



## Knowledge of Transgender on Right to Education and Privileges, In Tirupattur, Vllore (Dist)

### KEYWORDS

Rights, Knowledge, Education, Privileges, Transgender

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**ABSTRACT** *Objectives of the Study: To determine the level of knowledge of transgender on right to education and Privileges. Methodology of the Study: A structured pre designed and pre tested self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. Along with this qualitative research was conducted throw case study. This data was collected in the month of March, 2015. Out of the 32 population of transgender residing in Tirupattur eleven transgenders were selected throw simple random sampling. The respondents were youth who belonged to the age group of 15-30 years. The data was analysed using SPSS. Results of the Study: They have knowledge about the fundamental rights for education and not aware of the state government policies regarding education. Conclusion: This study reveals limited knowledge on state government policies and privileges among the respondents, it's the role of the government and the community to bring awareness among this group of people on their rights. Government and NGO's can work together to rehabilitation the transgender involved in prostitution and provide education to the interested people.*

### Introduction

The world is beautiful with all its greeneries and sceneries. All these things look beautiful only because of the admiration and positive perception of human beings. People also have differences in color, language and gender. Understanding the differences and accepting the reality and motivating each other they make the life more beautiful. Like the first and second gender- men and women- go hand in hand in almost all the fields especially in education. On the other hand the discriminated trans gender community also wishes to walk with them and get knowledge through education. Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Article 26 says, "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." In India also there are laws and norms for the trans genders to pursue education. But the thing is, Are they aware of all these laws? Do they have knowledge about their rights to acquire education? This study tries to investigate into the knowledge of the trans gender community on the right to education and privileges in the constitution.

### Results and Discussion

#### Age of the Respondents

Figure 1 shows the age distribution of respondents. 36% belonged to the age group of 15- 20, 36% belonged to the age group of 21- 25 and 27% belonged to the age group of 26-30. All the respondents in this study are Youth.

#### AGE IN YEARS

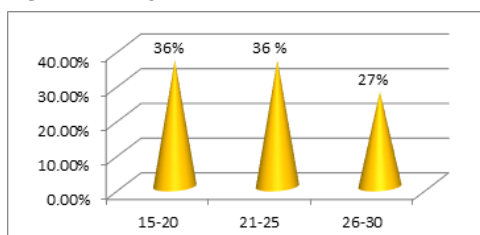


Figure: 1 Distribution of the Age in Years

### Education of the Respondents

Figure 2 explicitly points out the educational level of the respondents. 27.3% of the respondents have completed primary education, Professional course (18.2%), 27.3% high schooling. Very few have completed Middle school (9.1%), higher secondary (9.1%), P.G (9.1%) respectively. Census 2011 reveals low literacy levels with just 46 percent trans genders literate, compared to 74 per cent literacy in the general population.

#### EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

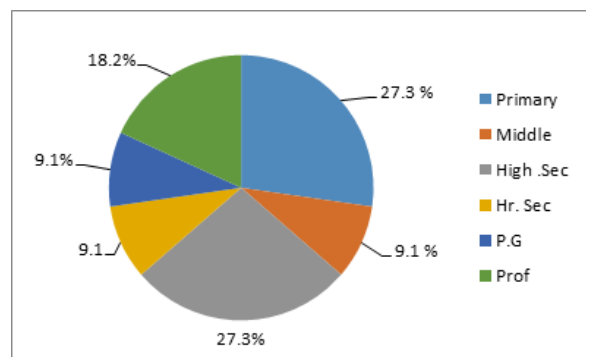


Figure: 2 Distribution of the Age in Years

Though there are so many educational institutions run both by the government and private sector the educational level of the trans gender have been found satisfactory. Kalki Subramaniam, founder of Sahodari Foundation for trans gender welfare, stated on 28 October, 2013 "Frequently trans gender children are harassed and sexually abused in schools by facing the verbal, physical and sexual abuse attack which results in their leaving the schools and they completely drop out."

(Here are two case study reports to support the words of Kalki Subramaniam gathered through interview in this study)

#### Case Study Report - 1

Miss. Rama (Name is changed) a transgender aged 30 at

Tirupattur, vellore Dt., explained her plight as “ I attended school till seventh standard and I was confident in all other subjects expect English. Knowing that I am a trans gender the boys and, male teachers started ridiculing, insulting and fooling me. I changed my male name to female name and requested them to call me with that name. Instead they all wounded me by calling the name with different sounds. Since I did not get any support from the teachers, I left the school.”

