Predictors of Attitudes toward Transgender Men and Women

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Predictors of Attitudes toward Transgender Men and Women

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Abstract

This study examined whether induced empathy affected attitudes toward transgender individuals, as well as personality and demographic variables related to those attitudes. Across two samples, participants who were higher in empathy and contemporary consciousness and lower in right wing authoritarianism held more positive attitudes. Similar attitudes were reported for both transgender men and women.

Introduction

Although there has been a good deal of research on attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women (Evans & Chapman, 2014; Jewell & Morrison, 2022), researchers have only recently started examining attitudes toward transgender people. Many transgender individuals report feeling rejection, discrimination, victimization, and violence. As a result of such occurrences, transgender individuals have a much higher suicide rate (41%) than the national average of less than 2% (Haas, Rodgers, & Herman, 2014). Transgender women are at a higher risk of violence in public places and have few places where they feel secure (Perry & Dyck, 2014).

Empathy can improve feelings toward stigmaed groups (Batson et al., 1997). The goal of this study was to examine the effects of empathy and personality/demographic variables on attitudes toward transgender individuals. We were further interested in whether a difference existed between attitudes toward transgender men vs. transgender women.

Vignette

At birth, I was assigned to the male gender, and was named Samuel. When I was young, I didn’t let my own skin. While my parents were dressing me in shirts and shorts, I wanted to wear dresses. I was given toy cars to play with, but found myself wanting to wear dresses instead. I knew, even though I had the body of a boy, in my heart I was a girl. I could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am. My mom went from being my best friend to a near stranger overnight, spiraling me into a deep depression. As I realized that my entire life was a lie, I couldn’t handle it. She had always seen me as her little boy, and could not accept me as the woman that I am.