

Hopelessness And Pessimism Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgenders (Lgbt): Effect of Counseling on Problem Coping Strategies

Desesperanza y pesimismo entre lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transexuales (Lgbt): efecto de la consejería en las estrategias de afrontamiento de problemas

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Summary

The aim of this study is to develop effective counseling approach for the socially deprived and discriminated lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Northern Iraq to enhance the physical and mental well-being. The study aims to develop effective problem-coping strategies to deal with social, economic, and political setbacks. The problem identified to conduct this study is that the LGBT people in Northern Iraq are not only unacceptable as normal members of the society but they also face rejection, isolation, and discrimination in society. This consistent hatred and discrimination against the LGBT people develop many psychological disorders that include anxiety, depression, isolation, pessimism, and hopelessness. These psychological disorders enforce suicide attempts and socially deviated behavior among the LGBT people. The study has a qualitative research design and the researcher conducted 10 interviews with LGBTs in northern Iraq. The results of the study outlined that LGBTs in Iraq have social and psychological issues that contribute to hopelessness and pessimism among LGBTs. The society has zero tolerance in the name of religion and the conservative norms do not allow these people to live their life as normal people. They commit suicide or get into depression because of unending suffering. However, the LGBTs that received counseling improved their condition as compared to those that could not receive counseling services. Counseling helped these people to come out of depression and live a normal life by accepting the reality.

Keywords: LGBT, hopelessness, pessimism, problem coping strategies, counseling.

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es desarrollar un enfoque de asesoramiento eficaz para las personas lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transexuales (LGBT) socialmente desfavorecidas y discriminadas en el norte de Irak para mejorar el bienestar físico y mental. El estudio tiene como objetivo desarrollar estrategias efectivas de afrontamiento de problemas para hacer frente a los reveses sociales, económicos y políticos. El problema identificado para realizar este estudio es que las personas LGBT en el norte de Irak no solo son inaceptables como miembros normales de la sociedad, sino que también enfrentan el rechazo, el aislamiento y la discriminación en la sociedad. Este odio y discriminación constantes contra las personas LGBT desarrollan muchos trastornos psicológicos que incluyen ansiedad, depresión, aislamiento, pesimismo y desesperanza. Estos trastornos psicológicos refuerzan los intentos de suicidio y el comportamiento socialmente desviado entre las personas LGBT. El estudio tiene un diseño de investigación cualitativa y el investigador realizó 10 entrevistas con LGBT en el norte de Irak. Los resultados del estudio señalaron que los LGBT en Irak tienen problemas sociales y psicológicos que contribuyen a la desesperanza y el pesimismo entre los LGBT. La sociedad tiene tolerancia cero en nombre de la religión y las normas conservadoras no permiten que estas personas vivan su vida como personas normales. Se suicidan o caen en depresión debido a un sufrimiento interminable. Sin embargo, los LGBT que recibieron asesoramiento mejoraron su condición en comparación con aquellos que no pudieron recibir servicios de asesoramiento. El asesoramiento ayudó a estas personas a salir de la depresión y vivir una vida normal al aceptar la realidad.

Palabras clave: LGBT, desesperanza, pesimismo, estrategias de afrontamiento de problemas, asesoramiento.

Introduction

LGBT and/or GLBT stands for lesbian gay bisexual and transgender are those people that have gender other than the only recognized genders of the society male and female. The term initially focused on gay men only during the mid 1980s but later developed the concept of gay women termed as lesbian. The term LGBT is popular since 1990s. LGBT is a huge term that describes further the classification of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and their relative culture (Cochran, Sulliva & Mays, 2003). According to researchers Mays and Cochran (2001), sexual orientation includes the following dimensions: sexual attraction; sexual behavior; sexual fantasies; emotional, social, and lifestyle preferences; and self- identification.

