



## Effect of Counselling for Enhancing Psychological Well-Being of Victims of Prejudice

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### ABSTRACT:

This research study will investigate the type and level of social prejudice and the psychological well-being of youth and for this questionnaire survey method will be used. The research carried out for this study is exploratory in nature. The study includes exploring the types and impact of social prejudice on youth of India. The nature of data obtained for the study will be both quantitative and qualitative. Victims of prejudice will be selected from the population on which the previous study has been done. Firstly, we must assess the psychological well-being of the victims and the factors influencing their psychological well-being. Then, there will be an assessment of the effect of prejudice on their psychological well-being. The intervention will take place with client centred counselling technique to enhance their psychological well-being for 2 months and so. After the intervention a post-test will be conducted to measure the difference on the psychological well-being of the victims. The data obtained will be tabulated and interpreted and discussion will be formulated based on the findings.

**Keywords:** Counselling, Psychological well-being, Prejudice, Gender Biasness, Irrational behaviour.

### INTRODUCTION:

The effect of counselling for enhancing the psychological well-being of the population that is affected by prejudice must be measured and evaluated for intervention and their personal betterment. By the implementation of these techniques we are supposed to strengthen the psychological state of the victims. The intervention is necessary for the victims in order to have a healthy personality and positive lifestyle. The counselling for such victims can be either directive or nondirective, depending on their exposure and experience. Here we are focusing on specifically client centred counselling. Historically counselling has played a vital role in solving emotional and psychological problems of individuals, especially those with exposure to traumatic situations. Individuals seek advice in various circumstances and counselling is playing a pivotal role in helping individuals to overcome their present and future problems. Counsellor provides facilities to help people achieve the desired change or make the appropriate choice. The client alone is responsible for the decisions or the choices he makes, though the counsellor may assist in this process by his unconditional positive regard and understanding relationship.

Counselling is the assistance given to the client by the professional counsellor or psychologist in order to help the client develop an insight to the positive outlook of life. It helps in altering the perspective and comprehending the other side of the coin. Counselling is a sort of assistance and an interactive process between the counsellor and the client or a group of clients and it is concerned with bringing about a voluntary change in the client.

### Client Centred Counselling

Client centred counselling has been referred to in the literature as 'supportive listening' or 'listening-visits' (Gamble et al 2002) and is associated with the descriptors 'client-centred', 'empathic', 'non-judgmental' (Bartels et al 1997), 'unstructured' and 'participant-led' (Gamble et al 2002).

"The nondirective approach was propounded by Carl Rogers in the 1940s and influenced other individual and group psychotherapeutic methods. Nondirective counselling is also called client-centered or person-centered counselling. It is an approach to the treatment of mental disorders that aims primarily toward fostering personality growth by helping individuals gain insight into and acceptance of their feelings, values, and behavior. The function of the therapist is to extend consistent, warm, unconditional positive regard toward clients and by reflecting the clients' own verbalized concerns, to enable them to see themselves more clearly and react more openly with the therapist and others. Pace, direction, and termination of therapy are controlled by the client; the therapist acts as a facilitator."

This non-directive counseling approach is more related to the field of psychological counselling. Rogers (1942) uses the term 'client-centered therapy' to emphasize the role the client has to play. The Rogerian system emerged as a set of procedures in counselling from his intimate clinical observation. It is related to psychology more than to medicine. Its aim was not to cure sick people but to help people live more satisfying and creative lives. As humanistic approach, it is popularly known as the third force of psychology. The basic underlying theme is helping relationship. In all human

relationship the helping relationship is fundamental. This relationship is one in which the counsellor seeks to bring about a better appreciation and a clearer expression of the clients' latent inner resources. Thus, the helping relationship is intended to facilitate the growth of the person receiving help. Such a growth in individual is aimed at improving their functioning and accelerating their maturity, this is usually called psychological maturity. Counselling aims at bringing about this maturity in the client. The helping relationship is a one-to-one relationship and Rogers attaches enormous importance to this helping relationship. The basic characteristics of this counselling: mutual, self-commitment, experience of emotional states, emotional and intellectual integrity, mutual consent, verbal and non-verbal communication, sense of security, and positive change in client.

