

Attitudes towards Transgender: A Study of Gender and Influencing Factors

Abstract

This study was initiated with the purpose of confirming the gender differences in attitudes towards transgender along with focusing on the factors that can influence these attitudes i.e. religiosity and interaction with transgender. Sample was selected from university students of Islamabad and Rawalpindi (N=300); using the Urdu translation of “Attitude towards transwomen scale” (Jami, 2013) and its adapted version i.e. Attitude towards transmen scale. Results disconfirm the widely popular notion that males are more prejudiced towards transgender than females. The study confirms that factors such as interaction with transgender and religiosity influence the attitudes towards MtF or FtM transgender. Religiosity was associated with decrease in acceptance of transgender; and increase in interaction with transgender was associated with increase in acceptance and decrease in negative attitudes. This research has potential for a wide range of implications from increased understanding of nature and manifestations of gender related attitudes as well as practical methods that can be employed to reduce negative attitudes and prejudices in our society.

Keywords: *gender differences, attitudes towards transgender, prejudice, religiosity, interaction*

INTRDUCTION

The study of gender differences is anything but new to the field of Psychology.

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From the moment a child is born (perhaps even before that) his or her gender plays a significant role in influencing how the child is viewed by the world (Eliot, 2009). Men and women are so dissimilar to one another, from physiological to psychological aspects of their being, that it is said that men and women may actually be from two different planets (Gray, 1992). This overwhelming contrast has been a focus of attention of researchers throughout the world in the field of Gender studies and related social sciences. Studies are primarily focusing on aspects that men and women are most different in; the reasons behind these differences; and whether these differences are found universally across the globe or are they culturally bound. This research will attempt to examine the attitudes of young male and female university students towards transgender people in Pakistan.

Differences exist in the overall attitudes possessed by both males and females. Psychologist Gordon Allport has described attitudes as being the most distinctive and essential concept in modern social psychology. He defined it as “A mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (Allport, 1935). Although there are numerous other definitions of attitudes available, this definition put forth by Allport is by far the most cited one. Then in the later years came a more simple and relatable definition which stated that an attitude is “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”

The reason attitudes are considered to be such an important concept in psychology is that apart from having affective and cognitive components it also has a behavioral component. Therefore the attitude of a person about a particular thing will determine how he or she will behave with it or in its presence. Attitudes have a practical role in our life. People tend to adhere to those attitudes and like the things that are closest to their values and not the ones that oppose their principles (Maio, Olson, Bernard, & Luke, 2006). Negative attitudes are formed and displayed when one is faced with a concept that is unsettling and disturbing for him or her. These negative attitudes, as explained above, can result in negative and hostile behaviors. In the recent present such behaviors have been wildly displayed against the transgender community. Transgender is an umbrella term and as of yet there is not one agreed upon definition for it. However this much is understood that the transgender community is comprised of a host of identities and types of self-expression that transgress the conventional and universally accepted gender categories of “male” and “female”. Among them are the ones

having organic physiological abnormalities or deformities; called the hermaphrodites or intersexed individuals (Diamond, 2002) transsexuals (the ones who aspire to change from their anatomical sex to the other (Valentine, 2007) and then there are the cross dressers; individuals who fancy dressing in the attire conventionally worn by the opposite gender (Beemyn, 2003). Also included are those who have deviant sexual orientations; being either homosexual or bisexual (Crooks & Baur, 2005). Therefore the term transgender is in essence a vague term and can have many different meanings. And the accurate terms listed above are beyond the knowledge of most common people therefore in the current study we use the term Male-to-Female (MtF) and Female-to-Male (FtM) transgender. MtFs are individuals, who have been assigned a male gender at birth but who consider themselves to be of the female gender; FtMs are individuals who have been assigned a female gender at birth but who identify themselves as the male gender. These two gender identities have been extensively used by transgender people as well as in transgender literature (Katz, 2001).