Apart from the verbal harassment in schools by the peers and teachers, financial status also becomes a speed breaker to complete their schooling and to go for further higher studies.

**Case Study Report - 2**

Miss. Jothika (the name was changed) a transgender aged 21 who dwells in Tirupattur, Vellore Dt, .shared her painful experiences as “I tried my best to complete my higher secondary studies but I could not. Five years back I left the school after writing +1 annual exam. The teachers in the school advised me to behave like a male but the students those who were in the school always cut my heart in to pieces by their filthy words and behavior. Because of that I left the school, went to Bangalore and had operation. Now I want to complete +2 by direct examination through study center and continue to study. The in charge of tutorial center whom I approached asked me to pay Rs.7000/- as course fee, which at present I can't afford.”

**Employment and Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Table 1 portrays that majority of the respondents are involved mainly in prostitution (81.8%) a few are Unemployed (9.1%) Private work (9.1%). The one person who is unemployed has newly joined trans gender community.

Majority (90.9%) of the respondents who are involved in prostitution as stated above earn between Rs.1000 – 5000 per month and only (9.1%) who is doing private job earns Rs.5001 – 10000.

This shows the non-acceptance of the community towards the transgender as a normal human beings and not giving decent jobs to this community of people forces the transgender to go in for prostitution. Since they don't have any permanent and respectful job they are living hand to mouth.

no=11			
S.No	Demographic Variable	f	%
1	<b>Employment</b>		
	a) Unemployed	1	9.1%
	b) Private	1	9.1%
	c) Prostitution	9	81.8%
2	<b>Monthly in Income</b>		
	a) 1000 - 5000	10	90.9%
	b) 5001 - 10000	1	9.1%

**TABLE 1 Employment and Monthly Income of the Respondents**

Standard of Living (Type of House) of the Respondents

Table 2 Indicates the majority (63.6%) of the respondents are living in tiled house and 27.3% are leading their life in the Cemented house whereas only 9.1% are live in Thatch house. Majority (81.8%) of the respondents reside in rented house whereas only few (18.2%) have the privilege to own their own house. This is due to their poor economic status and they are struggling to get the government scheme to own a piece of land and house.

no=11			
S.No	Demographic Variable	f	%
1	<b>Type of the house</b>		
	a) Thach	1	9.1%
	b) Tiled	7	63.6%
	c) Cemented	3	27.3%
2	<b>Own house?</b>		
	d) Yes	2	18.2%
	e) No	9	81.8%

**TABLE 2 Standard of living of the Respondents Knowledge on Right to Education**

Table 3 shows the knowledge of respondents on their rights to pursue education. Top most majority (90.9%) of people are aware of Indian Constitution article 15(1) which says “No discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place or any of them” and 90.9% know about article 21A which speaks about getting education is a fundamental right. All are (100%) sure about, “Child up to 14 years, irrespective of gender identity, shall have the right to compulsory education” ( Section 3(1), Right to Education Act, 2009, Government of India). This study clearly portrays that the awareness on Indian constitution regarding education is high among the transgenders.

Comparing with other states Tamil Nadu walks a step ahead, in planning for the transgenders. Tamil Nadu is the first state which formed a Trans Gender Welfare Board (TGWB) with representatives from the transgenders community on 15 April 2008 and also introduced Trans Gender Welfare Policy (TGWP). These movements widely open the doors for transgenders to go for higher studies. As per to this policy transgender people can access admission in government colleges with full scholarship. This is a revolutionary step in empowering the community. In addition, to improve the educational level of transgender people, Tamil Nadu government also issued an order to government colleges on May 2008 to create a third gender column in the application form.

Table 3 points out that though they are aware of TGWB (90.9%), and not so much aware of TGWP and its importance. There are 63.6% people who said it's not compulsory that government colleges should create third gender column in the college application form. Holding Aravani identity card is must to avail educational scholarship, but 54.5 % of the respondents had a wrong impression that Aravani identity card is not necessary to get educational scholarship.

Provision is there to change the name in the government gazette. Irrespective of gender any one can apply for that. Transgenders have very minimum knowledge about this and 63.6% said “Transgenders can't change their name in the gazette”. No law is there to change the gender identity of a person in the gazette. So it is more difficult for them to get a job in the government sector. S.Swapna the 23-year old transgender who became the first trans person to clear TNPS Group IV exams in 2003 is struggling now to go for government job. Except 9.1% of the respondents, all others said Trans genders can change their gender identity in the government gazette, which is not true.

