



Challenges Of Gender Dysphoria In Longchang Youth, Changlang District

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ABSTRACT

The Longchang community is a sub-tribe of Tangsa tribe in Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh. The Tangsas are one of the largest ethnic groups with many sub-groups that speak distinct dialects. In earlier times there was no such discussion on gender dysphoria as society was not aware. But as society is open, they come to understand about gender dysphoria especially today's youth who are experiencing this.

Gender Dysphoria is a form of identity crisis experienced by today's youth, where they perceive a mismatch between their biological sex and gender identity. It is also known as gender identity disorder, where an individual feel like their soul is in the wrong body because she/he thinks that they have a different identity as compared to their biological one. These problems were also found among the youths of the Longchang community. This gender dysphoria creates chaos in their lives where they experience mental and emotional breakdown, get anxiety, depression, and become a victim of bullying in their society, schools, and peer groups. Even their family members' acceptance becomes difficult for them, especially where the family has a patriarchal mindset. As LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer or Questioning) people were coming into the light, this gave some relief to those youth with gender dysphoria where they can get a proper direction to figure out their actual identity or sex orientation.

Keywords: Gender Dysphoria, Identity Crises, Mental and Emotional breakdown, Family Acceptance, LGBTQ.

INTRODUCTION

The Tangsa community is predominantly concentrated in the Patkai Range, particularly within the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The community comprises approximately seventy distinct sub-tribes, each characterized by its own unique dialect. Among these, the Longchang sub-tribe represents an integral part of the Tangsa community, preserving its linguistic and cultural distinctiveness (Reshma, 2023). Historically, the concept of gender dysphoria was neither recognized nor understood within the community. Consequently, discussions or awareness related to gender identity issues were largely absent among the Longchang people. In recent years, however, with the increasing visibility of identity crises and gender dysphoria among youth, the Longchang community has begun to develop greater awareness and sensitivity toward these issues, reflecting broader social changes and evolving perceptions within society.

Gender dysphoria refers to the psychological and emotional distress that arises when an individual experiences dissatisfaction with their biological sex, which interferes with their daily functioning (South African Federation for Mental Health, n.d.). It is a recognized psychological diagnosis established by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Gender dysphoria is clinically significant among individuals who experience or express a mismatch between their assigned biological sex and their experienced gender identity (Kushal et al., 2018). Young people dealing with gender dysphoria or gender non-conforming identities often develop behavioural and emotional imbalances, exhibiting symptoms such as depression, anxiety, suicidality, and self-harming tendencies (Elisa et al., 2020). Moreover, individuals with gender dysphoria frequently face a lack of social and cultural support, which exacerbates their psychological distress (Ghiasi et al., 2024).

The causes of gender dysphoria can be attributed to a complex interaction of biological, hormonal, psychological, social, and familial factors, as well as experiences of childhood trauma or abuse. Individuals experiencing gender dysphoria often show symptoms such as dissatisfaction with their biological sex, a fervent desire to identify as or transition to the opposite gender, and behavioural or emotional expressions consistent with the opposite sex. In many cases, individuals seek gender-affirming interventions—including hormonal therapy, surgical procedures, and other therapeutic approaches—to align their physical appearance with their gender identity and to enhance their overall quality of life (Ebrahimi et al. 2022).

In recent years, the prevalence of gender dysphoria among adolescents and young adults has shown a notable increase. The rising number of young individuals experiencing gender dysphoria also suffer from psychological issues such as depression and anxiety. The adolescents with gender dysphoria demonstrate a higher rate of both suicidal and non-suicidal self-injurious thoughts and behaviors, underscoring the critical need for early intervention, mental health support, and greater societal awareness (Marconi et al. 2023).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ghiasi, Z. et al. (2024) study physical and psychosocial challenges of people with gender dysphoria: a content analysis study show that people suffering from gender dysphoria were living their lives in agony, confusion and social concerns because of lack of awareness of families and communities about their conditions which resulted in suffering from mental and emotional distress.