The traditional and modern societies find it difficult to accept the gender that is not recognized as male or female. Hence, LGBT people are often left alone by not just their fellows and society members but even their own family and parents. Feelings of hopelessness and pessimism have been commonly experiences among these people. The rejection from family, friends, and society develops fear and sense of hatred among LGBT people. Counseling in this regard helps in providing some effective problem coping strategies that can help LGBT people to overcome these problems.

Hopelessness is one of the psychopathological state and recent studies have outlined its significance for many psychopathological situations. Beck (1963) stated that hopelessness is defined as one of the core

characteristics leading depression, suicides, schizophrenia, sociopathy, physical illness, and alcoholism. Some clinical researchers argued that hopelessness is just a diffused emotional state and it is too vague to be qualified for systematic research. Kazdin, French, Unis, Esveldt-Dawson and Sherick, (1983) argued that, a person's hopelessness can be developed or experienced by an individual during his/her bad or unlucky days and future. People that are sensitive well as people that experience any kind of rejection do not value themselves, not their life, and so does their experiences are shaped.

Beck, Weissman, Lestr and Trexler (1974) outlined pessimism is also one of the mental and psychological states that shapes the attitudes and perception of individuals suffering from emotional instability. Generally, pessimists are surrounded by negative feelings and thoughts in life. They are never optimistic or positive about whatever is happening in the life. Pessimists always perceive that nothing is there for them or something that is there is not enough for them. Pessimism impacts the thinking and cognition of people. Pessimism may influence on anxiety, fears, and depression. It is also important to note that pessimism can be influenced by different feelings and daily pressure of life.

Problem coping strategies are the skills that are individual to people for solving the problems that they face in life. Carver, Scheier and Weintraub (1989) argued that these are generally referred to the tactics that an individual adapts in most stressful situations. These skills and strategies differ individual to individual however; some of the commonly preferred and beneficent techniques include yoga, meditation, relaxation and breathing deep. These techniques are really helpful and allow releasing the stress. In comparison, some of people fail to cope with problems through these strategies and develop depression, anxiety, and feeling of pessimism and hopelessness that lead to more disturbed and imbalanced social and personal life.

Hirsch, Cohn, Rowe, and Rimmer (2017) outlined the indirect hopelessness and depressive symptoms caused due to the minority sexual orientation, gender identity, and suicidal behavior. The research included a sample of 349 students of college which were used to determine the sexual identity of the students and its relationship to the suicidal behavioral and depressive symptoms. In the study, serial meditation method was used to identify the association of self-identification as LGBTQ and suicidal behavior. It considered hope and hopelessness as first-order mediators and depression as a second order mediator. The results of the study indicated that LGBTQ status was associated with the hopelessness and hope which also links to the depressive symptoms and the consequent suicidal behavior. The study indicated it has clinical implications as it can be used to heal the affected youth. The results revealed that LGBTQ in young adults can be reduced using Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy strategies. It includes strategies like goal setting which helps in lowering the suicidal risk. The study also discovered the need for the development of different strategies to cope up with the depressive symptoms which arise due to hopelessness (Hirsch, Cohn, Rowe, & Rimmer, 2017).

Another study conducted by Bidell (2017) outlined the impact of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender graduate counseling course. The purpose of the study was to highlight the positive impact of the counseling course on graduate students. The participants of the study included 23 graduate students who enrolled in the LGBTQaffirmative counseling course. They were examined using the Sexual Orientation Counselor Competency Scale (SOCCS) scale before and after the course. To make further assessments on the course effectiveness, a comparison study was used. The results of the study revealed the difference before and after taking the course. The students reflected significant developments in the sexual orientation counselor capability and self-efficacy. These students also performed better in the SOCCS score than those students who were enrolled in the course. The study discovered the positive role of counseling on the attitude of the students. It also indicates how awareness among students can be enhanced using these courses. It also helps students for better self-discovery and thoughtfulness which may help to stop them from hopelessness and stress (Bidell, 2013).