On 15 April 2014, Supreme Court of India declared transgender people as a socially and economically backward class entitled to reservations in Education and Job, and also directed union and state governments to frame welfare schemes for them. The third gender people will be considered as OBCs (Other Backward Class) and they will be given educational and employment reservation as

OBC's. In this study most (63.6%) of the respondents are not aware that the trans gender come under BC(Backward Class).

They are mostly aware of Indian constitutions regarding right to education, which they were taught in the school or

heard from media and other government and non-governmental agencies. But they are not aware of the state level policy which gives more hope to their life to pursue knowledge nor has this revolutionary declaration of Supreme Court touched the earlobe of the transgenders.

n = 11

S.No	Parameters Regarding Knowledge	Correct Response	f	%
01	According to the Indian constitution there is no discrimination on the ground of gender.	Yes	10	90.9 %
02	Indian constitution doesn't say that Education is a fundamental right.	No	10	90.9 %
03	Child up to 14 years, irrespective of gender identity, shall have the right to compulsory education.	Yes	11	100 %
04	Each child has the right to get free education up to 14 years.	Yes	10	90.9 %
05	In government colleges the transgenders have to pay for their studies.	No	10	90.9 %
06	It's not compulsory that government colleges should create third gender column in the college application form.	No	7	63.6 %
07.	In Tamil Nadu there is a separate welfare board for the transgenders.	Yes	10	90.9 %
08	Transgenders can avail educational scholarship from Tamil Nadu Transgender Welfare Board.	Yes	9	81.8 %
09	Aravani Identity Card is not necessary to get educational scholarship.	No	6	54.5 %
10	In education there is reservation for transgenders.	Yes	8	72.7 %
11	In job there is reservation for transgenders.	Yes	8	72.7 %
12	The transgenders come under Backward Class.	No	7	63.6 %
13	Transgenders can't change their name in the government gazette.	No	7	63.6 %
14	Transgenders can change their gender identity in the government gazette.	No	1	9.1 %
15	Educated transgenders have respect in the society.	Yes	7	63.6 %

TABLE 3 Knowledge of the Respondent on Educational Rights & Privileges

**Level of Overall Knowledge of Educational Rights & Privileges**

Figure 3 indicates the overall knowledge of transgenders regarding their right on education. Among 11 people 18% of the respondents are having average and very good knowledge (18%) , majority (64%) of the respondents are having good knowledge on their rights and privileges. Since many have had exposure to school the level of knowledge on right to education is in good position.

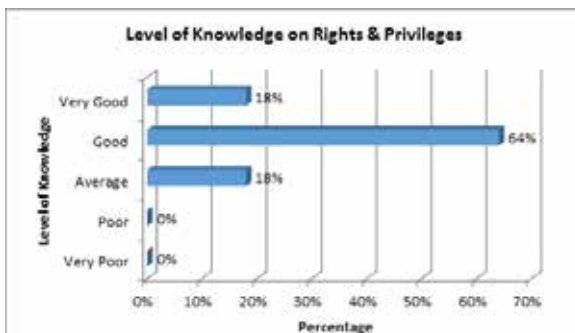


Figure 3- Level of Knowledge of Rights and Privileges

**Conclusion**

The present study is designed to understand the knowledge of transgenders on their rights to education and privileges. This study was focused on the laws and norms that

are available at present In Indian constitution for transgender. The findings show that the respondents in this study have better knowledge regarding the equality in education which our constitution provides. Rather there is a vast difference in knowing about the possibilities to get education through TGWB /TGWP. They need to be aware of the recent declaration of Supreme Court, which gives OBCs recognition to them. Since there is a less awareness regarding reservation, policies of the state government and the basic requirements of obtaining scholarship is not known to this group of transgender hence they are not exposed to higher studies, and are not availing any work either in government sector or private sector. As a result only 63.6% (Table 3) of people have an idea that educated transgenders have respect in the society. To lead day today life they (81.8%) are apt to go for prostitution (Table -1).

**General Recommendations**

- States and the Centre government should plan social welfare schemes for third gender community and run a public awareness campaign to erase social stigma.
- It will be more useful if the educational institutions conduct periodical programmes - if possible by the transgender - to the students and the teachers to understand the third gender.
- By collecting the statistics of dropout transgender students the government or the NGO's can join together to plan for their studies.
- Every transgender has right to know about their Right

to education and Job. It's the role of the government to bring the norms and opportunities to the public by adopting various ways.

- As there is a provision to change the name in the gazette, the government can pass a GO to change the gender identity in the gazette.

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