Marconi, E. et al. (2023) conducted study on A systematic review on gender dysphoria in adolescents and young adults: focus on suicidal and self-harming ideation and behaviours found that in recent years number of young patients with Gender Dysphoria has increased, with problem like depression and anxiety. Which show high rate of suicidal and non-suicidal self injurious thoughts and behaviour has increased in adolescents.

Ebrahimi. A. et al. (2022) carried out research on Gender dysphoria, its causes, and symptoms a review found that gender dysphoria can be a trait of diverse forms of biological, hormonal, psychological, social, family and childhood abuse, which can form such symptoms in a person's characteristics. Other symptoms were form because of dissatisfaction with their biological sex, desire to be the opposite sex, feelings, and reactions of the opposite sex leads to interest in transgender surgery with pharmaceutical, surgical, and other therapeutic methods.

Cooper. K. et al. (2020) conducted a study on the phenomenology of gender dysphoria in adults: A systematic review and meta-analysis to found that young people with gender dysphoria and gender non-conforming identity especially adolescents and teenagers faced emotional and mental health problems because of societal expectations with their gender mismatches and developed hyper-vigilance for transphobia.

Hunter. J. et al. (2021) study the Gender minority stress in trans and gender diverse adolescents and young people. It shows that minority with gender dysphoria had higher level of anxiety and depression with poorer psychological well-being.

Tamuli, K. et al. (2018) studied on who am I? A case of gender dysphoria showed the result that patient with gender identity disorder developed secondary depression and significant suicidal thoughts as they reached adolescence, which is consider as most stressful period which tends to be chronic in nature.

N.C. Capetillo et al. (2014) Gender dysphoria an overview said that lack of precise information about gender dysphoria in people, it causes disturbance in treatment to provide proper information to patients which delay in treatment to improving people's quality of life.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the psychological and emotional impact of gender dysphoria on youth in Longchang community of Tangsa tribe.
2. To study the social challenges and stigma faced by youth with gender dysphoria in Longchang community of Tangsa tribe.
3. To study the attitude of Longchang community towards gender dysphoria youth of Tangsa tribe.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The researcher uses the descriptive and qualitative methods for the study. The sources of data have been collected from the observation and secondary sources like journals, thesis, articles, newspaper etc.

FINDING

- v To study the psychological and emotional impact of gender dysphoria on youth in Longchang community of Tangsa tribe.
 - o It was observed that the youth of the Longchang community of the Tangsa tribe experiencing gender dysphoria exhibit emotional disturbances as they struggle to establish their gender identity. Furthermore, they encounter significant psychological burdens arising from concerns about acceptance by their family, peers, and the broader society.
- v To study the social challenges and stigma faced by youth with gender dysphoria in Longchang community of Tangsa tribe.
 - o It was observed that the youth of the Longchang community of the Tangsa tribe encounter significant social scrutiny due to their gender expression, which differ from their biological sex. Consequently, they are often subjected to societal stigma and discrimination stemming from their non-conforming to traditional gender norms and expectations.
- v To study the attitude of Longchang community towards gender dysphoria youth of Tangsa tribe.
 - o It was observed that within the Longchang community of the Tangsa tribe, varying social perceptions exist regarding individuals experiencing gender dysphoria. One segment of the community perceives male youths with gender dysphoria as having psychological or behavioral issues, often attributing these to their nonconformity with traditional gender expectations. In contrast, another segment demonstrates greater awareness and acceptance, particularly as exposure to information about the LGBTQ+ community has increased. This divergence in perception highlights the ongoing tension between traditional beliefs and emerging understandings of gender diversity within the community.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the youth of the Longchang community of the Tangsa tribe experiencing gender dysphoria encounter complex emotional, psychological, and social challenges. Their struggle to understand and express their gender identity often leads to emotional distress and concern about acceptance from family, peers, and society. At the same time, the community's perception remains divided—while some view gender dysphoria as a psychological issue influenced by deviation from

traditional norms, others show increased acceptance due to growing awareness of gender diversity and the LGBTQ+ community. Overall, these findings highlight the need for greater awareness, education, and supportive community engagement to foster understanding, reduce stigma, and promote the mental well-being of individuals with gender dysphoria.

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