

INCEST AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO HOMOSEXUALITY - A STUDY IN MUMBAI

Research
Paper

ABSTRACT

Incest is one of the areas in the literature of psychology that has not been studied extensively. The term incest is derived from a Latin word "Incestum" which implies impure, unchaste. Social scientists are now coming to believe and statistically prove that the incidence of incest in India is alarming. In India at least 25% of the adult population are molested before age 16. About 27 million females are adult survivors of child sexual abuse. This research study was an attempt to find out the relationship between incest and homosexuality in Mumbai city. A total sample of 184 was collected using a Questionnaire of Incest (QOI) developed by the researcher. Of the 184 sample 75 were collected from the gay population in Mumbai. Results indicate that 28% of the homosexual sample has indicated incest, as against the 5% of normal population. The study also revealed that in 18% of the cases the abusers were parents, in 8% siblings, in 28% relatives and in 60% friends. Similarly 58% have reported that the place of abuse was their own house. A feeling of guilt, embarrassment, humiliation and anger was high in the sample studied. The study indicates that there is a significant relationship between incest and homosexuality.

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is considered to be a stage of innocence. It is a stage that is very sensitive, and has a great influence on later life. It is a well established fact that a right amount out of love, care and attention is important for the personality of a child to bloom and flourish into healthy adulthood. When a child is ignored, battered or abused it results in pathological conditions and orientations. The Nithari Case in Noida, India, and the cases of child sexual abuses reported every day, highlight the urgency of the situation in India. On the gay front, in June 2008 gays and lesbians in Bangalore, Calcutta, Delhi and Mumbai came out in the streets to declare their sexuality for the first time. Section 377 of the Indian Penal code dating back to 19th century penalizes and criminalizes homosexuality.

Children are prone to various kinds of abuse (physical, mental, emotional, and sexual) because of their vulnerability. The number of structured studies in this field in the Indian continent is negligible. Hence the present study was undertaken.

A total sample of 75 persons were selected from Humsafar trust in Mumbai, a club born in March 2003 started by a group of gay men, to handle the HIV problems in gay men. Analyses of the sample shows that 12% are

graduates, while 2.75% are intermediate and 58.25% uneducated. The family income range between Rs. 50,000/- and Rs. 1 lakh per annum.

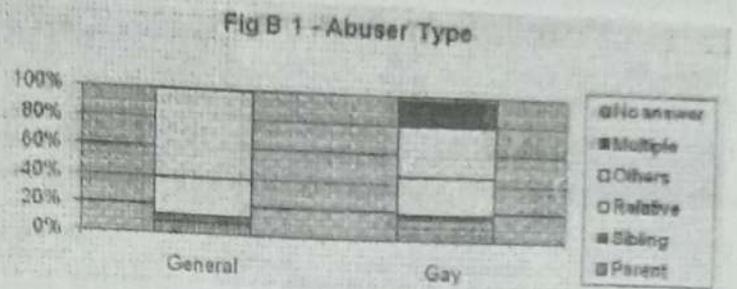
TOOL

Due to the non-availability of a suitable questionnaire was developed for the study. Based on extensive reference and expert opinion the investigator developed a questionnaire of incest (QOI). All items were given alternatives to select from. The inventory also included information on basic biodata.

In order to establish the reliability and validity of the study was conducted on a sample of 70. Reliability was established through split half method. The reliability coefficient was 0.54 for the English version and 0.48 for the Marathi Form. Validity of the questionnaire was established separately for the English and Marathi versions. Tailed tests were computed to establish the content validity of the questionnaire. For the English version a 't' value of 8.695 that is significant at 0.05 level.

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FIGURE 2
GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION
OF TYPE OF ABUSER



The above figures speak of the abuser. In the gay sample 18% have indicated that the parents themselves were the abusers and in 8% of the population the siblings have been indicated. In 28% of the sample it was close relatives while in 60% of the sample it was friends. However 17% of the sample have also indicated multiple abusers i.e. parents, siblings, relatives and friends.

CONCLUSION

In the gay sample sexual abuse is 28% as against the 4% of normal population. The findings are in line with the expectations of the researcher, that the extent of sexual abuse will be greater in the homosexual population. Similarly in the other areas of abuse i.e. physical and emotional abuse too one notices that the magnitude is greater in the gay population. Physical abuse is indicated by 17% of the population, 32% indicate emotional abuse and 22% of the sample has indicated multiple forms of abuse i.e. physical, emotional and sexual. In the gay sample 18% have indicated that the parents themselves were the abusers and in 8% of the population the siblings have been indicated. In 28% of the sample it was close relatives while in 60% of the sample it was friends. However 17% of the sample have also indicated multiple abusers i.e. parents, siblings, relatives and friends.

28% of the sample have reported that the abuse occurred in their own houses, in 15% of the abused sample the abuse occurred in the neighbours' house and in 20% of the cases the abuse occurred in a relative's house. Thus one could conclude that incest and other forms of abuse are prevalent in the gay population with parents and siblings being one of the main abusers.

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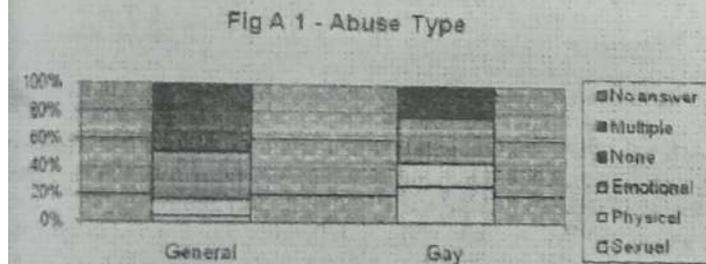
was obtained, and for the Marathi version a 't' of 13.3 that is significant at 0.05 level was obtained. In order to determine the item difficulty level an item analysis was done. All individual 't' values of the items in the English and Marathi versions are significant at the 0.05 level, establishing the appropriateness of the items in the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The obtained data was analysed to determine the significance of difference between variables and for the extent of relationship between variables. Since the data is discrete in nature suitable non parametric statistics is used to analyse the data.

In the present analysis the kind of abuse, the abuser, and the place of abuse were analysed. The findings are discussed below

FIGURE 1
GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF KINDS OF
ABUSE IN THE SAMPLE



From the above table one understands that in the gay sample sexual abuse is 28% as against the 4% of normal population. The findings are in line with the expectations of the researcher, that the extent of sexual abuse will be greater in the homosexual population. Similarly in the other areas of abuse i.e. physical and emotional abuse too one can notice that the magnitude is greater in the gay population. Physical abuse is indicated by 17% of the population, 32% indicate emotional abuse and 22% of the sample have indicated multiple forms of abuse i.e. physical, emotional and sexual.