Aim of this study is to develop effective counseling approach for the socially deprived and discriminated lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Northern Iraq to enhance the physical and mental well-being. The study aims to develop effective problem-coping strategies to deal with social, economic, and political setbacks.

Methodology

Research design

This study is a qualitative research design. The study was conducted with semi-structured in-depth interviews with the LGBTs. The researcher conducted one interview in one day. The interviews were conducted in a place where the interviewee was more comfortable and relaxed. The researcher focused on observing the anxiety, feelings, situation, and opinions could only be done through semi-structured interviews for the description of a given situation. Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives. Rather than by logical and statistical procedures, qualitative researchers use multiple systems of inquiry for the study of human phenomena including biography, case study, historical analysis, discourse analysis, ethnography, grounded theory and phenomenology (Toloie- Eshlaghy, Chitsaz, Karimian, & Charkhchi, 2011).

Study group

The researcher selected 10 respondents from Foundations. The respondents of the study were considered for the variation in age, gender, education level, and employment. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to collect the data. A semi-structured interview is a meeting in which the interviewer does not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. They will ask more open-ended questions, allowing for a discussion with the interviewee rather than a straightforward question and answer format (Drever, 1995).

Table 1:

Demographics of the study group

Demographic		Frequency
Gender	Gay/Lesbian	7
	Celibate/Abstinent	3
Age	18-20	1
	21-25	7
	26 and above	2
Level of education	Primary school	1
	High school	4
	Undergraduate	3
	Postgraduate	2
Relationship states	In a relationship	6
	Single	4
Religion	Christianity	2
	Islam	3
	Other	5

Table 1 represents the demographic information for the study group. 7 participants were lesbian and gay and 3 were abstinent. 1 was between age of 18-20, 7 between 21-25 and 2 above 26 years of age. 4 had high school diploma, 3 had undergraduate, 2 had postgraduate and 1 had primary school diploma. 6 were in a relationship status and 4 were single. 5 participants were other religion (deist). 3 participants believe in Islam. 2 participants believe in Christianity.

Instruments

The researcher used semi-structured 9 interview questions and then got 3Instructors opinion. The semi-structured in-depth interviews had two parts. The first part of the interview explored the fundamental reasons for hopelessness and pessimism among LGBTs and the second part addressed the current problem- coping strategies used by LGBTs. The researcher made sure that ethical limitations are followed throughout the study. The secondary data used for the general background of the study included the reports from human rights and the United Nations (UN). In addition, the scholarly sources, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and newspapers were also consulted. The validity and reliability of the interview questions was ensure by consulting with the instructors of Guidance and Psychological Counseling Department of the Near East University. The questions were first presented to the instructors of the relevant department then to the participants of the study.

Data Collection and Procedure

The interviews were conducted by the researcher. The researcher did not record video rather just the voice with the consent of the participants to transcribe the interviews later on. The researcher conducted the in-depth and semi-structured interviews with the respondents in an informal setting administered as one to one. The researcher preferred conducting one to one interviews to preserve the confidentiality of the respondent's information and also make them feel free and comfortable. The LGBT individuals could be more sensitive and hence may not find it comfortable to express their thoughts and opinions especially their experiences being LGBT. For this reason, the researcher administered the interviews in one to one setting.

The place for conducting the interviews should be peaceful and relax to make the participants feel comfortable and relaxed. The researcher also focused on the fact that taking too much time for the interview could also bore the participants and/or distract the interviewer and the interviewee from the actual purpose of the study. The researcher conducted one interview per day and each interview took approximately 1-2 hours and the participants were free to take a break whenever they needed.

