

Role of Educational Institutions in Reducing Adjustment Problems among Transgender Students in Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Transgender students in India often face serious difficulties in adjusting to educational environments due to social stigma, discrimination, and limited institutional support. These difficulties affect their social interaction, emotional health, and academic participation. The present study examines the role of educational institutions in reducing adjustment problems among transgender students in Uttar Pradesh. The study adopts a descriptive, survey-based research design. Primary data were collected from 20 transgender students studying in schools, colleges, and universities in selected districts of Uttar Pradesh, along with 20 teachers and institutional staff. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and brief interviews. The analysis was carried out using simple statistical methods such as percentages and averages, supported by descriptive interpretation. The findings show that fear of discrimination, difficulty in social adjustment, and emotional stress are the most common problems faced by transgender students. Many students also reported academic difficulties, including lack of concentration and hesitation in classroom participation. The study further reveals that although most teachers show a supportive attitude, institutional support systems such as counseling services, formal training, and inclusive policies are limited. This gap reduces the ability of educational institutions to effectively address adjustment problems. The study concludes that educational institutions play an important role in improving the social, emotional, and academic adjustment of transgender students. Strengthening teacher awareness, counseling services, and inclusive institutional practices can help create a safer and more supportive educational environment in Uttar Pradesh.



1. Introduction

Transgender students in India face many difficulties while studying in schools and colleges. These difficulties are not limited to academics but also affect their social life, emotional health, and sense of belonging. Many transgender students experience rejection, teasing, and isolation, which make it hard for them to adjust to the educational environment. Such experiences often lead to stress, low confidence, and poor academic performance. Adjustment problems among transgender students arise mainly from lack of acceptance and understanding within educational institutions. Negative attitudes of peers, limited awareness among teachers, and absence of clear institutional support systems create an unsafe learning environment. In many cases, transgender students do not feel comfortable expressing their identity, which further affects their participation and interaction in classrooms. Educational institutions have an important responsibility in reducing these adjustment problems. Schools and colleges can support transgender students by promoting respectful behavior, providing counseling facilities, ensuring equal treatment, and creating awareness about gender diversity. When institutions adopt inclusive practices, transgender students feel safer and more confident; this helps them adjust better both socially and emotionally. In Uttar Pradesh, the situation is more challenging due to social stigma and lack of consistent inclusive practices across educational institutions. While some progress has been made, many institutions still lack proper policies and support mechanisms for transgender students. There is limited research that examines how educational institutions in the state contribute to reducing adjustment problems faced by transgender students. This study focuses on understanding the role of educational institutions in reducing adjustment problems among transgender students in Uttar Pradesh. It aims to examine existing institutional practices and suggest measures to create a more supportive and inclusive educational environment.

2. Review of Literature

Studies from different countries consistently show that transgender students face serious adjustment problems in educational institutions. Early work by Beauchamp and D'Augelli (2010) reported that transgender students frequently experience bullying, verbal abuse, and social exclusion in schools. These experiences often result in fear, emotional distress, and poor classroom adjustment. Similarly, Grant et al. (2011) based on a large national survey, through the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, which showed that harassment and unsafe school environments significantly increase absenteeism and dropout rates among transgender students. Their findings clearly linked educational discrimination with long-term social and psychological problems. Similarly, Kosciw et al. (2014) found that transgender students studying in unsupportive school climates reported higher levels of anxiety, depression, and isolation. The study emphasized that adjustment problems are shaped more by institutional attitudes than by individual characteristics. Further, Russell et al. (2011) observed that lack of peer acceptance and teacher support negatively affects the emotional adjustment and academic engagement of transgender youth. Their work highlighted the importance of a safe and inclusive school environment.



In India, adjustment problems of transgender students are strongly linked to social stigma and institutional neglect. The landmark judgment in *NALSA v. Union of India* (2014) recognized transgender persons as a third gender and clearly pointed out their exclusion from education and other basic services. The judgment emphasized that denial of educational opportunities affects dignity, self-respect, and social adjustment. Empirical research by Chakrapani **et al.** (2015) showed that many transgender individuals face harassment during their school years, leading to emotional stress and early discontinuation of education. Their study highlighted that lack of institutional support is a major cause of adjustment difficulties. Later, Humsafar Trust (2017) documented that educational exclusion remains one of the key reasons for social and economic marginalization of transgender persons in India. The report stressed that schools and colleges rarely provide a safe and respectful environment for transgender students. Research by Khan **et al.** (2018) further noted that fear of discrimination discourages transgender students from participating fully in academic and social activities, which weakens their adjustment and confidence.