They challenge the widespread expectations that gender and biological sex are dichotomous categories and that individual expressions of gender has to match to either a male or female physical form. A person contradicting the set norms and beliefs about sex and gender is thought of as pathologically ill (Sharma, 2000). It is no surprise that such a deviation from the norms set by the society gives rise to the eruption of negative attitudes from every which way. Studies have brought to light the fact that transgender people are subjected to great degrees of bigotry and prejudice (Grant et al., 2011). It has resulted in some serious reactions which like, exploitation and hostility from the society, including physical and verbal harassment, as well as sexual abuse (Denny, Green, & Cole, 2007) since they are considered to be a threat to the society's ideals of its religion and culture. In addition to the risk factors presented above, researchers have found that transgendered individuals were at a significantly higher risk for suicidal behavior as compared to non-transgendered individuals, displaying a prevalence for attempted suicide of 32% for both MtF and FtM (Clements-Nolle, Marx, & Katz, 2006). Although different nations are claiming to recognize the rights of transgender people, in the name of civil rights and modernization, still the discrimination against this group of people can still be seen all around. A major leap for the rights and recognition of transgender community was taken by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, in accordance to whose directive starting from January 1, 2011, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) included the third box titled "Mukhanas" for the national identity cards for transgender individuals, while also introducing the policy to create employment

opportunities for them (see National Data Base Registration Authority [NADRA], Dec 16, 2010). However even after such a momentous action, there is an absence of legal provision for transgender rights (Jami, 2005) and violence and discrimination against transgender has not taken a back seat. Still reports about their rape, murder and victimization are on the go. Hence the importance of studying attitudes towards transgender emerges, that play a crucial role in their stigmatization and discrimination.

The previous researches and studies done on the attitudes towards transgender have taken into account many different variables in order to find out predicting factors that influence these attitudes. However the whole transgender community was not generally focused and much of this ignorance can still be seen today. Although much diversity is present in the transgender community, for layman there is no difference between various classifications within transgender community (Jami, 2005; Khan et al., 2008). Keeping in line with the ignorance of all the categories of the transgender community, a study conducted in US in 1966 focused only on transsexuals. In this survey, on a sample of 300 medical and psychiatric professionals gathered in the United States, it was shown that they viewed transsexuals as “severely neurotic” (Green et al., 1966). In contrast later research showed considerable positive shift in attitudes among U.S. mental health care providers (Franzini & Casinelli, 1986).

More recent researches show the emergence of the concept that transgender is a broader term that comprises of more than just transsexuals. Studies conducted in different countries like Canada (Hill & Willoughby, 2005), United Kingdom (Tee & Hegarty, 2006), Hong Kong (King et al., 2009), United States of America (Nagoshi et al., 2008) and Pakistan (Jami, 2012) showed evidence that men exhibit more negative attitudes towards transgender as compared to women. The reason behind this level of distinction can be because of the fact that men generally have a more sex-typed brought up and therefore they adhere strongly to the traditional gender role norms (Khalid & Frieze, 2004). And as a consequence gender role violations bother men more than women (Crooks & Baur, 2005). In light of this the current study also hypothesizes that male respondents will have more negative attitudes, than will female respondents towards transgender. Other variables studied in relation with attitudes towards transgender showed that decrease in interaction with transgender goes hand in hand with positive attitudes towards them (Norton & Herek, 2013); along with considering them less sexual deviants (Jami, 2012). When religiosity was taken into account it was found that the ones regular in religious practices held less positive attitudes towards

transgender (Tee & Hegarty, 2006; Jami, 2012). Substantial work has been done on the transgender in India (Nanda, 2008) but a very scarce amount can be seen about the transgender community in Pakistan (Haider & Bano, 2006). A lot of it focuses on the study of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases being more prevalent in transgender communities, pointing sodomy as its root cause (Khan, Rehan, Qayyum, & Khan, 2008).