Data analysis

The data collected to answer the research question was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. To be aligned with the aim and objective of the study. The research did not harm any candidate or the participant of the study. The research included the participants with their written consent. The research did not emotionally or physically abuse or harm the participants and they were allowed to leave the research whenever they want even the researcher did not question them. The research did not include any sensitive information and the names of the participants were not included. The participants were given a serial number that is the participant numbers rather than participant name for the ethical concern. The research was focused on objectivity. The study did not manipulate the data collected and the results were presented objectively. The subjectivity and personal biases of the researcher were kept far away and the research was within the ethical and moral limitations. The researcher was not placed in any hard to the vulnerable position before, during or after the research. The data was kept in electronic form in a locked folder that only the researcher can access.

Findings and Discussion

This chapter represents the results and discussion of the study. The chapter has divided into three parts according to the research questions of the study to achieve the aim:

Fundamental reasons for hopelessness and pessimism

Table 2:

Aware of your sexual orientation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They were aware since age 16– 17 or teenagers. (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10)	6	60%
They were aware since their adolescent age. (P1, P7, P9)	3	30%
She was aware since age 9. (P8)	1	10%

Table 2 outlines since how long respondents were aware of the sexual orientation. The results outline that 60% respondents were aware of their sexual orientation since their teenage, 30% respondents were aware of their sexual orientation since adolescent, and 10% respondents were aware of their sexual orientation since childhood. This is because in Iraqi society, the concept of LGBT is not given much attention or awareness.

There are many reasons for hopelessness and pessimism in LGBT. The findings of the research confirm the findings of Horn, (2006) about the self-perceptions of LGBT (Horn, 2006). The interview results indicated the lack of self-confidence and self-acceptance to be the main cause of depression. D’augelli (2002) also highlighted the mental issues which occur in LGBT. It indicated the suicide attempts committed by the individuals due to their belief that they are not wanted in society (D’augelli, 2002). From the interview results, it is observed that hopelessness and pessimism are generally due to the behavior of other people around. They feel hatred and awkward attitude from the people in their surroundings. D’Augelli, Grossman, and Starks (2006) findings match with the interview results about the victimization provided to the LGBT. It indicated how LGBT's were victimized from their early childhood and adolescence. It became the reason for their pessimism and hopelessness (D’Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006).

Participant I:

"Some of my friends knew about my situation after they talked to other students and teachers. Some of my teachers and almost all of the students looked at me as an awkward person."

Table 3:

Problems faced since sexual-orientation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
The problem is they are not accepted by Society. (P1, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10)	6	60%
Friends became problem for them (P2, P3, P4)	3	30%
His family is a big problem for him. (P9)	1	10%

Table 3 represents the problems faced since introduced to sexual orientation. The results of the study outline that majority of LGBT faced problems because of pressure of the society. Family and friends also become problem for the LGBT when they do not support them.

This is because the people in Iraq are not much open to the acceptance of LGBT.

Participant V:

"My problem is that my situation is not acceptable in my society. Nobody knew about my situation. It made me feel so bad, lonely, sad, bored, and shameful."

The findings of the research confirmed that hopelessness is caused when LGBT's do not share their feelings with the other person they are attracted to. Many cases show that when the love of LGBT's get married to any other person, they feel jealousy and hopelessness. It develops a sense of pessimism in them. It was observed that LGBT's wanted to die when they were unable to express their feelings to someone they love. Due to the conservative culture and fear of rejection, they hide their feelings. It makes them adopt drinking and other harmful activities. This is the reason they start feeling bad about their life and existence. Similar conclusions were drawn by Fergusson, Horwood, and Beautrais (1999) about the negativity developed in the LGBT. Due to the negative and rejected attitude of society, LGBT gradually adopts drinking and other negative habits. They also try to end their life and make themselves free from the world (Fergusson, Horwood, & Beautrais, 1999).

Participant IX:

"My family is a big problem for me. They don't understand me. They ask me to get married but I cannot. It makes me feel depressed."