Many studies emphasize that educational institutions can play a strong role in reducing adjustment problems. UNESCO (2016) stated that inclusive education policies, teacher sensitization, and counseling services help transgender students feel accepted and secure. Such environments improve social interaction and emotional well-being. Evidence from school-based studies by Snapp **et al.** (2015) showed that supportive teachers and anti-discrimination policies significantly reduce stress and fear among transgender students. Schools with inclusive practices reported better attendance and improved peer relationships. Similarly, Greytak **et al.** (2016) found that the presence of inclusive school policies and trained staff leads to better adjustment and academic outcomes for transgender students. In the Indian context, Bhattacharya **and** Ghosh (2020) observed that counseling support, awareness programs, and inclusive institutional practices help reduce anxiety and adjustment problems among transgender students in higher educational institutions.

3. Research Gap

Although earlier studies clearly document the adjustment problems faced by transgender students, most research remains concentrated at national or international levels. There is limited state-level research that examines how educational institutions respond to these problems in practice. In particular, empirical studies focusing on Uttar Pradesh are very few. Moreover, existing studies mainly highlight discrimination and exclusion, while the actual role of schools and colleges in providing support, counseling, and inclusive learning environments has received limited attention. This gap makes it necessary to study how educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh can actively reduce adjustment problems among transgender students.

4. Statement of the Problem

Transgender students often face difficulties in adjusting to school and college life. These difficulties include problems in interacting with classmates, fear of negative treatment, emotional stress, and lack of confidence. Such problems affect their learning and overall well-being.



In many educational institutions, there is limited understanding of transgender issues. Teachers and administrators may not be trained to deal with gender diversity, and support facilities such as counseling services or grievance mechanisms are often not available. Because of this, transgender students may feel isolated and unsupported within the educational environment. In Uttar Pradesh, social attitudes and lack of uniform institutional practices further increase these adjustment problems. Although policies exist to protect the rights of transgender persons, their implementation in educational institutions remains uneven. There is limited research that examines how schools and colleges in Uttar Pradesh help transgender students deal with adjustment problems. This study addresses this gap by examining the role of educational institutions in reducing adjustment problems among transgender students in the state.

5. Research Objectives (RO)

- RO₁:** To examine the nature of social, emotional, and academic adjustment problems faced by transgender students in educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh.
- RO₂:** To assess the role of educational institutions in addressing these adjustment problems through institutional practices and support mechanisms.
- RO₃:** To analyze the availability and effectiveness of support services, including teacher support, counseling facilities, and inclusive institutional policies for transgender students.
- RO₄:** To explore the experiences of transgender students related to acceptance, safety, and participation within educational settings.
- RO₅:** To suggest evidence-based measures for educational institutions to reduce adjustment problems and promote inclusive learning environments for transgender students in Uttar Pradesh.

6. Research Methodology

The study uses a descriptive, survey-based research design to understand the adjustment problems faced by transgender students and the role of educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh. The sample includes 20 transgender students studying in schools, colleges, and universities in selected districts of the state, chosen through purposive sampling because the population is limited. In addition, 20 teachers and institutional staff are included to understand support practices within institutions. Primary data are collected through a structured questionnaire for transgender students and brief interviews with educators. The data are analyzed using simple methods such as percentages and average values, along with descriptive explanation of responses to understand patterns and experiences.



7. Results

The results of the study are based on responses collected from 20 transgender students enrolled in schools, colleges, and universities in selected districts of Uttar Pradesh, along with 20 teachers and institutional staff from the same institutions. The analysis highlights the main adjustment problems faced by transgender students and examines the level of institutional support available to them.

Table 1: Adjustment Problems Faced by Transgender Students (n = 20)

Adjustment Problem	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Difficulty in social adjustment with peers	14	70.00
Fear of discrimination or negative treatment	15	75.00
Emotional stress and anxiety	13	65.00
Difficulty in classroom participation	12	60.00
Problems in academic concentration	11	55.00
Availability of counseling support	5	25.00

