions and access to healthcare may provide a broader understanding of the factors associated with stress. The inclusion of these variables may help in developing a more

comprehensive understanding of the psychological and social experiences of transgender adults.

In addition, similar research should be replicated using larger samples representing transgender individuals from different regions, age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural contexts. Such research may help in understanding whether the relationships between psychological well-being, social support and stress remain consistent across different populations and settings.

In the final analysis, the present study demonstrates that psychological well-being and social support are significantly and negatively associated with stress among transgender. The findings suggest that greater psychological well-being and social support are associated with lower levels of stress. Therefore, strengthening supportive social environments and promoting psychological well-being may be important in addressing stress among transgender. This study can thus be regarded as a stepping stone for further research and for developing a more comprehensive approach towards promoting the psychological well-being and social support of transgender.

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