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## Psychological well-being

Psychological Well-Being refers to Positive Mental State like peace and satisfaction. If a person is happy and very satisfied with one's life that means his/ her psychological well-being is quite high. Well-being is the combat of health, happiness, peace, prosperity and satisfaction. It is a blend of positive feelings, good mental health, high life satisfaction, social connections, and a sense of purpose of life. Well-being emerges from your thoughts, actions, and experiences, which are incontrol. According to Diener (2000), "subjective wellbeing refers to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. "Psychological well-being is concerned with two important aspects: "The term Hedonic well-being normally refers to the subjective feeling of happiness. It comprises of two components, an affective component (high positive affect and low negative affect) and a cognitive component (satisfaction with life). It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high" given by Carruthers & Hood (2004), and Carol Ryff (2005) gave the term "Eudemonic well-being refers to purposeful aspect of psychological well-being, he has developed a very clear model that breaks down Eudemonic wellbeing into six key types of psychological wellbeing: Self-Acceptance, Environmental Mastery, Positive Relations with Others, Personal Growth, Purpose in Life, Autonomy."

Psychological well-being is attained by achieving a state of balance affected by both challenging and rewarding life events. Carol Ryff (2005) explained a model in which Psychological well-being is categorized as eudemonic well-being and hedonic well-being. Eudemonic well-being is concerned with self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationships, personal growth, purpose in life, and autonomy. Hedonic well-being deals with happiness, subjective well-being, and positive emotions.

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## Factors Affecting Psychological well-being

**Psychosocial factors** are influences that affect a person psychologically or socially and are the blend of certain psychological and social factors. There are multidimensional constructs encompassing several domains such as mood status (anxiety, depression, distress, and positive affect), cognitive behavioural responses (satisfaction, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and locus of control), and social factors (socioeconomic status, education, employment, religion, ethnicity, family, physical attributes, locality, relationships with others, changes in personal roles, and status). Psychosocial factors and influences differ across individuals and may contribute to the development or aggravation of mental and physical disorders. Some common psychosocial factors that affect psychological well-being are: grief and loss of loved ones, physical health problems (health issues), depression and anxiety, loneliness, fear of failure, discordant family, severe peer pressure, financial crisis, low self-esteem, disruptive self-concept, uncertain trauma and identity crisis.

**Socio-Cultural Factors** involve a set of beliefs, customs, practices and behaviour that exists within a population. It is a blend of social as well as cultural factors that influence a person in one way or the other. In general, Socio-cultural factors are customs, lifestyles and values that characterize a society. More specifically, cultural aspects include aesthetics, education, language, law and politics, religion, social organizations, technology and material culture, values and attitudes. Social factors include reference groups, family, role and status in the society. Some of the important socio-cultural factors that have an influence on one's psychological well-being includes; gender biasness, irrational behaviour of society, stereotyping, class discrimination, intolerant attitude, partial ethnicity, social insecurity, racism, stigma, casteism, political values and disturbing interpersonal or intrapersonal interactions.

### Prejudice

The term prejudice has been derived from the Latin word '**Præjudicium**' which means 'judgment in advance.' (Prejudice and Discrimination: J.L. Chin-2004). Prejudice has come to have multiple connotations: i) A judgment or opinion formed beforehand without thoughtful examination of the pertinent facts, issues, or arguments; especially an unfavourable, irrational opinion. ii) The act or state of holding preconceived irrational opinions. iii) Hatred of or dislike for a particular group, race, religion, etc. Prejudice is an irrational and biased attitude (usually negative) towards a person founded solely on the individual's adherence to a social thought pool. It is concerned with some Unfavourable attributes. It deals with certain unreasonable and judgmental feelings towards a person or a group because of some social stigmas. Prejudice is a resultant of a negative mindset that often leads to inferiority complex.

Generally, prejudice consists of three components: beliefs, feelings and behavioural tendencies. Such beliefs and expectations often involve stereotypes- clump of preconceived opinions about various groups. The affective aspect of prejudice covers negative emotional state and strong feelings of dislike towards a person or a group particularly ethnic, racial, or religious groups. The behavioural perspective, prejudice is emulated in an individual's verbal support for discriminatory practices.

### Strategies to Enhance Psychological well-being

Some useful strategies that can enhance one's Psychological well-being are: 1) Awareness creation- spreading the awareness regarding the constitutional laws and human rights and freedom. 2) Brainstorming- a creative and effective measure to generate best possible ways to solve a specific problem. People are able to think more freely, and they suggest as many spontaneous new ideas as possible. All the ideas are noted down and those

ideas are not criticized and after brainstorming session the ideas are evaluated. 3) Meditation: an approach to train the mind or focusing their mind on a specific thought or activity, to train attention and awareness and attain intellectually clear, emotionally calm and stable state. Meditation can be used with the aim of reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and pain, and increasing peace, perception, self-concept, and well-being. 4) Counselling: giving assistance to the persons having low or disruptive mental health to develop an insight and self-confidence to face the world with a better perception and altering their behaviour for their betterment. 5) Foster positive thinking: cultivating and nurturing the positive energies around the victims for their upliftment and a healthy personality development. 6) Practice acts of kindness: doing good to all the people irrespective of society, community and other influencing factors and randomly helping the needy ones in every social interaction. 7) Create stress free environment: promoting a healthy and positive environment to mitigate the stress to have a better perspective of life and satisfying social construct. 8) Try to cope with anxiety and depression: applying and implementing strategies and techniques to minimize and cope up with the stress, anxiety and depression for a vigorous lifestyle.