Taking a turn from the overworked directions of study in this area; in this research we attempt to explore a different aspect i.e. attitudes towards transgender. In addition to that another neglected area is the comparison between attitudes towards MTF and FtM transgender. A previous study conducted showed that heterosexual men and women showed more negative attitudes towards gay men as compared to lesbians, even though both are clearly defying and violating traditional gender roles (Herek, 1992). This provides evidence that violations of gender roles when done by males are considered more serious offences, probably due to the idea of social privilege and power being associated with the male gender. Therefore when a male is in violation of his gender roles by adopting behaviors associated with the female gender, he provokes more negative attitudes than a female who violates her set gender norms by adopting behaviors linked with the male (more privileged) gender.

While several studies have acknowledged gender related differences in psychological aspects of human behavior, results have often been inclusive. Furthermore the growing numbers of incidents in the recent present have made us aware of the issues faced by the transgender community. Transgender identities challenge the widespread expectations that gender and biological sex are binary categories and that individual expressions of gender definitely has to match to either a male or female physical form. It considered to be the so called “natural attitude” toward gender to refer to the common belief that people can be categorized into one of only two “natural” and invariant gender groups, each of which is dependent upon the presence of certain genital organs. The discrimination and open violence encountered by the transgender for not behaving in accordance to this belief system can be clearly seen. The purpose of psychological research is primarily to observe, understand and then by extension control behavior. The inhumane treatment of transgender cannot be justified; regardless of whether the society approves of their lifestyle choices or not. It all stems from the attitudes that we as a society have towards them. Therefore it is important to study every possible aspect that can be related to our attitudes and their manifestations towards transgender. Although all transgenders are

discriminated against; differences can be seen in its intensity. Generally it is observed that violations of gender norms by males are likely to evoke more negative reactions and attitudes as compared to violations by females. This difference in strictness in enforcing gender norms can account for the widespread observation that men and boys avoid expressions of femininity more vigorously than women and girls do in expressing masculinity. In order to systematically test this observation, two questionnaires will be administered in this study, one measuring attitudes towards MtF transgenders and the other measuring attitudes towards FtM transgender; so as to determine where a significant difference is present or not.

Additionally, much of the research on this subject has been conducted in the west, result of which cannot be generalized to eastern parts of the world, given the culturally sensitive aspects of psychology. This research aims to fill this gap in literature.

METHODOLOGY

Research Objectives

This study focuses on measuring attitudes of males and females towards transgender people; both MtF and FtM.

More specifically, this study intends to:

1. Identify gender differences in attitudes towards MtF and FtM transgender in Pakistan.
2. Explore whether among MtF and FtM, one elicits more negative attitudes than the other.
3. Investigate the relationship between attitudes towards transgender (MtF and FtM) and religiosity.
4. Study the influence of interaction/contact with transgenders on the attitudes towards them

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of present study are:

1. Male participants will have a significantly higher negative attitude towards transgender than female participants.
2. There will be a positive relation between interaction with and positive attitude towards transwomen.
3. There will be a negative correlation between religiosity and attitude towards transgender.

4. Female participants will score higher on religiosity than male participants.
5. There will be a positive correlation between the scores on attitude towards transwomen scale and attitudes towards transmen scale.

Research Design

In the present research quantitative research survey method was used.

Sample

A total of 330 questionnaires were distributed out of which 300 were returned. The data of 300 individuals obtained was within the age range of 18-25 years. Inclusion criteria for sample selection were minimum 12 years of education and studying in universities located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The universities that were approached included Quaid e Azam University, Foundation University Rawalpindi Campus, COMSATS, Riphah International University and International Islamic University. Convenience sampling was utilized as a technique for sample selection. Demographic distribution of sample showed 150 (50%) were male while 150 (50%) were female.

Instrument

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives of the study translated version of attitude towards Transwomen scale (ATS) was used. The scale was further adapted to study the attitude towards Transmen. The details of the scale are as follows;

Attitude towards transwomen scale (ATS)

Attitude towards Transwomen scale (ATS) originally developed by Winter (2007) and translated in Urdu by Jami (2015). After seeking the permission, the translated version of Attitude towards transwoman scale was used to measure attitude towards MtF transgender (MtF TG). This scale was adapted to measure *Attitude towards transmen* (FtM TG). The scale consists of 30 items measuring student's attitude towards MtF and FtM transgender. It is a 5 point rating scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Items 1,4,7,8,12,15,16,17,18,21,23,24,28,29 and 30 are reversed scored. High score indicates acceptance towards transwomen and low indicate prejudice towards transwomen.