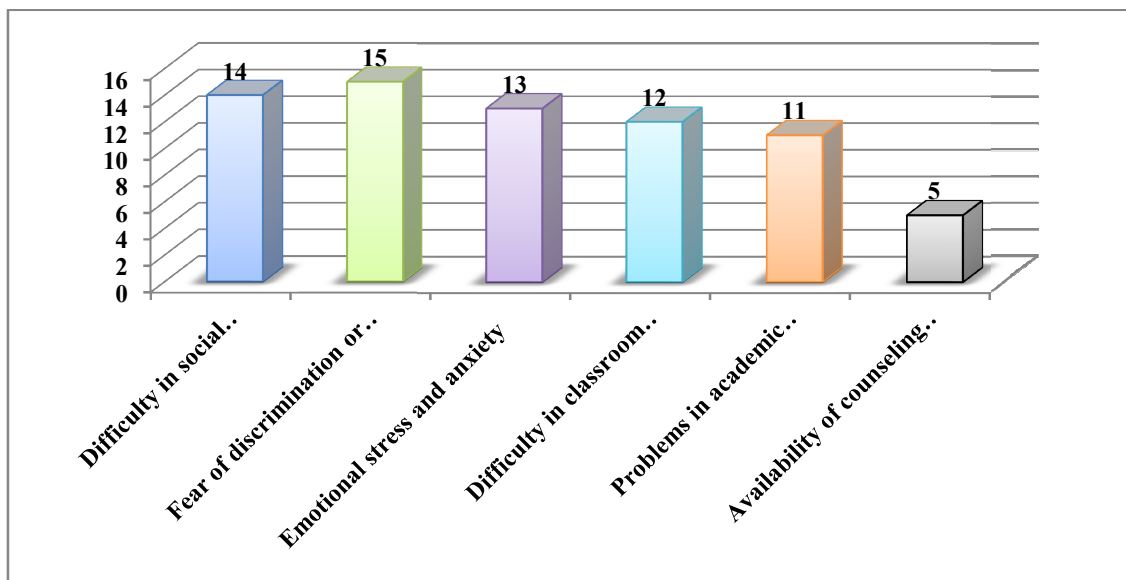
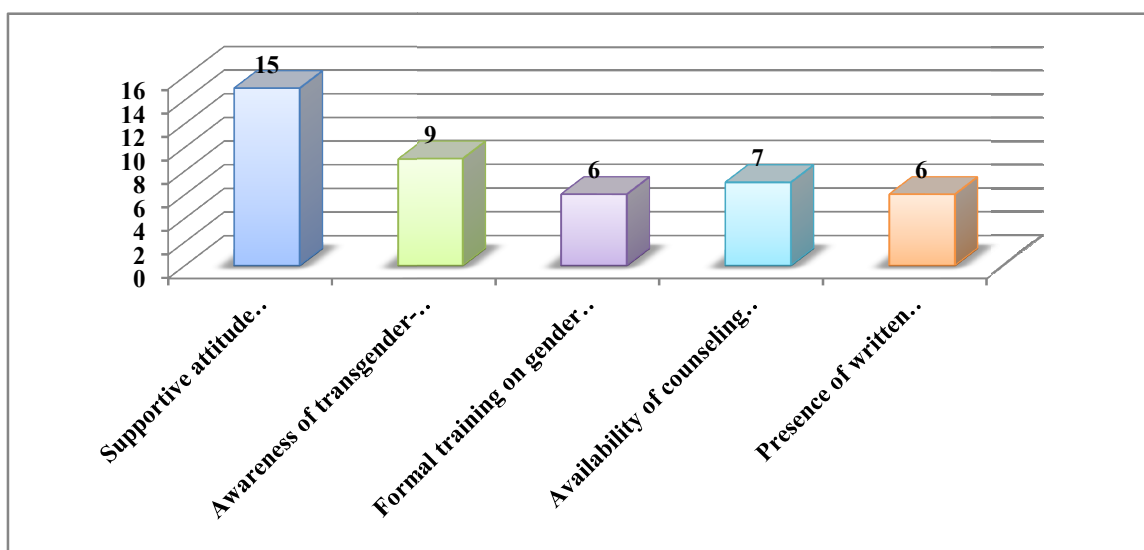


Fig.1: Adjustment Problems Faced by Transgender Students

The results indicate that fear of discrimination is the most common adjustment problem among transgender students. A large proportion of respondents also reported difficulty in social interaction with peers and feelings of emotional stress. Academic-related problems, such as lack of concentration and hesitation in classroom participation, were reported by more than half of the students. Counseling support was available to only a small number of respondents, showing limited institutional facilities for emotional and psychological support.