The role of parents is critical in handling the depression of LGBT children (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006). It was also observed that the attitude and harshness of parents to become straight push LGBT towards hopelessness and pessimism. Many LGBT was scolded and beaten. It caused depression in them. Few LGBT were depressed and pessimists because they were rapped. In many cases, when LGBT's disclosed their reality. People made fun of them and were left out alone. The results of the interview were similar to the findings of Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, and Azrael (2009) which indicated such reasons of depression which make LGBT commit suicide (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, & Azrael, 2009).

Table 4:

Introduced to sexual orientation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They were Attracted to same gender (P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10)	7	70%
They did not feel attraction for any gender. (P1, P2, P7)	3	30%

Table 4 represents how participants were introduced to their sexual orientation. The results outline that mostly they felt attraction for same gender. This is because in Iraq there is not much interaction between opposite genders.

Participant IV:

"I must act like boys and this is so hard for me. So many times I acted like boys but people realize that I am not straight. Society made so many problems for me. They didn't give me work. Some of them asked me to have sex with them. They looked at me as abnormal person."

The LGBT's were observed to be in the pressure of society. There were two kinds of LGBT's in the interview; the ones who have accepted their reality and the ones who are struggling with their reality. It was observed that LGBT's faced a great amount of stress and social pressure. It was also observed that hopelessness started when LGBT tried to act in a manner, what people wanted from them. They tried to meet the demands of the people around them to feel accepted and welcomed in society. The interviews findings

indicated some cases in which LGBT's were offered sex and other activities. They explained how sometimes they were offered to have sex, which they do not want. In other cases, gays felt issues because they wanted to act like girls but they cannot. It was also observed that the pressure from the family of getting married caused depression in the LGBT. It was observed that many lesbian girls hated men and do not want to get involved in any activity with them. It was mainly due to the abuse they faced from men in their childhood or adolescence. This feeling caused depression in them. It supports the findings of the Muholi (2004) about the harassment faced by lesbian women. There are many hate crimes attempted against lesbian women (Muholi, 2004).

Participant X:

“I had a lot of problems some of them: I am afraid from men, I hate

Men, I do not like to live, I think everything is black for me and I am so unlucky.”

Table 5:

Attended a narrow-minded school/college

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
He/she did attend a narrow-minded school/college (P1, P3, P6, P8, P9)	5	50%
He/she did not attend a narrow-minded school/college (P2, P4, P5, P7, P10)	5	50%

Table 5 outlines that did participants attended a narrow-minded school/college. The results represent that there was equal ratio of students who attended narrow-minded schools and those who did not. This is because many people did not know that these individuals are among LGBT.

Current problem-coping strategies

LGBT's should be well aware of the problem-coping strategies in order to live their life happily. There are many problem-coping strategies which may be adopted by the LGBT to handle their issues. In this regard, Johnson (2007) suggested having a proper monitoring system which highlights and identifies the needs and demands of the LGBT. It will help in indicating the issues which should be solved for the betterment of LGBT. Johnson outlined different activities which need to be adopted by LGBT to avoid their depression and mental stress. These activities will also help in developing negative and suicidal thoughts in their minds (Johnson, 2007).

Table 6:

Cope with these problems

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They have depression (P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, P9)	6	60%
They avoided everything. (P3, P4, P7, P10)	4	40%

Table 6 shows that how these participants cope with these problems. The results highlight that either they got into depression or they just avoided the problems. The results of the interview suggested that LGBT who faced depression tend to get rid of it. In this regard, they try to isolate them from society. It doesn't help in getting a better life. This is because people are not aware of the issues LGBTs come across therefore, they do not understand the correct approach to cope with their issues. However, it becomes reasons for constant

depression and lack of confidence. This is confirmed by the findings of Gendron, Pendleton, and White (2015) that isolation gradually becomes the reason of their hopelessness. Therefore, there should be proper problem-coping strategies (Gendron, Pendleton, & White, 2015). It is observed that families of the LGBT's send such teenagers to the organizations for help. Many LGBT's tries to focus on their job and study which helps them to forget their issues. Few LGBT's have accepted that problems are part of life so they accept it. Others opt for counseling services when they do not get any help from their parents and friends. Many LGBT's are sent to therapists when they attempted to commit suicide due to their hopelessness and depression. The organizations for the help of LGBT are considered as the main source of their problem- coping strategies. Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, and Azrael (2009) also found that counseling and proper guidance can make LGBT develop the strength to cope up with their problems (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, & Azrael, 2009).

