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Perceptions of Transgender Populations: An Educational Module to Increase Knowledge and Reduce Negative Attitudes

Dacia Oberhelman

University of Northern Iowa

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PERCEPTIONS OF TRANSGENDER POPULATIONS: AN EDUCATIONAL MODULE
TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE AND REDUCE NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

University of Northern Iowa
Dacia Oberhelman, B.A. & Dilbur D. Arsiwalla, Ph.D.

Abstract

The sample consisted of 219 undergraduate students (ages 18+) at a large public Midwestern University. We used self-report measures to collect demographic information as well as to identify lay persons’ attitudes and perceptions of transgender populations. Furthermore, participants viewed either a neutral video or an online psychoeducational module that contained factual information about transgender populations. Within this study, three measures were used to detect stigma these being the Social Distance Scale (adapted version; Link et al., 1987) the Affective Reaction Scale (Penn et al., 2003), and Attitudes Toward Transgender Populations (Walch et al., 2012). A knowledge questionnaire was created to assess participants knowledge of transgender populations.

Methods

2x2 ANOVA with One Repeated Measures Factor and One Between Person Factor for Stigma and Negative Attitudes and Knowledge

Results

➢ 2x2 ANOVA analyses were used to examine the effect of an education module on stigma and knowledge at post-test.
➢ Figure 1 shows there was an increase in positive attitudes on positive affect. There was an increase in the experimental group and no change in the control. However, there was no difference between groups at pre- and post-test.
➢ Figure 2 shows there was no change in the experimental group, but there was an increase in the control. However at both pre- and post-test there was no difference between groups.
➢ Figure 3 shows there was a main effect for time for both the experimental and control group. Both experimental and control group increased at the same rate indicating there was an increase in positive attitudes at post-test.
➢ Figure 4 shows there was an increase in knowledge at post-test for the experimental group. There was an increase for the experimental group and no change for the control. There was a difference between groups at both pre- and post-test.

Conclusion

➢ We examined the stigma experienced by transgender populations and if stigma could be decreased with a psychoeducational module.
➢ This study examined if knowledge about transgender populations could be increased.
➢ Knowledge can be stated to have increased but findings for stigma are inconclusive.
➢ Positive affect appeared to increase for the experimental group, but results show inconsistencies.
➢ For positive attitude, the control group and experimental group appeared to have an increase in positive attitudes.
➢ Social distance appeared to increase for the control group.
➢ Limitations—pre- and post-test design
➢ Future research
➢ Longitudinal Design
➢ Creation of more interactive modules
➢ Findings have implications for future research that aims to reduce stigma towards transgender populations.

Introduction

Fewer studies have explored stigma towards transgender populations (Case & Stewart, 2013; Lidde, 2002). This area of stigma research has become increasingly necessary with the increased visibility in transgender populations. Transgender populations are highly stigmatized and face much discrimination, including increased rates of police violence, sexual assault, and suicide (NCAP, 2013; OVC, 2014). With transgender populations being a common target of stigma, it will be important for public policy to assess the factors that affect this stigma. One of the oldest forms of stigma is that of in-group favatism, in which members of one group perceive members of their own group more favorably, and members of other groups less favorably (Brewer, 2007). We hypothesized the experimental group would have less stigma and fewer negative attitudes toward transgender populations after viewing a psychoeducational module compared to the control group at post-test. Furthermore, we expected that the experimental group would have increased knowledge about transgender populations after viewing the educational module when compared to the control group at post-test.

Figures

2x2 ANOVA with One Repeated Measures Factor and One Between Person Factor for Stigma and Negative Attitudes and Knowledge

Figure 1: Pre- to Post-test Positive Affect

Figure 2: Pre- to Post-test Social Distance

Figure 3: Pre- to Post-test Attitudes toward Transgender Populations

Figure 4: Pre- to Post-test Knowledge

Int. F = .36
P = .55

Time Main
F = 5.68
P < .05*
η² = .03

Pos. Affect appeared to increase for the experimental group, but results show inconsistencies.

Total Correct Responses

F = 87.83
P < .001**
η² = .29