**Table 2: Institutional Support Reported by Teachers and Staff (n = 20)**

Institutional Support Aspect	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Supportive attitude towards transgender students	15	75.00
Awareness of transgender-related issues	9	45.00
Formal training on gender inclusion	6	30.00
Availability of counseling services	7	35.00
Presence of written inclusive policies	6	30.00

**Fig.2: Institutional Support Reported by Teachers and Staff**

The responses from teachers and institutional staff show that while most educators hold a supportive attitude, fewer possess adequate awareness or professional training related to transgender issues. Counseling services and written inclusive policies are present in only a limited number of institutions, suggesting gaps in formal institutional support.

8. Key Findings of the Study

- ❖ A majority of transgender students reported fear of discrimination (75%) and difficulty in social adjustment (70%), indicating serious social adjustment challenges.
- ❖ Emotional stress and academic participation difficulties were reported by more than half of the respondents, showing the interconnected nature of emotional and academic adjustment problems.
- ❖ Most teachers expressed a supportive attitude (75%), but fewer had adequate awareness (45%) or formal training (30%), highlighting institutional limitations.



- ❖ Counseling services and written inclusive policies were available in only a limited number of institutions, reducing effective institutional support.
- ❖ Transgender students who experienced supportive teacher behaviour reported better confidence and classroom participation, emphasizing the positive role of educational institutions.

9. Discussion

The findings clearly show that adjustment problems faced by transgender students are closely linked to the social and institutional environment of educational institutions. Fear of discrimination and lack of peer acceptance create emotional stress, which in turn affects classroom participation and academic concentration. These problems are not related to academic ability but arise from feelings of insecurity and exclusion within the learning environment. Limited access to counseling services further increases emotional difficulties. Students who experienced respectful and understanding behaviour from teachers reported better confidence and participation, indicating that teacher support plays an important role in easing adjustment problems. Even basic sensitivity and encouragement from educators can make a noticeable difference in students' adjustment. The responses from teachers and institutional staff point to a clear gap between positive attitudes and institutional readiness. Although many educators are willing to support transgender students, the lack of formal training, clear guidelines, and inclusive policies restricts effective action. This gap explains why adjustment problems continue even in institutions where individual attitudes are generally supportive. Overall, the results underline the important role of educational institutions in reducing adjustment problems among transgender students. Improving teacher awareness, strengthening counseling services, and implementing clear inclusive policies can help create safer, more supportive, and more inclusive educational environments for transgender students in Uttar Pradesh.

10. Conclusion

The present study highlights that transgender students in educational institutions of Uttar Pradesh face notable adjustment problems related to social interaction, emotional well-being, and academic participation. Fear of discrimination and lack of acceptance from peers remain the most common challenges, which often lead to stress, reduced confidence, and difficulties in classroom engagement. These problems are closely linked to the institutional environment rather than the individual abilities of students. The findings also show that institutional support for transgender students is limited. While many teachers and staff members display a supportive attitude, gaps exist in terms of formal training, counseling services, and clear inclusive policies. The absence of structured support systems reduces the ability of educational institutions to effectively address adjustment problems. Overall, the study concludes that educational institutions play a crucial role in reducing adjustment problems among transgender students. Creating a respectful and inclusive learning environment, strengthening teacher awareness, and improving access to counseling and support services can significantly enhance the social, emotional, and academic adjustment of transgender students in Uttar Pradesh.



11. Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are proposed to reduce adjustment problems among transgender students in educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh:

1. Educational institutions should adopt clear and well-defined inclusive policies that ensure non-discrimination, respect, and equal opportunities for transgender students in academic and co-curricular activities.
2. Regular orientation and training programmes should be conducted for teachers, administrative staff, and support personnel to improve awareness and sensitivity towards transgender issues and to encourage supportive classroom practices.
3. Counseling and guidance services should be strengthened and made easily accessible within institutions so that transgender students can receive timely emotional and psychological support in a safe and confidential manner.
4. Institutions should promote a positive and inclusive peer environment by organizing awareness activities, workshops, and student-led initiatives that encourage acceptance and understanding of gender diversity.
5. A transparent and confidential grievance redressal system should be established to address cases of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion faced by transgender students, ensuring timely action and support.
6. Educational authorities and management bodies should regularly review and monitor institutional practices related to transgender inclusion to ensure effective implementation of policies and support mechanisms across different educational institutions.

Implementing these suggestions can help educational institutions create a more inclusive, supportive, and respectful learning environment, which will contribute to reducing adjustment problems and improving the overall educational experience of transgender students

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