Table 7:

Feel hopeless and pessimistic

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They feel hopeless and pessimism. (P3, P4, P6, P7, P9, P1)	6	60%
They felt hopeless but know they are good. (P2, P5, P8, P10)	4	40%

Table 7 shows the results for participants feeling hopeless and pessimistic. The findings suggest that most of them feel hopeless and pessimistic. This is because Iraq is a conservative society and the level of acceptance is little. LGBTs are not generally acceptable in Iraq.

Participant VII:

"I tried to accept myself first. After that I explained everything to this girl I love. We are in relationship now

The LGBT in the interviews seems to be less expressive at the start. However, they were found to be expressive when they tried to get rid of their depression and stress. The feelings of the LGBT should be heard and they should be supported to handle their issues. The self-discovery process and acceptance is found crucial in handling the issues of LGBT by themselves. The suggestions of Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can be used to enhance the confidence of the LGBT. The results indicated that motivational interviewing can help LGBT to share their feelings. They should be made realized that they are important for society. It can be used to make them believe in themselves and solving their issues of depression and hopelessness (Hirsch, Cohn, Rowe, & Rimmer, 2017).

Table 8:

Fundamental reasons for hopelessness and pessimism

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They said no one is good with me. P1, P2, P3, , P6, P7, P8,	6	60%
They are alone acting opposite gender P4, P5, P9, P10	4	40%

Table 8 outlines the fundamental reasons for hopelessness and pessimism among these participants. The results outline that no one accepted them in the society and they have to act like gender so they are alone among main reasons for hopelessness and pessimism. This is because LGBTs are seen as something against religion and social norms. That is why the people are not good with non-binary genders.

Participant I:

"I do not care about anything. I want to focus on having a job after my study to buy a small house far from everyone."

It was observed that no support was provided by the schools and colleges. Instead, LGBT's were made unwanted and punished in their schools and college. The LGBT's were bullied in the schools which caused several issues for them. There was no evidence of support to stop the bullying and safeguard the self-esteem of LGBT in schools. The findings of Haas, et al. (2011) also demands anti-bullying and safe school legislation. It includes the acceptance of sexual orientation and gender identity in protective legislation which is also related to school safety. The findings can be used to develop the process in which nondiscrimination policies can be used to access the mental health in the students. The consequences of the inequalities in society should be monitored and the action should be taken to safeguard the respect of LGBT (Haas, et al., 2011).

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Participant VI:

"I was so bad after those people abused me. I attempted suicide. The doctors from the hospital sent me to this organization to see a counselor."

Participant III:

"No one understood me even my father"

Many participants were trying to stay calm and explain their situation to their family. It reduces the chances of depression and hopelessness in them. Many LGBT tried to avoid problems and refrain from different activities. It helps them to escape their problems. The effort is done mainly by the counselors or the LGBTs themselves. The role of teachers and their peers in developing problem-coping strategies is minimal. The teachers of LGBT should develop guidelines for the treatment in all disciplines where they are presently deficient. The teachers and schools should develop different programs which help in training LGBT to handle the issues. They should be supported to maintain their psychological and mental health. There should be a special focus on LGBT groups to minimize suicidal risks (Haas, et al., 2011).

Table 9:

Deal with these problems

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Counseling helped them in coping up with problems. (P2, P5, P9, P10)	4	40%
They accepted their self and ignore the problems. (P1, P3, P4)	3	30%
They are trying to move with society. (P6, P7, P8)	3	30%

Table 9 outlines the strategies that the participants used to cope with their problems. The results represent that counseling is helpful for the LGBT who want to move on. It is effective to get back to life with hope. It also lowered the pressure and developed self-esteem. Few LGBT are ignoring the problems and trying to move on with society. LGBT in Iraq do not know how to cope with these problems due to lack of awareness and availability of resources.