The scale is composed of five inter correlated factors. 1) Belief that transwomen suffer from mental illness referred as "mental illness" (item no.1, 4, 7, 8, 12, 15, 17 and 21). 2) Belief that transwomen are not women, should not be treated as

women and not be provided their rights referred as “Denial women” (2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 19). 3) Rejection on contact with transwomen from society (family and teachers) referred as “Social rejection” (25, 28, 29, and 30). 4) Rejection of contact with transwomen within peer group referred as “Peer Rejection” (5, 18, 20, 22, 26, and 27). 5) Belief that transwomenen gage in sexually deviant behaviors referred as “sexual deviance” (16, 23, and 24). Internal consistency for the scale is Cronbach alpha coefficient .94.

Demographic Sheet

A detailed demographic sheet was filled out by all participants pertaining information about gender, year of education, family system, socioeconomic status, frequency of interaction and perception about who transgenderers are. Number of prayers offered in a day were taken as measure of religiosity.

Procedure

For the purpose of the present research the sample of N=300 (boys n=150, girls n=150) students were selected from universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Consent was taken from the participants. After that, they were provided with a detailed demographic sheet and the instruments. Respondents were instructed to complete the questionnaires on their ease and they were asked to fill all the items of instruments. Participants were ensured that their privacy and confidentiality of their responses will be secured. It was made clear that their responses will be used merely for the research purpose. For keeping the confidentiality participants were not asked to mention their names or any personal information except some required demographic information. In addition to that, before the distribution of the questionnaires the sequence of the questions was shuffled in an attempt to minimize response set bias. After the collection of data from the participants, appropriate statistical analysis was applied in order to address the objectives of the study and to test the hypothesis of the study

Analysis and Interpretation

In order to measure the Attitude towards Transwomen and Transmen and to explore the gender and other demographic differences in Attitude, the appropriate statistical analysis was done by using SPSS. So, in the current study statistical operations of alpha coefficient, correlation and t-test were used. Five response categories are used for Attitude towards transwomen scale Attitude towards transmen scale; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=Un decided, 4=agree, 5 = strongly agree, for all positive items and scoring are reversed for negative items.

RESULTS

The results of this study were computed using SPSS software and are stated below in tabular form along with their descriptions.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for sample and independent variable (N=300)

Variables	Categories	N	%
Sex	Male	150	50
	Female	150	50
Years of education	12	46	15.3
	13	15	5.0
	14	76	25.3
	15	38	12.7
	16	71	23.7
	17	23	7.7
	18	24	8.0
No. of Prayers	19	7	2.3
	0	41	13.7
	1	13	4.3
	2	29	9.7
	3	55	18.3
	4	70	23.3
Birth order	5	92	30.7
	1st born	87	29.0
	middle born	125	41.7
	last born	84	28.0
	only child	4	1.3
Family system	Nuclear	178	59.3
	Joint	122	40.7
Socioeconomic status	High	25	8.3
	Middle	267	89.0
	Low	8	2.7
Locus of control FtM	by birth	58	19.3
	by choice	116	38.7
	Both	126	42.0
Interaction MtF	Never	81	27.0
	once a year	83	27.7
	once a month	101	33.7
	once a week	15	5.0
	Daily	20	6.7
Locus of control MtF	by birth	68	22.7
	by choice	131	43.7
	Both	101	33.7
Interaction FtM	Never	88	29.3
	once a year	112	37.3
	once a month	62	20.7
	once a week	12	4.0
	Daily	26	8.7