### Measures to be undertaken to Reduce Prejudice

Prejudice as stated earlier is the root cause of human conflict and on an individual level they have the notorious capacity to ruin personalities and lives altogether. Therefore, it is important to mitigate their impact and influence and to eradicate them from the society. Some important and useful measures that can be undertaken to reduce prejudice in our society are: 1) Acceptance and appreciation of differences and diversity: India is famous throughout the world for its complex social and cultural diversity, however, to succeed as a nation we should accept and appreciate this diversity and the difference among its citizens and avoid any negative thoughts and resultant actions emanating from these differences. 2) Respect secularism and democracy: Irrespective of the country that one resides in, he or she should be world citizen first and treat the entire world as one family. We should respect the law of the land and in the Indian context, the concepts of secularism and democracy should be well accepted and applied and their importance in keeping the nation united should be fully understood. It is this unity in diversity that makes our country so unique and buoyant. 3) Profess and spread the idea of "VasudhaivaKutumbakam": VasudhaivaKutumbakam is a philosophy that inculcates an understanding that the whole world is one family. It is a philosophy that tries to foster an understanding that the whole of humanity is one family. It is a social philosophy emanating from a spiritual understanding that the whole of humanity is made of one life energy. The idea of the entire world being one large family is the essence of world unity and world peace. India through the ages has always focused this principle and has been a great proponent of world peace. The acceptance and appreciation of differences of culture and society is the root of this concept. 4) Inculcate the idea and concept of healthy discussion: for any kind of misconception or misunderstanding we should focus on healthy discussion rather than fighting over insignificant and irrelevant issues. We should spread knowledge and clear the basic concepts of differences and diversities in a persuasive manner. 5) Focus on development of society and nation instead of individual: for the development of our country we should concentrate and emphasize the development of society or nation as a whole rather than individually accelerating oneself and paying no heed to social norms and moral values and ruining the society and nation in the process of achieving selfish goals. 6) Dissemination of information regarding human rights: spreading the detailed information and knowledge about the human rights as the individuals are facing so much of partiality because of lack of knowledge about their rights. 7) Development of laws and regulation regarding discrimination and prejudice: developing rules and regulations to avoid the partial attitude and irrational or negative behaviour for the social benefit and implementing the policies to reduce the prejudice and discrimination. 8) Efforts to alter negative perceptions: the knowledgeable people should make some positive efforts to change the negative perspective of the prejudiced persons or extremists in order to minimize this act for the betterment of society and nation as well.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

Alice H Eagly and Antonio: "Are People Prejudiced Against Women? Some Answers from Research on Attitudes, Gender Stereotypes, and Judgments of Competence" have wrote about positive attitude towards women being higher as compared to men in results obtained from samples collected in universities in the US and Canada. They have compared these findings with the results obtained from the Goldberg-paradigm experiments on judgments of women's and men's competence, which are generally supposed to be indicative of attitudes and stereotypes of people.

Harold D. Fishbein: "Peer Prejudice and Discrimination - The Origins of Prejudice" has provided an analysis of the evolution and historical perspective of prejudice and discrimination its transformation over the years. It highlights how particular transformative mechanisms are used to both activate and stop prejudice and discrimination from taking place or to alter these behaviours once they are deep seated. The book also helps us to understand the limitations in removing prejudice and discrimination and how we can increase tolerance and acceptance of those who perceive as outsiders.

George Eaton Simpson and J. Milton Yinger: "Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination" have analysed the swift changes in the field of research and study related to prejudice and discrimination. The study has also attempted to analyse the changes in the scientific perception of inter group relationships. The book focuses on discrimination in the context of racial and cultural segregation and attempted to define the concept of race from popular and sociological perspectives. The book also looks at the use of prejudice and discrimination for power and prestige in group conflicts. The book has also outlined the individual sources and cultural factors responsible for the emergence of prejudice and discrimination. The book talks about the various types of responses to discrimination and the consequences of prejudice and discrimination in terms of the resultant personal, social and economic costs.