Counseling for developing more effective problem coping strategies

Counseling can have a positive impact on the mental health of LGBT. It was observed that the participants felt happy with the counseling. They faced the change in their personality before and after the counseling. LGBT also feel more comfortable to get counseling from specialized therapists. The counseling programs empowered the LGBT to share their thoughts. The main problems of LGBT are their perception of not being heard and understood. The therapy and counseling session ensures that they are being heard and understood. It helps in opening their heart and feeling more comfortable. The therapy programs are based on the willingness of the LGBT as well. If LGBT is not willing to take the therapy and counseling sessions, the counseling may not prove beneficial for them (Perey, 2015).

Table 10:

Received counseling services and perception about counseling

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They came to organization (P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P1, P2, P5, P9, P10)	10	100%
Counseling helps them to increase self-esteem. (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10)	9	90%
She thinks that they cannot do anything for her. P1	1	10%

Table 10 outlines that the participants received any counseling services before to cope with these problems or not. The results of the study represent that counseling was not received by majority of the LGBT. This is because not everyone is able to get counseling services among LGBT in Iraq thus, they remain hopeless and pessimistic.

Participant X:

“I received counseling serve after I attempted suicide 3 times. Now I feel better and decreased the level of my depression. I have Increase my self-esteem. I understand now that all men are not same and I have also decreased my fear about men.”

Counseling can help by making the LGBT feel that they are important for their society. Their feelings should be respected by others. It was witnessed that by developing a sense of acceptance and love, LGBT's can be taught how to cope up with their issues. Counseling can be effective to deal with the psychological and emotional issues caused due to the relationship issues of the LGBT. It can help in building their confidence again. It also supports them to follow their heart which can aid in giving them the motivation to live in society. The results of the therapy of the participants of the interview supported the LGBT-affirmative counseling course results of Bidell (2013) study. The results show that after the course, students were able to develop self-efficacy and motivation. It also made LGBT students in self-discovery and thoughtfulness about their role which stops pessimism and hopelessness in them (Bidell, 2013).

Participant VIII:

"I love myself now. The counselor helped me a lot. I know that all people are not same. I have no fear from the other people. But until now it is so hard for me."

Counselors helped LGBT's rebuild their self-esteem. It also gave their courage to start afresh by accepting their gender orientation and preferences. This confidence gave them a chance to move with the world without any hesitation. It was only possible without the theory session. Similar findings were supported by Hirsch, Cohn, Rowe, and Rimmer (2017) and Pelton-Sweet and Sherry (2011). The research confirmed that support is essential to make the LGBT self-confident and brave enough to fight with the circumstances. In this regard, the therapy sessions supported them to understand that people do not hate LGBT. Seeking help from counselors helped the LGBT's to lessen the depression they feel. Similar feelings were expressed by the lesbian girls after the therapy session. The therapy sessions helped lesbian girls to decrease the fear and hatred they felt for men. It developed their self-esteem and made them believed that everyone is one alike. It helps them to gain their lost confidence which strengths them to take decisions of their life. The findings confirm the perception of Manalastas & Torre (2016) about LGBT psychology in the Philippines. The findings also indicate the need for further research in the identification of the therapy effects on different LGBT (Manalastas & Torre, 2016).

Participant V:

"The counselor introduced some other LGBTs people. Now we are friends. We understand each other and help each other. The most important thing for me is that she introduced a pretty girl. Now we are in a relationship. We are very happy now. Except our friends, no one else knows about us."