Demographic distribution of sample. Demographic distribution of sample shows 150 (50%) are male students while 150 (50%) are female students. As per education 46(15.3%) till 12th grade, 91 (30.3%) Undergraduate, 109(36.4%) Graduate, 47(15.7%) Postgraduate, 7(2.3%) doctorate. The frequency of interaction with transwomen shows that; 81(27.0%) had never met them, 83(27.7%) report seeing/meeting once a year, 101(33.7%) report seeing/meeting once a month, 15(5%) report seeing/meeting once a week and 20(6.7%) daily. The frequency of interaction with transmen shows that; 88(29.3%) never met them, 112(37.3%) report seeing/meeting once a year, 62(20.7%) report seeing/meeting once a month, 12(4%) report seeing/meeting once a week and 26(8.7%) daily. As per practicing Religion 41(13.7%) do not offering prayers, 92(30.7%) offered 5 prayers daily. As per family system 178 (59.3%) participants live in nuclear family and of 122 (40.7%) participants live in joint family.

Table 2: Alpha Reliability Coefficient of Attitude towards Transwomen Scale and Attitude towards Transmen Scale (N=300)

+6-	No of items	Alpha Coefficient
Attitude towards Transwomen Scale	30	.802
Attitude towards Transmen Scale	30	.820

Psychometric Properties. Cronbach alphas were computed to ascertain the psychometric properties of attitudes Attitude towards Transwomen Scale and Attitude towards Transmen Scale. See Table 2. The result of table 2 indicates that Alpha coefficient for Attitude towards Transwomen Scale and Attitude towards Transmen Scale are .802 and .820 respectively, that indicates that these scales have good reliability value.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-Values of Gender on Attitude towards Transwomen Scale and Attitude towards Transmen Scale (N=300)

	Male			Female			<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	CI		95% <i>LL</i> <i>UL</i>
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Attitude towards transwomen scale	150	79.31	15.874	150	76.35	11.859	1.83	.068	.225	6.415	
Attitude towards transmen scale	150	79.90	15.103	150	76.15	12.194	2.368	.019	.634	6.872	

df =298, *p*<.05

Gender Differences.Independent sample t-test was carried out to study the differences among male (n=150) and female(n=150) participants on Attitude towards Transwomen Scale and Attitude towards Transmen Scale. See Table 3. The result of t test indicates non-significant differences in attitudes towards Transwomen, but statistically significant differences between male and female in terms of attitude towards Transmen. This lead to the rejection of our hypothesis that Male participants will have more negative attitude towards Transgender as compared to female participants.

Table 4: Correlation of Interaction with Transwomen and Attitude toward Transwomen Scale (N = 300)

Scale	Interaction with Transwomen
Attitude toward Transwomen Scale	.174**

* $p < 0.01$

Interaction with Transwomen.Out of 300 university students, 81(27.0%) had never met them, 83(27.7%) reported seeing/meeting once a year, 101(33.7%) reported seeing/meeting once a month, 15(5%) reported seeing/meeting once a week and 20(6.7%) daily. Pearson Product moment was computed to ascertain the relationship between attitudes and interaction. Level of interaction is taken as a continuous variable as 5 point scale ranging from never (1) to daily (5). Positive Correlation is found between interaction and attitude ($r = .174$, $p < 0.01$). See Table 4. Results indicate that Interaction with Transwomen is positively correlated with Attitude toward Transwomen. Therefore, the hypothesis that, there will exist a positive correlation between interaction with Transwomen and positive attitudes towards them is accepted.

Table 5: Correlation of No. of prayers with Attitude toward Transwomen Scale and Attitude toward Transmen Scale (N = 300)

Scale	No. of prayers
Attitude toward Transwomen Scale	-.153**
Attitude toward Transmen Scale	-.202**

** $p < 0.01$

Religiosity. Religiosity is measured by no. of prayers offered on daily basis, 41(13.7%) were not offering prayers, 92(30.7%) offered 5 prayers daily. Pearson Product moment was computed to ascertain the relationship between attitudes and religiosity. There exist a negative correlation between religiosity and positive attitude ($p=0.01$). Those who are more religious have more negative attitude towards Transmen and Transwomen. See Table 5. Results indicate that there is a significant negative correlation between no. of prayers and attitude. People who are more religious have more negative attitude toward transwomen and transmen.

Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation of religiosity (N = 300)

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>
Male	150	2.85	1.86
Female	150	3.66	1.428

Gender differences in religiosity. Out of 150 male participants, 31(20.71%) didn't offer prayer, 10(6.7%) offered 1 prayer daily, 17(11.3%) offered 2 prayers a day, 23(15.3%) offered 3 prayers a day, 31(20.7%) offered 4 prayers a day, 38(25.3%) offered 5 prayers daily. Out of 150 female participants, 10(6.7%) did not offered prayer, 3(2%) offered 1 prayer a day, 12(8%) offered 2 prayers a day, 32(21.3%) offered 3 prayers a day, 39(26%) offered 4 prayers daily, 54(36%) offered 5 prayers daily. The mean for female is 3.66 and for male is 2.85, indicating that female participants were more religious than male participants. This result leads to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there will be a negative correlation between religiosity (no. of prayers) and positive attitude towards transgender. See Table 6. Results indicate that female participants were more religious than male participants.

Table 7: Correlation between Attitude toward Transwomen Scale and Attitude toward Transmen Scale (N = 300)

Scale	Attitude toward Transmen Scale
Attitude toward Transwomen Scale	.694**

** $p < 0.01$

Correlation between Attitude toward Transwomen Scale and Attitude toward Transmen Scale. Pearson Product moment was computed to ascertain the relationship between Attitude toward Transwomen Scale and Attitude toward Transmen Scale. There is a positive correlation significant at 0.01. See Table 7.

Results indicate positive correlation between attitude toward transwomen and attitude towards transmen. With this result our final hypothesis is accepted; there will exist a positive correlation between the scores on attitude towards transwomen scale and attitudes towards transmen scale.

DISCUSSION

In the realms of psychological research, transgender is said to be a hot topic, for the reason that it has not been nearly as much explored as it should be. There are many hindrances that befall in attempting to tread through this topic. Primarily because of the taboo associated with deviant sexual and gender behaviors. Indeed, while conducting this study the team of researchers was questioned on numerous occasions as to why such a controversial topic was chosen that too in an Islamic society, where exploring such issues is faced with great resistance. The reason behind it is that in conservative cultures such as ours, issues related to sex are kept hush because they are thought of as indecent and met with disapproval (Rajabali et al., 2008). Perhaps there is a need for researches to be more robust to these resistances. It is hoped that this research and many of such kind will encourage more researchers to enter in this arena which desperately requires investigation.

This research was initially focused mainly on finding gender differences in attitudes towards transgender both MtF and FtM; which it did but in a surprisingly opposite direction. However, prodding for causes these results don't seem as much unlikely as they would on the first glance. Firstly, the researches those have all found males to be less and females to be more accepting of transgender have done so along with justifying it to men being more sex typed and less tolerant towards gender role violations. This was not found in the results of this study; there can be many reasons for that. Perhaps it is a consequence of the swiftly changing trends our society is going through. Men are not as rigid as they previously used to be, the concept of gender as a fluid entity is taking hold. The deviations from set gender norms are not being as much harshly judged as they used to be. This is also evident from the fact that now a third gender category has even been included in the national identity cards in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This type of response towards shifting gender norms from rigidity is identified as Progressive response (Morrell, 2001) which challenges the status pressures which dictate how men should act and behave. It also states that such a response tends to challenge societal structures that support the oppression of one group over another.

Furthermore, it was also seen through this study that FtM transgender were slightly more negatively judged than MtF transgender. Negative attitudes towards females that defy gender role norms are observed throughout the globe especially in Islamic Societies. Recently, a Fatwa was issued against Tomboys in Malaysia by its Top Muslim council (Damis, 2008). Another intriguing finding put forth by this study is that female participants displayed more negative attitudes towards FtM transgender than towards MtF transgender. Similar findings were seen in a research that showed women were more negative towards lesbians than they were towards gay men (Schope & Eliason, 2004) probably due to hostility one feels when seeing a group member rejecting the in-group and adopting the practices of another. In addition to that women are more religious and sexually conservative than men, these are the qualities that are typically, and with good reason, associated with negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Herek, 2002), which was one of the components of measurement of attitudes towards FtM transgender. Women with higher religiosity measure tend to reject sexual deviants (Herek, 2000), this statement is in support of our findings which show that female participants score higher on religiosity and lower on trans-acceptance.