## METHODOLOGY:

### Objectives:

1. To determine and select the victims from the experimental group, and conduct the pre-test to assess their Psychological well-being.
2. To assess the effect of prejudice on their Psychological well-being.
3. To intervene with the client centred counselling on the randomly selected victims.
4. To implement the strategies and techniques to enhance the Psychological well-being of the victims of prejudice.
5. To implement the strategies and techniques to reduce prejudice among the youth of India.
6. To conduct a post-test to assess the difference on the Psychological well-being among the victims.

### Hypothesis:

- 1) There will be an effect of social prejudice on Psychological well-being of the victims.
- 2) There will be a positive impact of intervention with the help of client centred counselling on the Psychological well-being of the victims.
- 3) There will be significant difference between the Psychological well-being among the victims after the intervention.
- 4) There will be a significant difference between the results of pre-test and post-test of assessment of Psychological well-being.

### Sampling:

The study was conducted on 30 respondents from the general population that is facing or have faced the prejudice at some point of life. Sample was collected randomly by stratified random sampling method as it is a convenient method and gives accurate results which can be easily measured. The data was collected through questionnaires which was first put on a pilot study and later amended and elaborated.

### Tools and Techniques:

For assessing the level of social prejudice and Psychological well-being of the respondents, following questionnaires have been used:

1. **Prejudice Scale Test**-developed by Dr. Rajiv L Bharadwaj&Dr. Harish Sharma (2010).
2. **Psychological Wellbeing Scale** – D. S. Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary (2012),

### Data analysis - Statistical Processing:

Statistical processing has been done using tools like coefficient of correlation and regression to understand and establish relationship between prejudice and psychological well-being. The validity has been checked with the Theoretical method found to be 0.83 and with Construct method is 0.66 and the reliability has been tested with the test-retest method is 0.69 and Split-half method is 0.94.5-point Likert scale Scoring Pattern is applied for the manual assessment of the scales that have been used. The conduction of this study is objective by nature and individual administration is done. The significance has been calculated at 0.05 levels.

N=30	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Prejudice	84.32	881.25	29.68
Psychological Well-being	81.70	128.40	11.33

**Results:** The results depict a significant difference among the concerned variables focussing on the inclusion and exclusion of the extraneous variables that could influence the responses.

N=30	Pre-test Observation	Post-test Observation
Mean	81.7	89.3
Variance	128.4	143.13
SD	11.33	11.96

- \*P value= 0.037 @ 0.05 Level
- \*T value= 2.186
- Df=28
- Sed=4.25

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### Outcome of the Study:

Overtime, the goals of psychology have always been to cure the mental illness, reduce stress and anxiety and enhance the positive lifestyle of the people around the world. However, as the studies suggested, the focus has been the study of Psychological Well-being and reducing the negative energies and strengthen a healthy and positive personality. Based on these earlier findings as well as theoretical consideration, this research study has measured the rate of social prejudice faced by youth. Other than the previous studies, this study also looks forward to understanding and assessing the factors responsible for the prejudice. An intervention with the help of client centred counselling have been done to measure the difference in the pre-test and post-test to assess the Psychological well-being and the effect of prejudice on the Psychological well-being of the victims. Between the interventions of counselling sessions with the victims of prejudice it has been noticed that the victims have faced different types of prejudice based on gender, socio-economic status and community at different levels which have adverse effects on their Psychological well-being and have caused stress and deteriorate their physical health as well.

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### Conclusion:

The results depict that the objectives of the study have been accomplished, as we have conducted a pre-test and a post-test with the intervention of client centred counselling to assess its impact on the Psychological well-being of the victims. With the intervention of counselling we have created awareness among the victims regarding the constitutional laws and regulations as well as their legal rights towards the discriminated behaviour of others in public places. We have also implemented the strategies and techniques to enhance the Psychological well-being of the victims and made efforts to reduce prejudice in the surroundings of the victims to make a difference in their psychological well-being level and spread positivity in near future. These efforts of intervention actualize the difference in the psychological well-being among the pre-test and post-test results. The results show that the victims have better psychological well-being after the intervention of counselling sessions and hence our hypotheses have been proved right as we found that there was an adverse effect of social prejudice on the psychological well-being of the victims and a positive impact was made with the help of intervention of client centred counselling and we have also found that there is a significant difference between the results of pre-test and post-test assessment of psychological well-being of the victims and this significant difference is a result of successful intervention of counselling sessions of the victims. This study has also been concentrating on recommendation of the techniques for managing and mitigating this prejudice from occurring in future. Moreover, the study is contributing to suggest measures and actions to be taken at macro-level.

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