It is not mandatory that counseling is provided by specialized people. The most important and essential counseling can be provided by the parents and the friends of the LGBT. Safe and supportive schools, Strong family bonds, and support from compassionate adults can help to save the LGBT youth from depression and suicidality (Team, 2013).

Conclusion

Sexual minority people, comprising of gay, lesbians, and bisexual people, and transgender reported having affected by the depression and stress. Depression, stress, and anxiety are common amongst the LGBT people. There are different reasons which affect the mental health and strength of the LGBT people. It includes the attitude of their family, friends, relatives, society, school, and college. Self-perception is the significant factor which affects the depression and pessimism in the LGBT. Many LGBT tried to commit suicide due to hopelessness. This hopelessness is caused by the hatred and awkward attitude from the people in their surroundings. Victimization became the reason for their pessimism and hopelessness. LGBT face depression because they cannot meet the demands of society. It compels them to mitigate to different areas where they are accepted. The relationship status of LGBT is also crucial in determining their happiness and satisfaction in life. LGBT people stayed happy in their relationships until they were rejected by their partners. Their love relationships made them feel hope about spending the rest of their life. The research indicated that many LGBT's are forced to hide their reality from the world which develops a sense of depression in them.

Many LGBT people often hide their feelings and needs from their families and friends. They cannot bear the pressure along so they start feeling alone and depressed. The role of the family is critical in making them develop self-confidence and self-acceptance. If families accept their LGBT children, it makes it easier to fight for their rights. The area of the LGBT in which they are living defines the acceptance level of LGBT. If LGBT are feel accepted and approved by society, the risk of depression and anxiety is less. Drinking and other harmful activities are adopted by LGBT people when LGBT people become tired from the attitude of people. Many LGBT was scolded, raped and beaten which developed depression in them. LGBT people felt lonely, sad, bored, and shameful when people mocked and bullied them in their surroundings. Due to this attitude, many LGBT people isolated themselves from society. Physical and verbal abused is faced by the

majority of the LGBT people. The study also clarified the difference before and after acceptance of LGBT's reality. It is observed that LGBT people who have admitted their own reality have found their own way of staying happy and away from depression. Whereas, the people who are still struggling face the issue of depression and anxiety. The depressed LGBT often started hating people who impose relationships on them.

LGBT's are trying to live their life without any pressure. Although, many attempted suicide. However, only a few have found their ways of handling issues. Some LGBT decided to choose therapist and counseling sessions while others were sent by their families. Counseling services have provided benefits for many LGBT people. The organizations for the help of LGBT are considered as the main source of their problem-coping strategies. The therapies and counseling helped LGBT to express their feeling in a better way. It also helped them to regain their lost confidence. Schools and colleges did not help the LGBT to develop confidence; rather, the behavior by people in school increased the stress and anxiety in LGBT students. The counseling helped the LGBT to feel more comfortable in counseling. Counseling helps LGBT people to find their own means of happiness. It provides strength to face the bullying and negative attitude of people around them. Counselors helped LGBT's to rebuild their self-esteem.

Recommendation

It is recommended to investigate further on the reasons for depression and anxiety in LGBT but it is more important to investigate the underlying reasons for the negative attitude of people around them. The findings of the study can be further used to educate parents and teachers about the feelings of LGBT. These findings can be used to empower LGBT in different school and colleges about the development of self-confidence.

There is a need to highlight the perception of society which makes them hate LGBT. To mitigate the difference and negativity, students should also be educated about the way LGBT should be treated. There is a need to aware people about equality. It is only possible when people will understand their feelings and know their perception about life. In this regard, different awareness programs should be started by the communities. Gender-based discrimination should be lowered in the society which is only possible when people will be well aware of the rights and feelings of LGBT. The results of the findings are confined to the LGBT of a particular area. However, LGBT is treated differently in different parts of the world. The depression and anxiety depend on the social factors as well. Therefore, it should be researched on how LGBT are treated in different societies. It includes different counties, cultures, and societies of both developed and underdeveloped countries.

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