Male participants scored higher on FtM trans-acceptance than females which can be attributed to eroticism associated with lesbians. Researchers have found that when the erotic values linked with lesbianism were controlled, men's attitude towards lesbians became as same as for gay men. This proves that due to the erotic value men associate with lesbians, their negative attitudes towards them are muted (Louderback & Whitely, 1997). Two factors were investigated during the research in order to determine the nature of relationship they had on attributes towards transwomen and transmen, i.e. religiosity (which was measured in terms of number of prayers offered in one day) and level of interaction with transmen and women (which was measured on a Likert scale from 1 to 5). It was found that for male participants there was significant negative correlation between religiosity and acceptance towards transwomen and also significant negative correlation between religiosity and acceptance towards transmen. As for female participants, there was a non-significant negative correlation between religiosity and acceptance towards transwomen but a significant negative correlation between religiosity and acceptance towards transmen.

These results are in accordance with the vast literature in area that states that involvement in religious practices is evidently significant indicators for influencing attitude towards sexual minorities (Yip, 2007). Although this study was conducted in an Islamic culture and used a sample of Muslim participants, it

is a known fact that religions other than Islam, such as Judaism and Christianity also preach against homosexuality, cross-dressing and other sexual deviant behaviors. And people holding strong beliefs of these religions are prejudiced towards transgenders (Crooks & Baur, 2005). Many other studies also show that religiosity is associated with conservative attitudes towards sexuality (De-Visser et al., 2007)

Coming towards the second factor which was interaction, our findings show that there is a significant positive correlation between frequency of interaction and positive attitudes towards transwomen, this can be explained through Contact Hypothesis or Intergroup Contact Theory proposed by Gordon Allport (1954) which suggests that contact between members of different groups work to reduce prejudice and intergroup conflict. Put in the context of our study we can see that increase in contact with transwomen or MtF transgender can lead to a decrease in prejudice towards them. There was significant correlation found between interaction with FtM transgender and positive attitudes. Lastly, it was also hypothesized that there will be a correlation between the scores of the two scales i.e., Attitude towards transwomen and Attitudes towards transmen. There in fact was a high correlation between the scores of the two scales.

Limitations and Suggestions

During the course of this research while going through data collection and analysis some issues were surfaced that can be considered as limitations of this study. Firstly, the measure of religiosity used in this research was not elaborate enough; it might be a good idea to include a more detailed scale of religiosity in future studies in order to get more definitive results. The age range of this research was from 18 to 25 years, which rendered us unable to see differences caused by age. Furthermore, the researches that have been done in this field are done by survey methods which has known drawbacks, it is suggested that different methodologies may be used in future researches. Lastly, this study was conducted using a sample of three hundred from two major cities of Pakistan, in order to increase generalizability future researches may want to broaden their sample collection location.

A study on such an unconventional and scarcely explored topic in a conservative society like that of Pakistan will provide a new dimension to the future researchers of our country. Findings of the present research provide us with some meaningful insights into the current status of our society's attitudes towards transgender and shed light on important variables that might affect these attitudes

in a specific culture. The study provides valuable understanding into the mechanism of attitude formation and its manifestations. The knowledge of the factors identified in this study that can actually influence our attitudes can have immense practical applications in reducing prejudices and stereotypes. It opens doors for deliberate attempts at creating a more tolerant society free from prejudices.

CONCLUSION

This study not only gives us information about what was found out through its course but also by what was not. It made one thing clear that gender cannot be thought of as predictor of an attitude. Differences between the two genders may exist but differences within a gender should also be kept in mind. There are so many factors that determine the attitude that one has about something that prediction can only be estimated at a limited extent at best. However, the most optimistic finding of this study is that there are measures that can be taken in order to reduce prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination. Further research is required for the understanding of these phenomena by using alternate methodologies and variables.

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